

KNOW YOURSELF



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A GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Spooner Dodd Consulting Services

Post Office Box 462

EDGECLIFF NEW SOUTH WALES 2027

A U S T R A L I A

(+61) (0) 410 940 183

maxwelldodd2021@gmail.com

Introduction

Know Yourself exists as a result of a sublime accident. I am minded to use the word “adventitious” with its combined flavour of the accidental and the beneficial.

In the course of the usual chat in which I rejoice with my old chum Kevin in Florida (long live *WhatsApp!*) a few weeks ago, he mentioned to me that he had found in a box a manuscript of mine that bore two dates, one of 3 August 2001 and the other 22 January 2002. It was writing I had put together to offer spiritual guidance without a religious flavour. I confess that I had forgotten it. He told me that the typing was a mess but that he would try to photograph it and send it to me through the internet. What arrived was indeed a mess and almost in places indecipherable and the presentation was a disaster.

That was ten days ago. As a consequence of a major effort including transcribing what had come longhand (I was reminded that others tell me I have a neat handwriting!) I find that I would want you the reader to weigh the wisdom now being offered and to be blessed by it.

As I trust is clear from all my efforts, I have a vision of the fulfilled individual life, a life of vast richness and colour where all that is in the enquirer, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically, has been touched and expanded. However rare this may be as an experience in so many lives (and what is disappointing to me is to observe how many others are locked into all that is restricted and fearful), I again offer to you the reader a vision of yourself as the one whose life can face the final test of significance - not merely well, but brilliantly.

Good reading and all blessings to you and celebrate yourself - energetically - but with deepening peace and empowerment.

Maxwell Dodd

Wednesday 22 December 2021

A Gift of Encouragement

A Gift of Encouragement exists to assist you to find within yourself the deepest and most satisfying journey of living. It is concerned totally with you as an individual. It is equally concerned only with *your* journey in *your* terms, however that notion may be translated in any life.

The whole thrust of the guidance now being offered is the adequacy of the individual and the immensity that lies within him (or her). It is, if you wish, a spiritual training programme, interested in assisting you to discover within yourself capacities of which you may have had little knowledge. It is totally predicated on the dignity and worth of the individual and on his or her capacity to be wholly *alive*.

The guidance now presented recognises that where you are and where you could be are very different places and that getting from one to the other is a gentle, and, indeed, a life-long journey that will require much patience and considerable endurance. What is presented is a programme of the long term - the longest term - it is truly life-long, no more, no less. Turning back is hardly an option. And yet it offers you as an individual the peace of mind and freedom from guilt and pain that you have sought so often (and so unsuccessfully) in other places, together with an enrichment of a measure that will constantly astonish.

You will say that the programmes are religious. I shall deny this. They turn on the relationship of the Universal and Its creation but they have no truck with religious systems that so dominate (and distort) the lives of individuals. If you wish, you are now being offered a "secular religion" which will give you the essentials to which all religion would point if it were not so encrusted with so much history and form. The essence of what is presented is that you are of Cosmic significance as part of what I choose to call "the Universal" and yet you have as an individual a differentiated quality of singularity which will deny all replication. As the bumper sticker puts it with clarity if not with

much sophistication - *Be yourself - no-one can do the job better!* That is the whole lesson now being offered.

What is offered turns on your developing your own self in your own terms and celebrating the responsibility that you have learnt with a life that is of great reward to you as much as to others - they are enormously important. It will be a life of new power and new vigour, of a refreshing courage and a willingness to give and to be given, such as you have not known before. You will be inspired to deal with your darkest and deepest gremlins and to find in their defeat a stepping stone to new qualities of delight in living. It matters not who you are or where you have been. If you have the courage to grow and to let go and, indeed, to start again, you can know the very qualities in your life that you have always desired. Delight in living is yours to be had and on scales you would not have thought possible. All this is of you and for you.

The lesson is simple: step out and grow.

22 January 2002

A Word from a Wise Man

God is your inner voice. No priest is required. You need not have instructions from anybody about your life. But one thing has to be done: you have to move inwards so that you can hear the still small voice. Once it is heard, once you know how to hear it, your whole life is transformed. Whatever you then do can only be right.

Socrates said that knowledge is virtue. By knowledge he does not mean mere “knowledgeability”: by “knowledge” he means intuitive knowledge. His statement is tremendously significant. Intuitive knowledge is virtue. He does not say what is virtue and what is sin: intuitive knowledge is virtue because the individual who knows intuitively, the one who can hear his innermost core, is bound to be virtuous. He cannot be otherwise.

I am not giving you a discipline. I have just to help you to listen to your own centre, and then to follow your heart. That will be real virtue, that will be *virtue*, and that is real character. That will be real morality.

But it comes from your innermost core: it is nothing imposed externally.

The Shree Rajneesh (“Osho”)
(1931-1990)

London, Friday 3 August 2001

Within and silent and still

Arbeit macht frei. The horrifying words on the gate of the camp at Auschwitz. "Work makes you free." Regrettably, just another lie.

We crave freedom. We crave happiness. We want more toys, more money, better jobs, more excitement, we want more of everything - and yet we are still miserable. The truth is that we refuse to seek more in the only experience of living where it matters. *Within.* We do not have the time or the inclination to set some part of our day aside, to breathe, to rest in silence and stillness, and to meditate and to contemplate.

And yet only in following these daily practices do we grow - in consciousness, mindfulness, freedom. We come to be happier, more settled, more of ourselves, and more comfortable with ourselves. We might even become so comfortable that others will start wanting to know the how and the why of our success and our material situation may improve.

Consciousness makes free - absolutely free. Do you have the courage to look?

The Opportunity of a Lifetime

Life is an opportunity, an opportunity to realise oneself. One can see that very few people fulfil it. And those few who do meet fulfilment, are the ones who enter their inner world. To go on remaining concerned about money, power and prestige to the exclusion of all else is sheer wastage. One's path should be to know "Who am I?" One can feel contented only when one can answer that question. Make a special decision at the heart of your being, "I have to attain it," because that very decision becomes a seed.

The Fourth Dimension - the real one - all is mindfulness

Man tries in every way to achieve perfect happiness, by accumulating money, by becoming respectable, by becoming knowledgeable. But all these routes are doomed to fail. They cannot bring intense satisfaction to you. Fulfilment comes only in one way and that is by your becoming more conscious. The more you are conscious, the deeper your contentment: the less conscious, the more miserable.

As consciousness expands and unconsciousness shrinks, you become more and more complete and whole. You start opening up like a flower. We are like buds, closed: as wholeness comes, you become a flower. In the Eastern traditions, it is said that one becomes a lotus, a thousand petalled lotus. Everybody is carrying the seed, the bud, but great effort is required to be conscious. Unconsciousness has been our habit for so many lifetimes that it has almost become our very nature.

So from this moment, try to be more conscious, in everything you do, in everything you think, in everything you feel. These are the three dimensions.

In these three dimensions, you have to become more watchful, more alert, more of a witness. Amidst these three arises the fourth, the *witness* - and that is your true nature.

Once you have learnt how to create the witness, you know the secret art, you know the alchemy of transforming the dark continent in your being into light.

Freedom comes in the most unexpected way

Learn how to disappear, how to evaporate. Learn how *not* to be. That is the greatest art in life because the ego is so cunning. It always finds some way to come in through the back door. It can become humble, it can become pious, it can become saintly, it can become holy. It can play all manner of games.

Be watchful. And the more you know the ways of the ego, the more you are free of it, because it can no longer prey upon you, whatever strategy you have come to know. Slowly, slowly, all doors are closed. One day when the last strategy has collapsed, you are freed from yourself.

That is liberation. And that is the ultimate goal of all religious effort. Only in that liberated state, can one know what truth is. They are not really two separate things, but two aspects of the same coin. Liberation is truth.

Something to ponder - it is the Truth

Make a point to give more and more emphasis to the inner, more and more time and space to the inner. And it is only a question of remembering to do so.

Slowly, slowly, your consciousness takes a turn. And when you start facing yourself, you are facing the greatest phenomenon, the most exquisite, the most beautiful experience of life, because you are seeing life in its intrinsic grace and splendour.

Free as a bird

Freedom is one of the most significant qualities. In fact, it is out of freedom that all that is great blooms. You can only live if you are free. You can only be joyous if you are free. Hence freedom has to become the foundation stone to the spiritual journey.

You do not need to belong to a church, to a creed, to a nation, to a race. Those are all less than important things. You should be free of all that nonsense. You should be simply human. There is no need to be a Christian, a Hindu, or a Mohammedan, and no need to be Indian, German, American, Australian, or anything. One should be free of all these bondages. They are prisons which keep your spirit encaged. Break out: your being demands it.

And it is all up to you. If you cooperate with these things, you are cooperating in your enslavement. Stop cooperating. Nobody else is keeping you in bondage - it is your own unawareness. So become aware of how you cooperate with your enslavement and that awareness is enough to get rid of all slavery.

Freedom is your nature. It is not to be achieved. When all slavery disappears, you are free: when restriction is not present, freedom starts welling up in your being. And out of freedom, life starts taking on a tremendous beauty.

Then everything is possible - love, truth, godliness.

Transformation - far from easy - but very worthwhile

I am aware that the world is full of people who are so totally and devastatingly clever. They are experts in disaster - they are able to foresee every possible problem, every difficulty, every hurdle. When the going gets tough, they are able to congratulate themselves on their prescience and intelligence. Cleverness sees only problems and foresees only failure. And what is worse is that we listen to its guidance.

Wisdom is something very different. It knows that anything worth accomplishing will have its times of challenge and its disappointments and its failures. But it also knows that it requires only one more success than failure for great things to be done and wonders to be achieved. Everything that is in this little *opus* is here to remind you that whatever you want from the relatively unimportant of the physical to the highest accomplishments of the mind and soul points to the other journey of silence and stillness and the deeply contented state that accompanies it. The age-old question of what it shall profit a man to have gained the whole world and to have lost his soul in the process is relevant here.

Anything can be done but you are alone the traveller. The decision to go forward is of you alone - but the rewards are too.

Put your mind to it - whatever it is - and watch the benefits come.

Rules rule - or do they?

This little work makes much of freedom - *your* freedom. The other side of freedom is the burden of the world that lives by rules and regulations and a plethora of boundaries and restrictions.

Whether you are the spiritual seeker aiming at "enlightenment and a consciousness blown open" or whether your adventure is of a different or even perhaps of a lower order, the freedom to go forward will always deny the limitations you have put upon yourself. If your aim be happiness, real happiness of great profundity, it will come in recognising that you have allowed yourself to be incarcerated in the name of the fears of others. Break free now and realise that there are no concrete rules. There are only points of guidance which it is your duty to assess for themselves.

You can be rid of pain and suffering - all of it. You can be anything you want. The journey is yours, the decisions are yours, and the rewards are yours. The decision to start is equally yours. Do you have the courage and the passionate desire to be comfortable? I hope you do.

Difference is a blessing

The times are obsessively conformist. The best reason to wear black is that it is decreed by European fashion houses as arbiters - for their own economic benefit. The world is a marketing man's oyster. Subtle pressures are upon us at every turn to behave and to conform. We are often well rewarded for our good behaviour. The owners of large houses and cars are the happy recipients of this world's largesse - they have danced to the music of time but not to the music of the spheres.

Only in dancing to the music of the spheres, the universal harmony of which we find ourselves part, shall we finally provide ourselves with the blessings and the transformation we seek. We realise that there is no God "out there" like a private secretary waiting to answer our prayers. We find that Wisdom is *within* us and that over an extended period of time that is as personal and distinctive as each one of us we slowly come home to the balance and wholeness that is true godliness. That is what should be promoted as "conversion" - not a false emotional trick.

Meet yourself *within* and find that the Universal has welcomed you.

The journey of peace and power

We want to change our lives - we then want to throw down anchors. Life never allows us such an easy option. The very fluidity and upset of life is its norm and our challenge is to rise above it and indeed with it and to be undisturbed by it.

The transformation we are seeking is again a transformation that will only come within ourselves in the deepest experiences of our soul. None of this is religious: none of this requires the performance of arcane ritual. All that is asked of you is that you set time aside (and it is a very special time) to be silent and go within. The practice of meditation and contemplation is totally life-changing and life-enhancing. Do not be alarmed by those words. Learn the blessed simplicity of silence and stillness and separation with the emptying of the mind allied to ever deeper breathing and physical relaxation. There is no fixed route - there are as many meditation "techniques" as there are meditators. That people are shown in the "lotus" position matters not a whit.

Your processes of deepening quietness are yours alone. The journey will require courage and demand commitment and persistence. But if you want the gremlins of pain to depart, do not chase them. Simply float them away like a ship resting at low tide on a sandy bottom. The incoming tide will do all for it. Let the discovery of deepening quietness be that swelling tide for you.

You will be dazzled by the outcome - and the continuing outcomes.

KNOW YOURSELF

The journey to health of mind and of body and of soul is to be made within, in ever deepening silence and stillness and solitude. The rewards are immense for those with the discipline to start and go forward.

This little work is an invitation to do just that.

Start now and over the weeks and the months meet an order and a wellbeing you could only have dreamt of and which will be so apparent to those around you.

My deepest blessings go out to you.