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Introduction to the Albigen System
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Why Zen?

The basic idea that I'm going to talk about is why Zen at all? Why fool with Zen, as opposed to some other system?

I don't think anybody can give you more than their own personal reactions – you have to choose your own. But sometimes by giving a talk, someone with similar questions, a desire perhaps for a certain answer or a certain completeness of philosophy, may receive an intuition, and we may have the same direction.

I don't mean that everybody has to go the Zen direction, or that anyone has to go any particular direction. There's no direction that you should endorse for everyone. As an old farmer said to me one time, "There are many paths to the top of the hill, that the cows make, but they all come to the barn."

So I'm not trying to convince people that this is the only path to the top of the hill. But if it rings a bell for you, then my purpose is achieved. And if it rings a bell for just one or two, I presume it's achieved.

¹ This version contains "Addendum 2", an additional 16 minutes discovered in 2015, and "Addendum 3", a few paragraphs taken from an old transcript, audio for it is missing.

² Wiki link: <https://www.direct-mind.org/index.php?title=1977-0426-Intro-to-Albigen-System-Cleveland>
For information, Doc file and audio files, send email to editors@direct-mind.org

The only thing that I can give you – I think that I could possibly give you a lot of argument, but that it might be pretensively technical, philosophical. And in the long run I don't think philosophy does much, in the line of proving things. That is, an argumentative philosophy.

We eventually get, somewhere along the line in our spiritual searching or philosophic seeking, to where we realize our logic isn't going to do us any good. We have to depend upon another faculty. This faculty is largely intuition. Which means we have to feel. Consequently, hours of complex argumentation won't do any good; and too much dependence on the cruder forms of feeling will not do you any good. It has to be a certain refinement of feeling.

But regardless, I'll run you through – with an apology to those who have heard it before – my reasons.

Personal Search

I felt an inclination when I was young, very young, to find out the truth of things. And it could have been rooted basically in fear – I'm not making a pretense about that – I think a lot of us get curious about what happens to us after death because we fear death. That doesn't mean we have to curse our findings because they began in an experience of fear.

But my early years were an emotional search, you might say. I was raised as a Catholic, and I was trained in an emotional appeal. To respect – because I loved my parents – the doctrine that my parents taught me, so to speak, or brought me up in. The idea possibly being as a child that the love was the deity.

If I could have analyzed it at the time I would have seen that I followed that which my family followed because of love for that family. Thinking of course, as almost every person at some time thinks, that the mother is infallible. Because as a child, the mother protects – and as a result of this we get filial religious strains.

I went away when I was quite young to study to be a priest. Because this was the fulfillment of filial obligation to the true religion as taught by the truest person on earth, being my mother. They can do no wrong.

But after some time in the seminary – I wasn't in there too long, maybe two or three years – I became dissatisfied. Fortunately enough I had been weaned from my family for awhile, and I began to think as an individual. And I began to see what I considered holes in the logic. Incompleteness, if you will. Injustice – according to my standards; a theology that didn't allow for a man's microscopic intelligence.

I felt that I could not live up to the edicts – that somebody else translated to me as being God's edicts. Some edicts seemed to be very cruel, and the people didn't show me that they had any comprehension of that God's desires.

So I was about to part from what I considered my emotional search. I began as an emotional child, and when I got to the point where I could free myself from emotional attachment to theology and religion, I started looking around elsewhere.

So the next step I went through was a search for a tangible proof. I realized that believing just wasn't enough. That if I were created with doubts, the doubts were as sacred as the belief. If a all-powerful being created me with doubts – he must have had a purpose.

Of course, I trembled a little bit in this business of bravely going out and facing those doubts and running at right angles to my previous indoctrination. But I also noticed in the Bible where it says, "Seek and ye shall find." The same part that says, "Believe in Me."

Well – it's difficult sometimes to tie in those two. Where somebody's exhorting you to believe in them, and at the same time go out and search until you find. But that's what I started to do, regardless.

Of course, it became pretty much of an egotistical thing – I didn't realize that at the time, I thought I was objective. I had hoped to have an objective bit of research, and I tried to get into everything that was objective, even studying psychology for the purpose of analyzing the brain, to find the contact point where the spirit touched the brain, and all this sort of thing.^{3, 4}

I thought that by some intricate study you could come to that point – and maybe somebody already knew it. So you could go through all the psychology books and see if you could find what thought was.

In the process of doing this, of course, I realized that it was possible that I would understand myself – which didn't occur to me when I first got into this. Because I sensed that I wasn't talking to myself clearly. That I had a lot of misconceptions, and some of the misconceptions were rooted in my inefficient computer, in my inefficient translator. That the data coming into me was being translated by certain appetites or certain desires, colorations, and so on.

Spiritualism

So I followed several things. Anything that popped up in front of me that would be objective – like spiritualism. I got into spiritualism I guess when I was 17 or 18 years old – because there seemed to be nothing more logical if you want to find out what happens to you after death, than to talk to the dead.⁵

³ Rose took courses in psychology (first?) and majored in chemistry, but only attended college for about two years.

⁴ Rose expands on the contact point and associated spark gap in Energy Transmutation, Between-ness and Transmission, published in 1975.

⁵ Rose describes his experiences and evolution in a non-linear manner, apparently for easier presentation. He was interested in Spiritualism when he was young, but he didn't encounter what he considered a genuine materialization until 1958 (described below). So he was still searching in the field of Spiritualism 11 years after his realization in Seattle, which occurred in May, 1947. See Alan Fitzpatrick:

And I heard that there were bona fide materializing mediums that could bring the spirits up – and you could talk to them, and they could say, "Well, here's how it is. Here's the keys to the door." And the rest would be easy.

I was rewarded in many of these searches. Another one of them was the scientific search on the aspects of longevity. I felt that there was a need for maintenance of life. That you couldn't just take chances and get yourself killed – because you have no proof that a dead man knows anything. So seeing that the task ahead was monumental, the idea was to try to find a lifestyle in which you could live long enough to continue the problem. This was part of the project also.⁶

But in regards to spiritualism, we did find – and I say "we" now because I started to associate with people who had the same interest, people who knew mediums and that sort of thing. I got into everything that was contingent upon spiritualism, also.

I was fortunate enough to run into a little circle just north of Columbus, Ohio⁷ that had brought a materializing medium down,⁸ and he brought some people out – little foggy creatures that had lived before, supposedly. And we asked them some questions.

Some of the people in the group I was connected with at the time⁹ had relatives come out that they recognized. To me, no relatives came out; I saw a half of a nun and half of a priest. Maybe some sort of reproaching for the life I was leading, I don't know, being away from the Church.

But these figures didn't give me any great amount of wisdom. The priest just repeated over and over, "I am a Catholic priest; see my chasuble, see my stole, see my surplis. I am a Catholic priest..." It sounded like a record. The nun said nothing; and as I say, the nun had no eyeballs – that was the distinctive characteristic about her. There was a head, but no eyeballs in the head. I recognized the nun, incidentally, as someone I had known. She was very similar to a nun I had known as a child.

Well all these figures – there were some eighteen people there, and for a good many of them two people came out and talked to them. For one lady her mother and father both came out.

This was no rigging. This was not cheesecloth; this was genuine. There was a concrete floor and you could see them go through the floor. They would just sink right down. Some of them would explode and leave a vacuum – the medium sat behind a curtain, and the curtain would move out to fill the vacuum. They were genuine phenomena.

But as for valuable information – here's the opportunity to ask somebody, "Where are you?" – and this is what they were asked: "What's it like there? Who is there? Do you see Jesus Christ?"

<https://albigen.com/about/richard-rose-assimilation-enlightenment.htm> Also see Rose's chart of his personal evolution close to the end of the Transmission Paper: "Notes on Tension: Life Stages".

⁶ Hence Rose's interest in a vegetarian lifestyle and hatha yoga.

⁷ White Lily Chapel near Delaware, Ohio. <https://www.whitelilychapel.org/>

⁸ Rev. Aldred, of Muskegon, Michigan.

⁹ Steubenville Psychic Society. See Rose's correspondence dated Sep. 3, 1958 on the materialization at White Lily Chapel. <https://selfdefinition.org/rose/rr-letters/rose-papers-catalogue.htm>

Not one of them said they had seen Jesus Christ, for instance. And these were Christian families.

This disturbed me a bit. I remember the answer of one was, "Well, we have heard that he is here." They were always vague answers. They were always an answer that you could not really nail down as being a lie or misinformation.

Answers were given mostly in the line of the questions that you would ask: "How are you?"

The answer would be, "Oh, we're fine."

"Is Joe there?"

"Yes, Joe sends his love." These were responses that were almost uniform. I have heard this about other sittings that I didn't attend myself.

Q. Were these individuals?

R. Yes. This was the spirit talking.

Q. They were people?

R. Individual spirits, yes. You could see them; they were standing right there. The room was only 18' by 10', so there were several rows of people. And I'd say we were within six feet of them.

Q. Did they have personalities?

R. Yes, well – yes. For the lady from Steubenville,¹⁰ her mother and father came out and talked to her a few minutes, and they started to go down through the floor. They said, "We have to leave now." And she asked them or pleaded with them to stay a little while longer and talk.

But there was no coherent information. They said, "We're happy to know that you're here, and you know now that you don't have to worry about death." Little things like that would be said.

So we asked questions about the state of where they were. There was nothing given except, "Oh, it's just pretty much the same as where you are, as it is on earth. We live pretty much as you do." But it was always in generalities, like the words "pretty much the same".

There was no definition of time. For instance, "What's the time difference between where you are and where we are?" This was important to us. And "Who are the personages? Do you have teachers there? Are you at rest? Is there an aim yet in view for you?" There seemed to be no aim.

And I was reminded of something I read in the Bible,¹¹ that the dead know nothing. That quotation stuck in my mind. I don't know whether Christ said it or whether it was in the Old

¹⁰ Mrs. D'Aliberti.

¹¹ Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Testament. The idea was not to pester after the people who purport to bring back the dead. Because it was evident that if these people, or these entities, had reached a point of any wisdom or any knowledge superior to that which we have here, they didn't manifest it.

In fact, the common quality was one of apathy. The tone was always one of apathy – no despair but no enthusiasm, just a monotonous tone of voice.

Now these were not the medium's voice; I had heard the medium talk. And there was what they call a cabinet spirit that floated around, that came out first. This was the "guide," so called. I considered it much the personal entity of the medium, a little creature about two feet high that jumped around before the spirits started to come out that were identified. This one identified itself as Midget.

This Midget had some characteristics of the medium's voice. But it was the only one that did. The spirits' voices when they talked could be localized. The medium may have been maybe six or eight feet back in the cabinet, whereas the voice of the spirits came from right in front of you.¹²

Now this isn't unusual. This happens in other instances besides a planned materialization. I talked to a fellow from Mexico,¹³ he was a Mexican, who had gone out into the desert and invoked the spirits supposedly of some bandits who had been killed at a certain place – they had hidden gold – and they were trying to find the gold by invoking the spirit of the bandit. And the same thing occurred there – the voice would appear in their midst, right in the middle of them. They wouldn't necessarily see anybody, but the voice would appear there and speak. So this is not unusual that you'll get an entity of some sort to speak.

But regardless, to make a long story short, like Omar Khayyam I came back with the same amount information or knowledge that I went in with.

And after pursuing this objective search for a while, I could see where some people had taken this as an entire path of life. Some latched on to it and continually stayed with it, hoping for more of a message, and a better message, and a better medium, and this sort of thing.

Some people of course became fleeced. I knew some people in particular – they had had some outstanding things happen, that were impressive enough to make them become subject to being fleeced. But it seemed like the whole thing – as too many philosophic and spiritual movements do – degenerated into moneymaking gimmicks.

I realized that these things if I put my life into them – I looked at some of the people in these groups, some of them were fairly old, and I realized that they didn't have the answers from it.

There was a man who came to a meeting we had in Akron, Ohio; a man about seventy years of age – he had been in spiritualism practically all his life.¹⁴ Fitzpatrick and I were sitting there talking to him, and he was telling us how they made the noise with the trumpets. They were

¹² Rose continues the story in the Q&A section below.

¹³ Was this during the trip to San Antonio to visit Bob Martin?

skills for these old spiritualists – they would have a person behind the curtain and they would float a trumpet around with wires in the ceiling, and give an eerie sounding voice.

This became quite a business, to get people who were looking for contacts. Of course, the nice thing about this fellow was that he was devoting some of his time going around telling people about some of the pranks he used to pull. Because he saw that the most valuable message you could bring was not comfort to somebody but the truth about some of the chicanery.

But anyhow, I drifted away from it. Because I didn't intend to put a life into something that might be just circular. And I realized that in pursuing an objective search for a subjective truth, I was really shooting for a very long shot. That the only way that I could get it would be an accidental combination of an infinite number of variables.

It was like alchemy: By continuous experimentation or study or reading, you might discover some key, which would give you another key, which would give you yet another key. And this is another little path that's hinted about in some of the esoteric writings, about the seven seals inside the seven seals, and all that sort of thing. I never found the sixth one. Because I think that's just the incessant looking for keys.

Looking Inside

This automatically led me into philosophy and away from objective psychology and objective thaumaturgy, you might call it. And instinctively I began to look inside myself. Because most of the systems that seemed to indicate having found this answer – through examining the variables over thousands and thousands of years, such as raja yoga – wound up with a system of self-contemplation.

And so we come full turn in a way, because the original thing is to find your soul, or your God; and after digging around for a while you find that there's something in the road of your finding it. And it isn't as much your ignorance as your ego. That you have a certain desire to write into any philosophy everything you want to believe.

If something is hard to believe, there's an automatic inclination to think, "Well, that's unreasonable." In other words, the humanization of God, they call it. The creation of God in the image of man. I often think this may have been the true meaning of the words in Genesis: that God didn't create man in his own image; man created God in *his* own image.

And this is what happens today: You'll hear people saying, "Well, I can't buy that." When I started out on my search I said, "I'll buy whatever is." In other words, "If I find out that oblivion is the answer, that when I die I cease to exist mentally, physically, spiritually, that there is no such thing as a soul – this I want to know."

¹⁴ Dana M. Bailey Jr., parapsychological investigator, former furniture store owner and mayor of Newton Falls, Ohio. Blurry photo from about 1975. <https://selfdefinition.org/rose/images/talks/dana-m-bailey-jr.jpg>

If you start out on a spiritual search to find your soul, you're in error because you're postulating a soul. If you start on a search to find God, you're postulating a God. So be careful, or you're liable to create one in your own image and likeness, or in the image and likeness of your desires.

An honest search has to be a scientific one of trying to find that which is. When you analyze a chemical compound, you don't say, "I'm going in there and find gold." No. You say, "I'm going to run a qualitative analysis, and whatever's there I'll report as I find it."

This is what I mean by scientific. You can't be too scientific; you can't be objective. But you can use this little bit of common sense, as not to postulate in advance what you're going to find. Because you may well create your answer. And you may be decades getting rid of the creation, before you get back to an honest search again.

But I found out that first of all there's a bit of fear, in stepping into this type of investigation. One fear is that you're liable to lose your health in the experimentation – you may decide that fasting will give you more clarity of mind. Or some spiritual exercise might drive you crazy, say meditating on a certain philosophy or prayer, or whatever formula that you run into that appeals to your intuition.

But this is what you have to do. You have to start someplace. You can't just start by saying everything is foolishness; because if you believe that of course, you're postulating it. Everything may not be foolishness. Everything may not be oblivion.

So you have to approach the thing with an open mind, in the full realization that you may go crazy or you may lose your life. And if it's worth it, then you go ahead. Because you'll be challenged somewhere along the line. Somebody will say you're going to lose your job, or you're going to lose this opportunity or that opportunity – and if that opportunity means more to you than finding out who's doing the job, then you have to stop and vegetate.

One of the first things I got into then was raja yoga, because I could see that we had to go directly to the mind. And what system do you use? You use something that appeals to you; that's the only thing you can do.

Reverse Path

I've written a book, and in it I explain this, and I don't think you'll find it in too many other books. The system is very simple, in one respect: You cannot approach the Truth, because you don't know where it is. This is the fallacy of a tremendous lot that's going on today. And this is possibly where Zen leads. Up until now I've said that you can reach illumination by a Christian method, a Mohammedan method – any method as long as you're sincere. But most of these postulate something. Zen postulates nothing.

So you might get hung up on the creation or reinforcement of a concept that was handed to you.

Consequently, you'll still accept some little system. Now yoga is seemingly impersonal – of course in India there are gurus that become personal teachers and that sort of thing, but if you get a book you don't have to worry about worshiping a person. You can follow the system or interpret the system, and let your intuition be your teacher to a great extent.

And of course I had no money to travel to India, or I might have gotten snagged. But I went to the library and got systems from books on yoga and mental exercises, like Rudolph Steiner put out,^{15, 16} or certain yogis. I looked at them all and worked out my own system of meditation.

The first thing I noticed – I don't know how many of you have done meditation and noticed this – was that something was coloring my findings. That I would come to a certain conclusion and six months later realize that I had come to that conclusion because of the very same thing I mentioned a little while ago: I wrote into it what I wanted to hear. I wrote into it what one of my appetites wanted to hear.

Why do you pick a church? You pick a church, perhaps, because there's somebody in the church that you'll benefit from in your business. People's businesses are expanded by being church members. Their politics have been bettered by going to church.

I remember back on the farm when I was a kid people lived about a mile apart. They very seldom saw each other in the wintertime. One man had quite a large family, and I said to him, "How did you ever meet your girlfriend that you married? There's so little commerce between these families." And he said, "Oh, very simple, we went to church on Sunday." So while the older people were inside snoring, the kids were out chasing each other around the trees.

But regardless, that was their purpose for joining that particular church.

We have a little group, and I've watched people that come into the group. Some of them come in because of philosophic interests and some come in because they're sick. They intuitively feel that if they get in there where things are a little healthier, they'll eventually pick up a better state of equilibrium.

Now that person isn't writing into it what they believe, but occasionally you will get people who do write into it. For instance, Zen itself today has a lot of stuff written into it by people who want to write their current political theme. Which is possibly a current degradation.

There are certain systems that encourage degradation, spiritual degradation, and they tie it in with spiritual activity. For instance, the guru will say, "I don't care what you do as long as you pay me the initiation fee and repeat this mantra over and over. That's all you have to do, and you'll go to heaven eventually, or to realization."

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_Steiner's_exercises_for_spiritual_development

¹⁶ Rose advocated as a step to building will (a practice which helped him recover from a long illness) the exercise of walking around the block once every day at a certain time without fail. Rose didn't mention Steiner, but this was Steiner's second exercise in a list of six: See Wikipedia above and the following PDF (16 pages, 126 KB) <https://selfdefinition.org/blavatsky/Tom-van-Gelder-Six-Basic-Exercises-Rudolf-Steiner-16-pages.pdf>

So if you aren't careful, you will do as I did. You will write into the philosophy you're studying that which you want to hear. So that any two people can sit down and read for instance a certain passage or verse in the New Testament, and one will say what it means – and you'll find out you can fight a battle over the difference in definition. And this is because they have an ax to grind. They're using the New Testament as an ax, to chop you with. This can happen in anything you read. I know that certain yoga sayings and lifestyles have been interpreted with an amazing breadth of meaning.

Also I have heard people say they had read the New Testament and picked up a certain meaning from it – then ten or twenty years later read it and said, "Now I understand it."

Mind Is An Obstacle

So the mind as we know it is an obstacle.¹⁷ We come to realize this, that the mind is full of tricks. And this is something that you don't particularly encounter in let's say the established faiths, such as Christianity. Christianity does speak of mental obstacles, they speak of the seven sins; and this is true – they are obstacles. But the idea of ego, there's not much mention of it except Pride, and the other six of course.

But there are all sorts of egos that are very legal. The ego of importance. That isn't necessarily Pride – you have to have a certain amount of self-pride in order to keep alive. But there's a degree of desire in which we desire God to be a certain way, or we desire life after death to be a certain thing, and we write it into our theology. For instance, people who like to hunt, at one time considered heaven to be a hunting ground.

Regardless, this limitation by virtue of the ego came as a discovery to me. I realized that if I could twist things, and later find out, ten years later, that I had twisted them, it meant that I had an unreliable mind.

Now getting around that unreliable mind, you have to become a super-psychologist; you have to know when you're outwitting yourself. This may sound difficult to some of you – if you haven't done any spiritual work on yourself you may not know what I'm talking about – but anybody who has tried to do any type of spiritual work will know they outwit themselves. It's that simple.

You can even identify voices. For every action there's a voice, and for every counteraction. There are always two voices. If you're overweight something says, "Eat fruitcake," and another voice says, "Hey, you're going to kill yourself."

Both of these are egos. One of them is the ego of appetite and the other one is the ego that you believe you should exist forever. That all you have to do is keep yourself in hand and keep your body going, and this is all that's necessary.

¹⁷ See *The Albigen Papers*, fifth paper, Obstacles to Transcendental Efforts.

Well, of course, it's not good to kill yourself off by getting too fat, but also, you're not going to live forever. The idea is to take care of your health, but don't make a big ego out of the importance of that health.

But this is written into everything. And there are more egos than just appetites, as you know. There is the power ego; we like to have power over our fellowman. And this is as dangerous possibly as any of the seven deadly sins they talk about. But these are written into our theology and our study of theology.

And I find another one that's written in is this idea of pleasure. Pleasure is a relative thing. But everybody defines heaven as a pleasurable place. People define spiritual systems as being blissful or else they're no good. I get this a tremendous lot: "You mean to tell me that in the final experience there is no bliss? Well – I don't want any parts of it."

They have no choice. It isn't what you want, it's *what is*. But in the final realization there is no bliss. The final realization is an absolute condition; and bliss and sorrow, pain and pleasure, are the polarity of relative experience.

They don't stop to think about that. That in an absolute condition there would be no polarity. They want to write it in, and if a system doesn't say you're going to be happy, well...

And the people who do go in for the bliss trip – wind up mumbling to themselves. And eventually they wear out.

I went through it. I went through seven years of something very similar to TM. We used the word "OM" – it's as useful as any of the mysterious syllables they give you in TM, and you can get it for nothing. Just take it from me. Leave a nickel in the basket on the way out. Just chant "OM", and it'll do just as much for you as *angh* or *bang* or *bong*.

It'll put you to sleep, in other words. It'll make you quiescent if you're turbulent. It's good to quiet people who are turbulent and traumatic – but try to wake yourself up before you get too quiescent.

This, incidentally, is an ego: the desire for sleep, the desire for peace. Life is a battle. We were talking about this in the car today as we drove up from Wheeling. The conversation got around to this business of pleasure, that everybody is looking for.

I had been talking to a young lady who was trying to marry my son. And I said to her, "What do you want out of life?"

She says, "I want to be happy."

I said, "You're a hedonist, then."

And she said, "What's that?"

Well, I didn't explain to her. Because her happy cruise was legitimate that far, but if she found out it was a disease she might have felt bad about it.

But measure the moments of happiness that you have in a lifetime. In comparison to the amounts of tears or troubles that follow or precede it. We are baited; our happiness is a bait, basically. I think the pursuit of happiness is programmed in. If there weren't some bait, we wouldn't go chasing. And there has to be something of a fictitious reward, or we wouldn't continue chasing.

But to think that there would be any greater proportion because we suffered here, because we didn't get what we chased: in another dimension we're going to get what we chased. Forever and ever and ever and ever. And it would get so damned monotonous you'd wish you were down in hell someplace – and that's where you go, I think, after awhile. If you go into the after-death experience with too much of a concept of pleasure, you'll eventually wish for a comparison.

In finding a method, then – we're going into the mind; and the mind being imperfect, not a good vehicle. And if the mind isn't perfect – what are we? Are we the mind?

And somewhere along the line, as I said, you become a psychologist, and you reach some conclusions that you wouldn't get out of a book. And one of them is that you are the awareness behind the mind, not the mind. As soon as you are aware that you are thinking, the awareness, to me, is a superior consciousness to the mind.

The mind has the capacity for what I consider five or six types of visions, imposed upon it, witnessed by our awareness. We're aware of them.

Now the physical mechanics of this I don't know. Our awareness is not in our synapses alone; our awareness exists after the synapses decay, or are knocked out of commission say by a narcotic on an operating table. But regardless, there is an underlying awareness, when the body is inert or dead, so to speak.

This whole process becomes then the method of using the mind – that's the only vehicle we have – to find that which we really are, in spite of the mind itself.

Bodhidharma's Four Precepts

The whole system of Zen – if I can wrap this into a package for you, and show you that it is necessary to watch yourself in a particular manner – I'm not saying that you have to follow a particular formula – *is a continual challenging of your reasons for thinking what you think*. A continual pursuit.

Now Zen is a very old system, and we have many types of Zen floating around the country today. But I would like to quote to you Bodhidharma's four principles of Zen, and without going to any particular sect that exists in the country today – if you are well read on Zen, there are different books – you can compare this to them, and see which of them deliver.

Zen is a special transmission outside the scriptures. No dependence on words or letters. Direct pointing at the soul of man. This goes beyond the mind. Not direct pointing at the mind; it's the

direct pointing at the soul of man. Seeing one's nature and the final attainment of Self. Or, as it was written in those days, *Buddhahood*. Now "Buddhahood" means the Supreme Self. Of course, Bodhidharma lived many years ago, but this is attributed to him in the writings of D.T. Suzuki.^{18, 19}

So here is a system that enables you to go directly into your mind. Of course, the system isn't written in those four letters, but the different schools have them. But I want to go through them once more, while we're on them:

1. A special transmission outside the scriptures.

A special transmission outside the scriptures means that there's a way of putting this inside another person's head. There is a way of realization, by being associated with a person who has reached the goal of knowledge of Self. Unless your system of Zen has that, it is not a true system of Zen. If you have a teacher who cannot do it, you don't have a teacher who can take you.

2. No dependence on words or letters.

And this means writings on Zen, this means my book, anybody's book.

You can get sutras, if they inspire your intuition to further labor. You can get notes on the path – the book I wrote [*The Albigen Papers*], was written as a handbook: here's some help, here's some hints, here's some obstacles you'll run into. The direction is generally very personal. Everybody is different, everybody has a different trap of egos, which have to be indicated to them personally.

No dependence on words or letters also goes clear back to fundamentalism. You cannot get the truth by verbal communication. That is, books, preaching, something of that sort. There's no proven language. There's no fundamentalistic language that proves itself as being a Word of God – these are all postulations.

Of course, if you believe that – if you believe that there's a literature – that's your prerogative. I take no argument with what a person believes – that's your path.

¹⁸ D.T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, volume 1, page 20: <https://terebess.hu/zen/mesterek/dtsuzuki-essays1.pdf>

¹⁹ Pia Tan says that the four maxims attributed to Bodhidharma appeared during a later era/dynasty. See "The Chán root quatrain" on page 2 (PDF, 68 pages, 1.5 megs): <https://selfdefinition.org/zen/Pia-Tan-40b.5-Transmission-outside-the-scriptures.pdf>

3. Direct pointing at the soul of man.

How do you find your soul? By talking about it? By saying prayers? Well, maybe the prayers will help you; maybe the guidance, the hints, and so forth. But you must look directly into yourself. Now you might say, "That sounds easy, but that's very difficult, to look inside yourself."

But it is not so difficult. When you look at your actions you're looking at part of yourself; you're looking at the effects of yourself. When you look into your thoughts, you're on what I consider a "ray" of sorts, that goes back to your awareness. And when you're one with your awareness, then you're pretty much in tune with your soul, the soul of man.

4. Seeing into one's own nature.

This is pretty much the same thing, of course. And in the "direct pointing at the soul of man," you inevitably have to go into your own nature.

Now there's an implication behind this: That the whole system is seeing into your own nature. The whole answer is inside of you, not outside. The real realization of that which you may have postulated correctly before you started, meaning the Absolute, or God, or whatever you want to call it, is inside yourself.

But it has to be a realization, not a belief, blindly. Unless you're content with blind belief, with taking somebody else's word for it.

Behind all of this and through all of this work, or time that is taken, methods that are tried – you may try different systems – I don't say any system that is sincere is detrimental. I think that people latch onto a certain technique because their intuition tells them that that technique is good.

I take issue with systems that charge money. I don't think that there should be a price upon a priceless thing. I think it's degrading when a man eats on the altar. So any system that is too wrapped up in money, to a point where people are financed in lavish style – I somehow write it off. And I did this from the time I was a young person.

I met quite a few gurus when I was younger, chasing around, and lots of them were connected with powerful groups, financial groups, moneyed groups – and I could see where there was more respect for the money than there was for the freedom of the person, getting somebody loose from their shackles.

There are a number of things, if you care to take note of them, that I found were necessary in my search. Why? Because we don't have two thousand years or two hundred years. We have to take some shortcuts. We can't examine every cult and every religion on the face of the earth. So we have to cut through. This is what I think they refer to in Zen as the *sword of prajna*,²⁰ cutting through the garbage.

²⁰ Sword of discriminating wisdom, associated with Manjusri. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manjushri>

Common Sense and Intuition

The path to wisdom begins with common sense.^{21, 22} Common sense is the faculty or intuition that sorts out our experiences and to some degree, promotes or prohibits our reactions. Wisdom is basically the skill which is manifested in correct reactions. The greatest product of our common sense is that we recognize our potential expansion with our type of reaction that apparently approaches wisdom.²³ The greatest individual mental reaction occurs when he witnesses the vindication of his Intuition.

Common sense prevents us from wasting years in improvable philosophies or theologies. It also prevents us from making a frontal assault on imaginary devils, sins or damnation, or from an impatient embrace with the first promising path which we encounter. Common sense picks for us the path of the reversed vector, in that we make no postulation of Truth or its hiding place, but instead, guides us away from all lies, rationalizations, and all psychological and theological garbage that is patently more foul-smelling than other systems under scrutiny.

With the development of intuition, we are able to discover milestones that mark our progress on the long road which is away-from. Unfortunately many who have discovered such a milestone immediately believe that they have found the Absolute Truth, or final monument which is the God-dimension. The ancient Zen writings indicate a knowledge of those profound states of interior growth, which cause the weary seeker to rest in the shade for decades.

A lesser type of example of this would be the young man who decides to join a church. On the first Sunday, a very pretty girl smiles at him, and he makes her acquaintance. Immediately he feels that God has also smiled at him, and produced the girl for him to show him that he has been taken into the exclusive club. The young man may never get beyond this egotistic delusion, but will become an ardent member of the congregation.

Zen has a milepost called **Satori**, which I call the Eureka experience. Sometimes I think that the word Satori relates more to Japanese Zen, than to the Enlightenment indicated by Huang Po, a Chinese sage.

We are able to see these mysterious signposts at the time of the overcoming of a major ego. Many Christians speak of the Salvation Experience, which to them seems to be the maximum religious experience. It is generally attained by dropping instinctive or carnal drives, combined with emotional bonds with a mate or with a spiritual being, such as Christ. The animal man has learned selflessness in the face of love. He becomes an emotional man instead of an instinctive man. He has made his first milepost.

²¹ The next few paragraphs appear to be read from notes, due to the density of the wording. They were recovered from an old transcript and the audio could not be located.

²² See lecture given two days after this: Zen and Common Sense, KSU, April 28, 1977. The Wiki page has new material not published before 2022. <https://www.direct-mind.org/index.php?title=1977-0428-Zen-and-Common-Sense-KSU>

²³ See *The Albigen Papers*, chapter 6, First Steps: "Progression ... means that evidence of a little of something may automatically imply that more may evolve from the little. If we find some men's minds capable of great knowledge, there must be some capable of greater knowledge."

[break in tape]

[I believe that what they are referring to as *satori* in Zen can mostly be] described with the word "Wow. This is it. Now I know." Okay, this is what I call the *eureka* experience.

Cosmic Consciousness

Now there's another experience, called cosmic consciousness. If you want to read about it, get Richard Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness*. This is a very profound writing; he's done a tremendous lot of research, describing the experiences of different people, such as St. Paul. St. Paul was struck on the road to Damascus,²⁴ and blinded for three days by the light. And St. John of the Cross was blinded by the light in his prison cell, when he had his experience.²⁵

These have distinct qualifications or designations. But the salvation experience doesn't necessarily imply that a man is struck down and blinded three days by a blinding physical light, so that his eyeballs are negated, so to speak.

Then there's another word: Enlightenment. There's no substitute for it, that I know of, except in the Hindu terminology Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi.²⁶ In comparison with Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi, which is cosmic consciousness.

But these all imply that people down through the ages have sensed and found. Read Ramana Maharshi.²⁷ There are very few books available to the person who isn't looking. But if you're looking, you'll find quite a bit of evidence. For instance in Plato's Republic, the man in the cave – this is a perfect description of man's illusory nature in relation to a real world outside the cave.

I try to keep some books in the group, we have some of them back there on the table.

One of them is by J.J. van der Leeuw,²⁸ *Conquest of Illusion*.²⁹ This is a very good book.

Because people will come into a group like this, having no previous reading on it and they'll think, "This is nonsense, the concept that the world as we know it is an illusion."

²⁴ Rose erroneously says "road to Emmaus." In Luke 24:13-32, the appearance of Jesus on the road to Emmaus was witnessed by two unnamed disciples immediately after the resurrection. The appearance that blinded St. Paul years later on the road to Damascus is told in Acts 9:1-19.

²⁵ Need to research.

²⁶ See chart at <https://selfdefinition.org/awareness/sahaja.htm>

²⁷ Rose is referring to *The Spiritual Teaching of Ramana Maharshi*, edited by the Ramana ashram, published 1972 by Shambhala [not the David Godman or Arthur Osborne books].

²⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Jacobus_\(J._J.\)_van_der_Leeuw](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Jacobus_(J._J.)_van_der_Leeuw)

²⁹ Published 1928. Full text in html: <https://selfdefinition.org/van-der-leeuw/conquest-of-illusion/>

PDF: <https://selfdefinition.org/van-der-leeuw/J.J.-van-der-Leeuw-Conquest-Of-Illusion.pdf>

But if you're interested in physics, you might read Einstein's concepts on space-time, or Ouspensky's ³⁰ analysis of space-time concepts, in which there is no time outside of space or space outside of time. These exist as a unit. And if such exists, then time does not pass. The only thing we witness is experience. And you will begin to realize then, why it is when people die they do not return. Because there is no "after." There's an eternal now-ness. An eternal experience of now-ness.

And in reading these books – I'm not saying they're all total truth, or that every word of them has to be followed – but they'll give you an insight into the paths that people have followed and things that people have found out.

It's very good, such as in *Cosmic Consciousness*, to read the accounts of people who have had experiences in their life. A lot of them are practically anonymous – although Bucke claims that Walt Whitman experienced cosmic consciousness, and a few other literary personalities that I wasn't acquainted with.

At first when you get into this you think you're a loner. You think you're chasing a nebulous sort of cloud, and that there's no guarantee that you're going to find anything. Well, it boils down to this: That even if you never find anything out, your living with your fellowman will be a tremendous lot better. You'll have a better understanding of your fellowman, and less of an imperious ego in which you might think that you're supposed to rule the society, or something of that sort. Your ability to know yourself will improve, and you will not be as miserable.

Because you'll realize that almost everything that happen to you is educational. That may be hard to swallow, but just about everything that happens to you is educational. We're not here by chance, and after awhile as you get older, you'll find out that of a lot of things you cursed in your youth, you welcomed the experience as you got older.

Q and A

I'd like to change the format at this point. There may be some things you'd like to talk about. Now, I'm open to questions. The only thing is, I will not engage in argument. If you wish to consider me ignorant and you smart, that's perfectly all right; I'll accept that *a priori*. I can only tell you that which I feel, and hope that you feel it. I'm not going to prove anything to you. Consequently, I will not welcome loaded questions. I'm not on the witness stand at this point.

Mediums and Familiar Spirits

Q. There are several people coming into my awareness who are in communication with spirits. The most famous one right now being the Seth material. Could you say anything about that?

³⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P._D._Ouspensky

R. There's a Levy, who wrote *Aquarian Gospel*.³¹ And the *Oahspe* book was written this way.³² I mentioned this in my book, incidentally, as being a correction of some of the systems that you can get into. I would far rather take the evidence of an entity that appeared in front of me – because I could look at it at least, and gauge by the expression on his face while he was talking – than I would automatic writing or an inspired voice or something of that sort.

Q. All of those things being what...?

R. I'll tell you, if it won't offend you. I think it's phony. I think that it's next to an obsession. In other words, you run the danger of being taken, of being a vehicle.

I'm going to give you a little more insight into the business of mediumship. Again, I offend sometimes people who are deeply interested in spiritualism. And I'm not saying, "Get away from spiritualism," because I went through it myself. But I'm just telling you what I found and the convictions I came out with.

It took us quite awhile to find this materializing medium. It was a Presbyterian minister – this group in Steubenville located him – and he was from Muskegon, Michigan. He's been dead now for four or five years. We found out he was coming to Delaware, Ohio, the White Lily Chapel, to materialize.³³

We got two carloads together, about ten or twelve people from Wheeling and Steubenville. There was no great racket, there was no fleecing. Because he only charged three dollars apiece, and it cost him more than that to come down from Michigan. There were four or five local people that came in also, so there was a group of about eighteen people there.

He had been in Steubenville before, and they had had him in and tested him. This was the Steubenville Psychic Society. They put flour on the floor to pick up footprints, they had taken all his clothes off and given him a new suit of clothes, so there couldn't be any cheesecloth in his clothing and so on. They went through some rather rigid testing.

But sometimes the most sensational findings come about accidentally. He stayed at the minister's house, and he had two children. So the minister got to talking to the kids, and he said, "What do you think of Midget?"

And the children said, "We don't like Midget."

"Why don't you like Midget?"

"Because he will not let Daddy sleep." They had come into their father's bedroom, and they would see this thing come out of his body and jump up and down on him, and wake him up.³⁴

³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Aquarian_Gospel_of_Jesus_the_Christ

³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oahspe:_A_New_Bible

³³ See earlier footnotes.

³⁴ In a private conversation Rose described this as a succubus performing a sexual act. See *Richard Rose Biographical Notes*, by an anonymous writer.

So I came back again full circle. You go out from the old paternal faith and doctrine, and then you hear something that reminds you of it. In the Bible it says, "Destroy the people that have a familiar spirit. Don't allow them to live."

I became convinced that this man was obsessed. And for the little bit of information that he could give, for this show, like a puppet show – these things came out and made little mouthings, but no great wisdom – they took his life. They drained him. Or it drained him.

Get a hold of Colin Wilson's book *The Mind Parasites*.^{35, 36} It'll give you an inkling of what goes on. One of the great egos of all mankind is that we're the only people here.

We know that the only reason we are visible is because we vibrate molecularly at a certain rate. Now if another entity vibrated at a different molecular or atomic rate, it's very possible that they could be standing right here taking in everything we say. You can even get Biblical backing for this, that there are creatures not seen. The old Church classified them. The Nine Choirs of Angels,³⁷ they called them. They had names for them, and listed them.

Our psychology today does not take into account the existence of these creatures. And the result is that we have a lot of people who are obsessed. And this is not fiction. I have had people come to me and ask me to free them. And I don't have the strength, to be honest with you. I don't have the time or the strength. But it's manifest that they're obsessed.

Now, I know that certain acts that people do will make them *fey*.³⁸ You know what I mean by that? I use that word, it's a Scottish term – because a lot of Scottish people were psychic – but it was a particular type of psychic. They could tell the future; they could see it.

There are certain things that change your body chemistry. And I'd prefer not to go into them at a public meeting. But I know that these people get *fey*. They can hear all sorts of voices, and if they wish to they can write them down ad infinitum. And I believe that the woman in connection with Seth is that way.^{39, 40, 41}

Q. She's in touch with people who are vibrating at a different level...

R. Yes – or even deceased. She claims that the person she talks with is deceased, and it may well be. I don't doubt that. But that's no...

For instance, I was reading in some esoteric writing, that somebody contacted Oscar Wilde. He said, "I really gave them a fright. I was in Paris, and I got inside of a kid. I wanted to look at the

³⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Wilson

³⁶ Pdf here: <https://selfdefinition.org/colin-wilson/Colin-Wilson-The-Mind-Parasites.pdf>

³⁷ Rose erroneously says Twelve Choirs of Angles. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_angelology

³⁸ <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/fey>

³⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seth_Material

⁴⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Roberts

⁴¹ Jane Roberts - The Seth Video - Part 1/3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMRYkgBjCoA>

scenery, to see Paris again. So I got inside this kid and I looked out through his eyes, and I scared hell out of the kid." And everybody around him, I guess.

But these things can happen. And what their genesis is, what their origin is, is open to speculation.

One time in my diggings I joined an outfit – I used to join anything they would let me join without any money, if I thought they had something. I joined a secret organization, and I don't consider them too secret so I'll mention it, the Universal Brotherhood.^{42, 43} They had a lot of literature, very brief stuff; it wasn't too dogmatic.

The piece I had was an interview with some eminent yogi, and they asked him about the appearances in the medium's cabinet, these ghosts. He said they were activated astral shells. That was the first time I had heard of that.

But I noticed when I got into Blavatsky – she talks of Katie King,⁴⁴ an astral creature she classifies as a Titania that visited William Crookes,^{45, 46} who was a noted physicist and chemist. But some of these people who have done a tremendous lot of digging in this respect are waiting and expecting: whenever these things appear they run through the set of symptoms and say, "Which is it? What's behind this?"

Now I don't doubt that back in the mind of man, possibly, there's all sorts of genetic memory. In the Steubenville Psychic Society we had a man⁴⁷ who would go into a trance and he was a priest in the Temple of Karnak.⁴⁸ They all come from Karnak. I don't know why. Even the guy on television, Johnny Carson, he's a priest of Karnak too. But it's an easy one to remember. It sounds impressive. And everybody was helping to build the pyramids. You'd think surely there was someplace else important they could have been, but they always go back to Egypt.

But he would get all sorts of messages. Well, one time a priest came through. And he was talking in an Irish brogue.

And he had a Scottish doctor that talked to you. You'd think he was really getting a spirit, coming through this man. But this priest came through, and I spoke to him in Latin, because I

⁴² The phrase "Universal Brotherhood" appeared as the first Object of the Theosophical Society in 1881. https://theosophy.wiki/en/Universal_Brotherhood

⁴³ Need reference for the particular group Rose joined. Possibly the White Brotherhood of Light, which Rose mentions in a letter to Robert Martin dated May 9, 1956, quoted in Martin's *Peace to the Wanderer*, p. 76. The group was headed by Sheldon Scott, who was also connected with the Steubenville Psychic Society.

⁴⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katie_King_\(spirit\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katie_King_(spirit))

⁴⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Crookes

⁴⁶ Crookes investigated the materializations. A photo of the spirit taken later was demonstrated to be a hoax, but Crookes continued to believe the phenomenon he witnessed was genuine.

⁴⁷ Sheldon Scott.

⁴⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karnak>

had five years of it and I could carry on a stumbling conversation.⁴⁹ And he couldn't give one answer. And I said to him, "Why can't you answer me? These are the responses to the Mass. You're a priest and you said the Mass." [And he said,] "Well, that was many years ago."

Of course, I maintain that it wasn't very long ago. Because he was in the 18th century or something; if he could talk at all, if he could remember the language he was using, he could remember the Latin Mass. But the information was somehow limited to the subconscious mind of this medium.

So I got ahold of his wife and I said, "What is it with your husband? You live with this man – is he a medium?" And she said, "My husband has read many books." And I thought that was sufficient: she didn't have to betray him. That was a good enough answer. He had a wide reading field.

But I there are some genuine entities that do come through. too. So you've got to be able to sift them. And I have seen these. I think that what you can do – for instance, I recommend a little book there, *The Mind Parasites*.⁵⁰ This is a book of fiction. A man can hide behind a book of fiction.

But if I tell you something face to face, I've got to back it up, to a degree. But you can come out with this automatic writing and I can say, "Hey, this isn't consistent. How do I know?"

And they say, "Well, I don't know – Seth told me this." So what are you going to do? Are you going to argue with Seth? You're stuck. And this is the way with a lot of automatic writings.

For example, the Betty Book [1939], by Stewart Edward White.⁵¹ There's a whole theology woven around a particular type of reincarnation. Which I think is very logical, but he got it from a mediumship deal. It has to do with a quotation from the Bible. An enlargement upon a quotation of Christ speaking with Nicodemus. Nicodemus says something about what people are born from, and Christ says to him, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which born of spirit is spirit."

So this whole takeoff means to them that in the previous dimension or experience you are born as a baby, by two spiritual parents. This baby like a cherub flutters around until it finds a woman at the right time of the month, and enters that woman's womb and is born to a physical person. Now this is their whole idea of reincarnation.

And – so what? Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. You can't prove or disprove it. But it sounds good. It sounds like it springs from the Bible. So – my honest opinion is that it's questionable. You can't build a way of life on it. I think a lot of things that are easy to read and easy to follow are just that. And the mind rests upon them easier.

⁴⁹ Rose said he also tried this test with the materialized priest at the séance at White Lily Chapel, as mentioned in 1990-0215-Are-You-A-Robot-Ohio-State.

⁵⁰ See footnotes above.

⁵¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stewart_Edward_White

Misc. Q&A

Q. What do you think about following the Tao?

R. I can't speak with authority on it. I don't know much about Taoism; I just understand it as sort of being a combination of Christianity and Buddhism. And maybe yoga, I don't know.

Q. Are you free from the cycle of death and birth?

R. I hope; I don't know for sure. I'd hate to have to go through it again. [laughter]

Q. Couldn't the awareness of thinking also be an ego?

R. Who's ego?

Q. Well, mine.

R. Who's "me"? Is that the man that's aware? How can the awareness be an ego of awareness?

Bardo

Q. You were talking about your experience with the spirits – it sounds like if you were stupid in life you'd be stupid in death too.

R. I grant you. If you read the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and there are others that will possibly give you the same hint, or possibly an experience of it yourself – there are real visitations. Blavatsky mentions this. Blavatsky's got a lot of foolishness in her books, but at the same time there are some points there that I thought were very valuable, on the keynotes of authenticity for spiritual experimentation:

We try to be scientific according to scientific methods; science as being a method of prediction, whereby you can say that you can put chlorine and sodium together and produce salt, and then you put the two together and prove it. That's science. But the proof behind spiritualistic or esoteric phenomena is *unpredictability*. Whenever you can predict it, you're liable to create it.

So that when you sit down in a mediumistic cabinet, your energy and intelligence creates. In fact some people, for instance Eliphas Levi,⁵² could materialize anything he wished. His book *Transcendental Magic* is available now in paperback, [translated] by Arthur Edward Waite.⁵³

On the contrary, if you meet a man say on a lonely road on a dark night, you bump into Joe Doakes and you say, "Hi Joe," and he says, "Why hello, how are you?" And you speak to him and he says, "Tell my wife I'll be late tonight because of such-and-such." And you go home and you find out that he had been dead for two hours before you met him. Now this was no begging the answer. You didn't know he was dead, you didn't go out hunting for him, or you didn't go to a

⁵² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliphas_Levi

⁵³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._E._Waite

materialization. These are much more authentic experiences. By virtue of their unpredictability. This is where the whole scene is reversed.

I do believe that this type of experience happens to people, and it's valid. But by the same token, these people again are still on earth. Now what is the difference? The Tibetans in their books speak of a bardo, in that we do not change too much after death. The Catholics speak of Purgatory. This a bardo. Now what is Purgatory? Some of the sky pilots would like us to believe it's a flaming inferno. Well, if whoever eats you in the next dimension likes you roasted, maybe it will be, I don't know.

The whole thing as I see it, is that unless you progress to a certain point, the only dimension that you can contemplate is the dimension you have now; the people that you know now – as you know them now. The dimensions that we witness are created by faith, and the dimensions after death are often created by faith. But this doesn't mean Reality. Because they're still relative.

Earlier, I went through the different types of experience – the only one that is absolute is Enlightenment. Cosmic consciousness is marked by relative experiences: blinding lights, bliss, rosy-colored horizons, this sort of thing. This means color – relative experience. In the Absolute there are no relative experiences. And this makes the difference. There's no freedom as long as you are beguiled or bedeviled by relative experiences. Because as I said: ninety-nine percent of our experiences are painful, one percent are pleasurable. So it would be one hell of an eternity to continue on a relative type of experience forever.

Why This Work?

Q. Assuming a person experiences salvation, transformation, cosmic consciousness, satori and enlightenment ...

R. Hmm. Do you want them all for a quarter? [laughter]

Q. ...What does that accomplish? People spend lifetimes seeking this. You mentioned people who go to Spiritualist meetings all their lives, seeking something.

R. Right.

Q. But once you accomplish these things, it seems to me that you still have to deal with everyday life. And therefore, what is the motivation and the purpose of trying to develop these powers, even though they do exist?

R. Well, number one, it's not powers that you develop, it's realization. There's no power connected with it. It's not a question of becoming so powerful – because you're not going to wield anything after you get there; you're not going to affect it. The second thing is, when you say, "What good is it going to do you?", you're coming from a utilitarian standpoint, which doesn't exist in the Absolute.

For instance, if you were to die tomorrow and you had accomplished a million dollars in the bank it might make you miserable trying to get back to spend it. What good would the million dollars do you? What good would the presidency of the United States do you? If you disappeared off the horizon that quickly – which you always do.

Q. Well that's the hard thing for me to grasp, though. There seems to be an implicit statement that this lifetime becomes kind of meaningless in comparison.

R. Yes, yes. Well, you're not old enough to see it yet. But it will come to you regardless of whether you're enlightened or not. When you get so old you'll see it; you'll see it as sure as...

In other words, a person that is hungry and able to experience is very difficult to convince. But the irony is that once you become sated to a point where you say, "Hey, what was that, a bubble?" – then it's too late to go back and look. Because your arteries have hardened. You can't go through the persistent disciplines and strains that are necessary. Unless you go through the death experience or something of that sort. History shows that the majority of people who have reached the maximum have done it before forty. Or at death. You can reach it at death at almost any age.

Self-Knowledge

But regardless, the conclusion I came to when I was young was that I didn't know who was living. When I spoke I didn't know who was speaking; I didn't know which of my egos was speaking.

Check yourself out sometime; when you talk to a girl are you talking to the girl because she's a soul, or are you selling some merchandise? And if you're in business, are you meeting those people because they're friends, or because they've got five bucks that you need?

So I basically wanted to know who's going through it? I made up my mind it was more important for me to know. Because the wrong egos can put you in the electric chair. Or they can put you into disease.

To know yourself, to know your potential, is valuable even if you just want to make a living, or if you want to get along with your fellowman. It isn't necessarily to attain.

For instance, we're talking about Enlightenment but at the same moment I warn you: Do not reach for Enlightenment. Do not reach for it. Because you're postulating something. The only thing you can see is erroneous thinking; this is the only path that you can follow. You can witness erroneous thinking that may get you into trouble or give you trauma. You retreat from that, and the path automatically takes you toward that which is correct. By avoiding the massive amount of that which is ridiculous. And that becomes a way of life.

Q. It might be best to assume then that there is some kind of truth; because if there is no truth and if there is no reality to reality you're not going to find anything anyway. So if you want to

search, assume that there is truth and hope to find it. Truth being something that is consistent, that explains things.

R. Oh, I don't doubt that a bit. What I'm saying is, don't take a particular dogma.

Q. Don't take any one truth.

R. Right. If you lean on somebody's word – this is what happens in a lot of movements – you get a charismatic leader and people will lean on him because of his personality. And because of that I try not to have any personality. Maybe I try too hard sometimes, because I'm not quite that bad. But I think that you have to doubt everything but your ability. If you doubt your ability you won't try.

Q. Don't take anything for granted, but do try.

R. Right, that there is a chance. And even if you thought that there wasn't a chance – there's nothing better to do, except to try to find it.

Q. What about an artist? Should he negate his artistic endeavor? Or should he see that his endeavor in some way helps other people increase their awareness?

R. Sometimes that endeavor might be an ego. I know when I was very young I wrote a book of poetry. And I threw it away because I thought that it was all ego.

Q. Assuming that there is a truth before you start out – won't that sometime prevent you from making a leap into the dark?

R. No. It's a hope, that's all. That there's a balm in Gilead somewhere. If you don't hope for something, you'll not move. Nobody has that conviction, though, to be honest with you. You won't have that trouble. Because there's something in all forms of life – it resists death to the last wiggles. So this resistance of death means there's hope of explanation. So it's automatic.

Sin, Guilt, Modern Psychiatry

Q. Psychiatrists are publishing more and more today that one of the main things that disturbs people and brings them to psychiatrists is the problem of guilt, that results from sin. How does Zen deal with the problem of sin and guilt?

R. Well, I should better tell you what I think of modern psychiatry. And that would explain, perhaps.

I told you I was born and raised a Catholic; and one of the most guilt-infested movements was the Catholic religion, as far as raising young people. I was raised to believe that, say, everything from the belly button up was God, and from there on down was the Devil. I think this is bad; a very bad influence on young people. It's necessary to build a certain culture – because there's a primitive urge – that if you can't logically explain to a child that a certain thing will destroy his energy source, it's better to scare hell out of him with guilt. But then there should come a day

when you say, "That was a fairy tale, son, and now I'll tell you the truth. This was just to get you over a certain hurdle." If we have to do that to our children. But unfortunately, it's never done. Even the priests themselves are guilt-ridden. They're in there confessing to each other all sorts of little peccadilloes.

This was what I consider to be a phase that the Western civilization had to go through. You don't find this guilt complex in the Orient at all. The whole Christian religion is one of sadomasochism: a sadistic God and a masochistic people. The good Christians are masochistic; you strike them on the other cheek and all that sort of thing. This doesn't permeate Oriental theology or philosophy. But nevertheless, it seemed as though because we were barbarians or something we had to go through this attack.

Now – there was a revolt. The human mind revolted en masse against it, and said, "This is garbage." But it didn't revolt intelligently. Most revolutions are the same; they don't settle for a happy medium, they go clear over to the other extremity. So the result is that modern psychiatry is saying, "This is hogwash. Any sexual act with any type of human or animal is permissible. And don't feel guilty about it." Well this is not true. And this where modern psychiatry, modern sociology and psychology, are leading people down into destruction.

Q. Do you really see that, that it's such an over-reaction?

R. Yes. As I said before: If you go after an intangible, subjective goal, a self that is not the physical self – as I say, in the Catholic theology they had a stopper, that deterred people from looking for the subjective, or the essence of man: Thomas Aquinas was supposedly quoted as saying, "The finite mind will never perceive the infinite."

This sounds good, because it says, "Sure, we're relative creatures and we've got a relative brain. So you're never going to get these real, subjective truths with a relative head." We talk about a relative mind here, discovering the Absolute. That sounds strange, when you realize you've got a relative mind. And it stopped me for awhile. I thought, "That's true; you've got to believe." I knew you had to *change*, and the first thing was, "Well, you've got to believe." Well, I couldn't quite swallow the belief. I don't know why. But then it occurred to me that there's a method by which the finite mind can become less finite.

Now the method by which you ascertain, as you go on this path – this is like running between the raindrops, it's not a straight blueprint on a roadmap – is it's necessary to develop the intuition. If I can give you a brief description of what the intuition is, it's a computer with the taps closed. No impressions coming in. No irritation, no confusion, coming in, no energy going out. So that the problem stays in the computer until it's solved. And the energy stays in there to keep the computer going until it's solved, so to speak.

Now this is the whole secret behind developing intuition. You cannot develop it by having the experiential life of many forms of sex and many forms of experiences – try dope and booze, try dope and sex, try dope and this and that – you know, it'll broaden your mind. It'll blow your mind right out of your head and they'll have to track you down and club you to bury you. And then the earth may refuse. Because nature just doesn't care for that type of activity.

Consequently, I think the great psychological crime – is psychology. Today. Modern psychology, modern psychiatry. In which they're trying to go clear over to the other extremity, and say, "Don't feel guilty." I say, "Don't feel guilty." But you'd better learn to discipline yourself. Or you'll amount to nothing even on the physical plane.

Read Napoleon Hill's book, *Think and Grow Rich*. It's not long and is very astute. In the middle of the book he gives the formula for making a million dollars, which I think is very true.⁵⁴ And that is one of them: The inhibition of the outgoing energy. You can't do a hundred things at once. You can't be drunk and doped and jaded, and accomplish. You have to inhibit some of your energy outflow in order to accomplish anything. And you have to inhibit it quite a bit if you want to accomplish something on the maximum effort; and that maximum effort is self-attainment or self-realization.

Q. So the psychiatrists are saying, "Nothing is wrong, so you shouldn't feel guilty because you haven't done anything wrong." But you think that certain things are sins.

R. No, no. I didn't say sin; I don't believe in sin. I never committed a sin in my life.

Q. Of right and wrong, then, or whatever.

R. Not necessarily right and wrong. Healthy, unhealthy. Propitious, unpropitious.

I've got a billy goat down on the farm; that is all he's good for. So if you want to be a billy goat – by all means take some lessons from him. But if you want to accomplish something else in your life, that's all. It isn't a sin. It's just, do you want to do something besides being a billy goat? It isn't a question of being guilty. The billy goat doesn't have any guilt. Neither should you. It depends on what you want to be, that's all.

The other thing is that I think ever since Freud, psychiatry underwent this business of what I call "packaging." Freud was a merchant, more than a psychologist. He found a few cunning phrases, and then he started to set up clinics. He wanted a syndicate, a Freudian syndicate, in which they used Freudian techniques. And he did it; he set it up. He had a school – of loyal followers, who never said anything out of touch with Freudianism.

But this disease which crept into psychiatry, in which the different teachers decided to package their stuff led to – like a medical doctor – a pretense of infallibility. Today you can hardly go to a doctor who will honestly say, "I don't know what's wrong with you." He'll give you a placebo if nothing else, and say, "That'll help you."

And this is modern psychiatry. They know nothing about sanity. No one has defined it. None of these people – this is their stock in trade, sanity – they know nothing of the definition of sanity. They can't define insanity or sanity. They know nothing about the essence of thought. They don't know where thought comes from. How can they treat it?

⁵⁴ Napoleon Hill, *Think And Grow Rich*, Chapter 11, The Mystery Of Sex: Transmutation
<https://selfdefinition.org/celebrity/quotes/napoleon-hill-sex-transmutation-part-1.htm>

So they have a way of getting around this, and that is, anything that you don't see – deny it. If a person's possessed, for instance, and there's all sorts of evidence of some other form of activity besides his own personality – they deny it. It's either a set-up or a hallucination; the party's deliberately trying to trick the audience. There are many phenomena that occur that psychiatry just refuses to admit that exist at all. And that's the way they get around it. Because they maintain that the only mind is somatic. That the mind is the brain. And boy – they have to twist their theory a lot.

But like the medical doctor – I often say the medical policy for a doctor treating chankres is to apply something to heal, not to prevent. My idea of true treatment is to say, "Hey, Bud – change your lifestyle. Because you'll get chankres again." Psychiatry does not say, "Change your lifestyle."

Q. So what you're saying then is, "There's no such thing as sin; there are just certain things which are going to be more beneficial, and will lead you more in the right direction."

R. That'll give you more potential in whatever field you want. Whether it's making money or whatever. Spiritual laws are the same as financial laws: results are proportional to energy applied. That's physics too.

Transmission

Q. You've had some kind of insight ...

R. Maybe. I'm old enough to have had something.

Q. In what way do you think you can transmit to other people? A person can have true insight, but there's also a matter of being able to give it to other people; because when that person dies the insight dies with him.

R. True.

Q. So what I'd like to know is the method.

R. Well, you'd have to be shown. I couldn't tell you. If I told you, I'd give you words, and you could argue the words. But we have a group, and it has been witnessed, in different degrees.

Q. The whole point of this self-knowledge, is it to see what ego you have inside of you?

R. To see your self. Your true Self. The egos prevent you. And you have to see those in order to go in; you have to go by them. That's the only objective. If that's all you get – at least that's of value.

Q. Well, why do you do this? Why do you want to do it?

R. Well, I thought it was explained – a person does not want to have a false impression of who they are.

Q. It helps to know what you're doing.

R. Yes, I think your general conduct would be entirely altered. For instance, if we have a lot of people who think they're Napoleon and they pose with their hand in their shirt, and they do weird things. But once they realize that they're not Napoleon they quit doing weird things, that's all.

Now that's an exaggeration to bring out a certain point. We look in the mirror when we put on a suit of clothes – almost all of us have had this experience. When you've got your old work clothes on and go up to the mirror, you don't have as much respect for yourself. But you put on something real pretty and you go up to the mirror – and you have to act that way. You have to go out and act the way you look. Now this is ego. You should be able, say, to act the same way stark naked. Except a little bit shy. You shouldn't be proud. [laughter]

Evolution

Q. I've read that one of the biggest problems for the person who's trying to achieve something is that he's saying, "I am doing this. I am the one who's achieving this." And that also has to be dealt with.

R. Well – I know. But I believe that you'll get to that, though. I know that there's a group that goes around not allowing each other to say "I."⁵⁵ That isn't necessary. You'll realize you're not important soon enough.

Q. Is there a certain way to try to see yourself?

R. You look back. You can see much clearer by looking back. Some people can't. We've had people come into the group, they were there a year, and they'd say, "Boy, I'm getting absolutely nothing out of this." And everyone around had witnessed a tremendous transformation in the person. So we'd check it out, and they'd start telling him, "Here's what you were a year ago," and this sort of thing. Sometimes it's hard to see it yourself.

But I maintain that there are distinct guideposts that you'll reach. You'll reach a definite evolution; for instance, Gurdjieff talks of man number one, two, three, and four. You actually go through the instinctive, emotional, intellectual, philosophic levels. And you'll know when you hit them. There's an exultation connected with them. So you'll know you're moving.

[break in tape]

We have a farm down in West Virginia, and I try my best to keep from getting into routines. They just love to get into routines, and I keep breaking them up, because I don't think it's good.

⁵⁵ Reference to a Gurdjieffian group in Cleveland at the time.

Q. In Alcoholics Anonymous, how does it work that an alcoholic gets help with his addiction by helping somebody else who is sicker than he is?

R. This is the whole spiritual system. This is not only Alcoholics Anonymous. Alcoholics Anonymous was founded by an enlightened man. He was an alcoholic who became enlightened; that was Bill Wilson. But you can't progress too far spiritually – we didn't dwell on this tonight – without doing something for somebody else. Why this law exists, I don't know. There's a book of fiction, *The Magnificent Obsession*,⁵⁶ and this is the theme. That man only climbs when he places someone else upon his step. This is the true reason why all esoteric or spiritual or religious organizations should exist. They should *not* exist for the sake of the organization. They should exist for the fact that the organization is a medium to help people; they take another step. So it's the same thing. Some of the most enlightened people probably in this country are people who were alcoholics.

Q. For any activity to have value, it will be good not only for you but for other people too?

R. Well, I don't know, you're taking in a lot of scope.

Q. That it's service, basically, is what I'm saying.

R. I don't go at it from that angle. That's not the idea. I don't want to get into the idea that we're serving mankind.

Q. That's an ego.

R. Right, you're playing God. But basically – you're helping a person. The big thing is not in helping mankind, but trying to find that fellow who needs help, and who you are capable of helping. A lot of people need help but they won't listen to you. You're not capable of helping them. So it's a very selective thing, not a great democratic deliverance, a great mission. That's the reason I'm not dismayed when I give a talk and only 10 people show up. It doesn't matter. People are not interested too much in doing anything of real value.

Work with Others

Q. I can see that it doesn't have to be a lofty thing of all mankind. But whatever our quest is, it seems to be more meaningful and satisfying – and we seem to be getting somewhere – when we do it with other people.

R. Well, there are a few things you learn as you go along. First of all, you can't do much by yourself. A few people have made it by themselves, but very few. And this realization of our individual impotence brings us to the idea of group work. That's the main reason. A lot of people say, "I'm on a spiritual path, but I have to work it out myself." Sometimes that leaves them alone to rationalize their time and not do anything. But if you go into it with the idea of being in service to your fellowman, that starts off as an ego, and that shouldn't be.

⁵⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnificent_Obsession

But once you get into it, you begin to realize. I was into this thing for about five years and I had a real big head. I thought I didn't need anybody. I was going to do it alone.

[break in tape]

All I was finding was hucksters, and I was tired of trying to sift them. So I thought, 'I'll just do it myself and keep away from all of them.' Well, I found out after awhile that when you work alone you don't move. There's no motion. And on the other side of the coin, after we formed a group – I was still in my twenties – we were able to compare notes with people who had been in many other groups. So you can get a lifetime of experience in two or three years of your own by comparing notes with them. That alone is a benefit from being in a group.

Plus the same as he said about Alcoholics Anonymous. I used to say we were like Ignoramuses Anonymous, in which we continually reminded each other, "You're not as smart as you think you are." Your head's getting too big and they pull you down, so you get your feet back on the ground. That's basically what Zen is. That's saying, "Who are you?" Don't think you're something, don't postulate. And action is postulation, not only philosophy.

Misc. Q & A

Q. How can one find this ego? Is it by intuition?

R. You'll develop both at about the same time: an understanding of your egos, as you develop your intuition. But unfortunately, people don't discover their egos until very late in life. What I'm trying to do is get this across to people young enough to profit from the exposure of egos. Life will expose your egos. But sometimes people are 50 years of age before they realize that they were a fool at 20. This is too late to start working. So my idea is to get this out – to those who somehow, by some quirk of fate or genetics, are inclined to look for their own definition. To give them some sort of a yardstick. So they will start developing their intuition immediately, not waiting until they're a wise old man on a slab in the morgue.

Q. What do you think of the writings by Alan Watts?

R. Alan Watts – for instance in his talk of Zen – leads me to believe that he never had any realization, number one. And he gave the world what I consider the wrong slant on Zen. For instance, he makes the remark repeatedly that there's nothing to find. Now, if he worded that the other way, that your final experience is the finding of nothingness, I would have said he was right. But when you say there's nothing to find, that means it's a hopeless task, that you're never going to find anything. I maintain that you *will find*, but you'll find nothingness – and you'll find everythingness simultaneously. If you don't use both terms, then you're still in the relative dimension. The final realization is the realization of nothingness and everythingness.

He had gotten this – he was a close friend of Sokei-an, who came over here as a young man, 19 years old. And there's no history of anybody at the age of 19 receiving enlightenment. He first came over here as a Zen teacher. Now if he acquired enlightenment after that time, I don't know. But this seemed to be the great contact that Watts had with Zen. Watts did go to monasteries in Japan. But first of all, he had a reportorial attitude. He was like a reporter. He observed from the outside and he commented. I think there are some very good thoughts in Alan Watts. He does some good writing and makes you think. But as far as his real philosophy on Zen, he missed the point completely.

Q. What do you think about Krishnamurti?

R. I have always felt that Krishnamurti was enlightened. But you see, there are people who are enlightened who have no system. They tell a joke about a fish that received enlightenment. The students brought the fish to the Zen master and said, "What do we do with this fish? He's enlightened." And the master said, "Eat it." That is, he can't communicate. It's no good to be enlightened if you can't communicate.

I had an experience when I was 30 years of age, and I *tried* to communicate, and for years I found that I couldn't do it. You go out and try to talk philosophy to people and they think you're crazy. There has to be some approach to the human mind. And I think that in this country, if it hadn't been for acid there would have been very little communication. Because the door was cracked a little with the acid.

Q. I have a lot of trouble with the separation of the subjective and the objective. The scientific types think that if they can't put something in a test tube and measure it, they can't believe it. And then there's a tendency among the spiritual types to say that there's nothing objective anyway. They begin to say that matter doesn't matter

R. Oh, I grant you that. But I believe there's a common-sense medium.

Q. Okay, a common-sense medium then, that allows for a little bit of the subjective, but still tries to have things make sense, I don't see that requiring intuition. I do see that it requires logic. I can logically believe that there are spiritual entities that don't have material characteristics, that can communicate with us.

R. Sure. Well I don't even doubt that you can find a mathematic formula for something that designates the absolute. But I don't say this will automatically bring you to the knowledge of the absolute. You might have a symbol for infinity or something. But that doesn't give you an understanding of what that symbol really means.

Q. So the intellectual and the objective aren't really satisfying or useful until you can make them experiential.

R. Well, no. The thing is, that you can't find it intellectually. But what you have to do – after you come back – is try to verbalize it intellectually. This is what I'm trying to do.

Q. I haven't seen that, in my experience.

R. Well, you won't see it until you reach it. See, you haven't gone the trip. For instance, supposing someone told you that if you just believed in Christ, you would be exalted, saved, feel joyous and all this sort of thing, and feel like you knew the answer. To argue that for hours and hours would get you nowhere. But if you go in and become saved, then you'll know what they're talking about.

You have to go there. I often draw the analogy, that I could say, "Down in West Virginia there's a valley in which there's a city of gold." And you'd say, "Nonsense, that's not logical." But I would say it exists, and the only way you could disprove me is to make the trip. A man supposedly approached Buddha with this. The guy said, "Hey, if you can prove to me this stuff you're talking about, I'll follow you all the days of my life." And Buddha said, "The proof is in the going." In other words, you can't prove things *a priori*.

Q. Couldn't somebody use that as a way of supporting all their sexual misbehavior?

R. You can rationalize anything you wish. This is the reason the intellect is so undependable. You can bring up all these quotations. The only thing a person can do, who has transcended this, is notice it. I get it all the time: people demanding that I speak along the current political theme, the current "hip" thing to believe. But I know who's talking. I know it's a phase of them talking and I just ignore it. Because there's no argument with that type of person. They're putting up their own wall, and they're entitled to. So you just walk away from it.

Enlightenment Not Discussed

Q. You mentioned the difficulty of describing enlightenment, and to use a common analogy, it would be like trying to describe a tree to someone who has never experienced a tree. It would be meaningless.

R. It is meaningless. And it should be. Not only should it be meaningless, but it shouldn't even be discussed. Now that's the truth. It should not be discussed. Because as soon as you mention it, there's a postulation involved. And then we wrangle: "What do you mean by this and what do you mean by that?" Again, you have to make the trip. It's a culmination of a trip. But as I said, the thing we're interested in – or perhaps that we're talking about, not interested in – is the retreat from error, not the arrival.

We presume, by virtue of these books I mentioned, that people have arrived someplace, mysterious as that may sound. But the only thing you can really speak of logically, is that it's logical to retreat from garbage or nonsense. You retreat from the more ridiculous and satisfy yourself tentatively with the less ridiculous. And then that becomes more ridiculous to something else that is less ridiculous. This is the whole system.

Q. Maybe enlightenment is not some mysterious thing that takes a lot of knowledge to learn, but it's just not a common experience, and that's where the illusion occurs.

R. Well, I grant you, if you read Bucke, he says that cosmic consciousness – and I consider that a step below enlightenment – is only experienced by one in a million people.

Q. Can we try an experiment for one minute?

R. If you don't kill anybody. [laughs]

Q. No, I won't kill anybody. This is just something to help make this talk of the ego more realistic to the people here. If for a few seconds we just remain silent, we can observe how the ego always wants to speak, and is usually nervous and scared around people and so forth.

R. It's alright with me. Would you like to try that? About a minute?

[Recorder turned off, then back on.]

R. I picked up five people who distinctly thought to themselves, "This guy's crazy; I don't have any egos." And 25 others who thought everybody else had egos but them.

Q. Just looking at yourself – is that meditation?

R. No. If you have this in mind, what he told you, if you just sit and think, you'll get restless. It's hard to see this in a minute. But even a minute, you'll get restless and have an urge to do something. I find that if you sit in meditation you'll go through this rather quickly; your mind will go through about 15 excuses for not sitting there. I used to develop all sorts of concoctions to make a million dollars. I had a hard time keeping away from the pencil and paper and start writing down the formulas. All sorts of things come to you, when you want to do something like that.

Q. The building is closing.

R. Is it? We'd better get out before it folds up completely. Well, I want to thank you for coming, because it's been a very receptive audience.

[applause]

End