

THE HOLY EXPERIENCE

*A book about the most
wonderful encounter in life
and how to produce it*

BASED ON THE MESSAGES IN
Conversations with God

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The Holy Experience

Chapter One

All of my life I have been seeking the Holy Experience. All of my life I have known that the Holy Experience would reveal everything. Everything about God, everything about life, and everything about me. The only questions for me have been, what *is* the Holy Experience, and where can I find it?

Those questions have been asked by people all over the world since the beginning of time. Perhaps you have asked those questions, too. This book is the short story of how I found my answers. By telling you this story, perhaps I can help you to find your answers, too.

I hope you will forgive me, then, if I place before you in this book some brief narratives of my life. I know that many of you have read one or more of my previous books, and so you may already have a few of these facts and details. But if you will indulge me, I want to create a context here, in *this* book, within which the remainder of the messages placed here might be considered and experienced. And from time to time a brief excursion into my own past may prove instructive, even if, for you, it is a revisiting of information you already have about me.

I began my search for the Holy Experience by looking where one might be expected to look. I began by looking to religion. It is entirely understandable that I would do that. I was born into a family that believed in religion as a means of getting to heaven. I was raised a Roman Catholic, and by age seven I had a deep and abiding faith in God. I did not doubt for a moment God's existence or God's benevolence.

By age 10 I also did not doubt God's wrath.

I was not taught much about God's wrath at home. In fact, I was taught absolutely nothing about it. I think now, as I look back on it, that

my mother did not believe in it. If my father did, he bowed to my mother's wishes not to "tell the kids about it" until it was time.

It was when I was sent to parochial school—St. Ignatius Elementary, on 36th and Mitchell, in Milwaukee—that I learned about a God who could become angry. It was there that I learned about the Ten Commandments. It was there that I learned about sin and punishment. It was there that I learned how to make a Perfect Act of Contrition ("Oh, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee...") in case I was in a car accident and found myself near death, or for some other reason discovered myself facing Judgment Day at an inopportune moment, not having gone to Confession for a while...

Confession was a big thing to me. We were told at St. Ignatius to go to Confession at least once a week. Saturday was the day set aside in our parish, as it is in most, so that one could receive Holy Communion at Mass on Sunday.

This is where the idea of my own imperfection first came up, as I recall. This is where I picked up the thought that my soul must be "clean" before God would allow me to receive Him under my roof.

Until then I never had any doubt that all I had to do if I wanted God near me as to call out to Him. He would always be there, Mom told me, and I believed her. How could Mom be wrong about a thing like that? How could Mom be wrong about *anything*?

Then I got to St. Ignatius and the nuns told me that, well, it wasn't exactly like that. God *wants* to come to me whenever I call to Him, they assured me, but God cannot be received by an impure soul. Who has an impure soul? I asked. All of us, I was told. We all have impure souls. None of us are worthy of receiving God into our lives.

How can we *become* worthy? I desperately wanted to know. I'd thought that God would come to us always. In fact, I'd been taught by my Mom that God was *with us* always, and that all we had to do to receive God's help and blessing in any moment was to call out to the God who was Always There, and that help would be ours. Now I was being told, "well, not exactly..."

I had to be *worthy* of receiving God under my roof. And the problem was, I was *born unworthy*. It was at St. Ignatius that I learned

about Original Sin, and about how I was a sinner every day, and about how God could not come into my soul if I was a sinner, but not to be dismayed, because God could *forgive me* my sins, and *then* come into my soul – but first, I had to confess them.

God could not forgive sins that were not confessed. Hence, the Sacrament of Confession was created by the Most Holy Roman Catholic Church as a road to forgiveness, and, ultimately, Salvation. If we confessed our sins, God would forgive them, rendering our souls pure again, wiping the slate clean. We could then go to Communion. We could receive the living God into our lives through the consuming of the flesh and blood of Christ (literally, not figuratively), who was God's son and who died for our sins.

I was taught that ordinary bread and wine was turned into Christ's body and blood at the moment of Consecration (a ritual and the highlight of every Roman Catholic Mass), when occurred the miracle of Transubstantiation, the first stage in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Confession, as you might now be able to see, suddenly became very important to me. I went as often as I could, the better to make sure that I had no sins on my soul should death come knocking at my door.

As a child I was nervous about this. You may think that I am kidding here, or exaggerating a little, but I'm not. I clearly remember being afraid to go to sleep at night, especially if I knew that I had been a particularly bad boy that day. If I had talked back to Mom, quarreled with my brother, or in some other way had behaved inappropriately, I earnestly prayed as I squeezed shut my frightened eyes...

Now I lay me down to sleep.

I pray the Lord my soul to keep.

And if I die before I wake,

I pray the Lord my soul to take.

I hoped that my earnestness would earn me what my behavior had not.

Part of my nervousness stemmed from the fact that I was not sure which behaviors really offended God enough to keep me out of heaven forever (dooming me to everlasting torture in hell), which would send me to purgatory for only a temporary (if painful) period of exclusion, and which might be overlooked altogether.

(Were *any* overlooked? That was a question I remember asking. Did God overlook *anything*? Was my every thought, word, and deed to be judged? The answers I was given led me to believe this was the case. Who wouldn't be nervous under those conditions?)

And so I tried very hard to be holy. To be holy, I believed, was to be without sin. It was to live a life without offending God.

Thus, I went to Mass several times a week. I went to Confession often. I prayed to God every night. I walked around the playground with a crucifix tucked in my belt. I became an altar boy. I memorized every prayer there was to memorize. Not just the Our Father and the Hail Mary, but the Glory Be, the Act of Contrition, and the Apostle's Creed. And I had determined in the 7th grade that I was going to become a priest.

I was going all the way.

My search for the Holy Experience had begun.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Two

I wish I could tell you that in the ensuing years I had a wonderful and fulfilling experience of God. I did not.

My first obstacle was my father. When I told him while I was in the 7th grade that I wanted to enter the seminary he made it clear to me in no uncertain terms that that was not going to happen.

“You’re not old enough to make that decision,” he told me. “When you are, we can talk about it.”

I now understand what that was all about. At the time, I did not. I saw my father as cruel and even “anti-God.” I could not understand what he had against my entering the seminary.

In the 7th and 8th grade of Catholic parochial school the priests and nuns really start talking up the priesthood to the guys. If a fellow has any kind of piety at all, this can suddenly start looking like a very attractive option. In my case, it had become something that I *had to do*.

The sisters all agreed that I had “the calling.” I served at Mass every morning, and it was not lost on the priests and nuns how earnestly I prayed, how fast I had completely memorized the altar boy’s responses in Latin, and how I had “taken” to the whole business of God and the Church.

My father was clear that it was the business of these schools to steer as many young boys into thoughts of the seminary as possible. Dad knew that I knew nothing of females—and he was also smart enough to understand that until I did, any decision about moving into a line of work that required me to be celibate all my life was premature.

He was, of course, dead right. Somewhere during the eighth grade I saw my first picture of a woman without clothing. I know, I know, that was late, relatively speaking, in the life of a boy, but you have to remember that this was in the Fifties, and things were a lot different then. A year later, as a freshman in

high school, I actually saw a real, live girl naked. She, too, was a high school freshman, and we had gotten into a little mischief together. Nothing serious, really. Just a little show-and-tell. But it sure took my mind off the priesthood.

Still, I remained enamored of religion itself as an institution. I may not become a priest, I thought, but I will always be devoted to God.

Too many complications

It didn't take long for me to realize that I was not going to find it possible to remain devoted to God through organized religion. Many people have, of course, and so this is not an indictment of religion. It is simply that I could not find my own way to the Holy Experience, I could not get in touch with the Transcendent Reality, through this vehicle.

Religion, to me, presented too many complications, and in my heart I experienced what I would now call the Transcendent Reality as being Without Complication. Indeed, it was Utter Simplicity. Religion, to me, generated too many conflicts, and I experienced the Transcendent Reality as Without Conflict. Indeed, it was Total Peace. Religion, to me, offered too many contradictions with my own inner truth, and I experienced the Transcendent Reality as Without Contradiction. Indeed, it was Absolute Harmony.

Utter Simplicity, Total Peace, Absolute Harmony. Without Complication, Without Conflict, Without Contradiction. That is how I experienced God. Religion did not experience God this way. I soon found this out.

The how's and why's of my personal experience do not seem so important now. It seems sufficient to note in broad general terms that the singular difficulty I had with religion was its insistence on teaching of a needy God—indeed, an angry, vindictive and *violent* God—who was going to punish me for my sins. And, to be sure, was going to punish all the world.

I simply did not experience God in that way. Chalk it up to my mother's early teachings, perhaps, but for some reason my internal guidance system kept steering me away from such an idea of God.

I searched everywhere within the religions of my culture, but could find no place of comfort. Then I explored the religions of other cultures. Still not much simplicity, peace, and harmony. A little here and there, but not the totality

for which I yearned. Still no God without complication, without conflict, without contradiction.

Finally, I left religion altogether.

It would be a quarter century before I returned to a deep and abiding faith in God, born of a new *understanding* of God that changed everything in my perception of who and what God is.

How that came to pass is described in *Conversations with God-Book 1* and in the semi-autobiographical *Friendship with God*. The simple and peaceful and harmonious *answer* I came to is articulated wonderfully in *What God Wants*, and will be even more fully in a book I am working on, with the title: *A New Theology*.

So...let's look at just what I have learned through my conversations with God, my friendship with God, and my experience of communion with God.

First, I have learned what the Holy Experience truly *is*. And I have learned how to move *into* that experience at will. I have not yet learned how to sustain it. I'm not even sure if I want to.

I'll explain that later. I know that, just hanging out there, it seems like an unusual thing to say, but all of this is what will be discussed here. And all of this discussion will, I hope, help you to move closer to your own experience, and to unveil your own truth, about these things.

I should like now to offer my personal *definition* of the Holy Experience, so that we can know just what it is, exactly, that I am going to be talking about. This definition kind of popped out of me unexpectedly a few years ago as I was responding to a question e-mailed to me by a man in Maine. Let me share with you that question and answer, and you'll see what I mean.

(The question at first seems to have nothing to do with the topic at hand. But wait. It was in the process of responding to the question that my definition of the Holy Experience popped out. See what you think.)

Hi Neale...I have been struggling recently with what "mission" means in a pluralistic world. Mission has had so many different objectives throughout history – converting others to the "true" faith; extending God's kingdom; doing justice for the poor and marginalized, etc.

Our world seems very near-sighted when people consider their faith the "true" faith and others as condemned to Hell. Since all of us have a somewhat different

conception of what "faith" means, what is each person's responsibility to other people – both people of other faiths and people of no faith?

Should we try to show others what we consider "true", or should we only try to share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships? What does it mean to be a person of faith -- ie: Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, or otherwise – in a pluralistic world?

Thanks for any comments or insights you may have, Neale!

Matt, Natick, MA

Dear Matt...The only True Mission is the mission of the individual soul. Every other mission is an extension of that. The mission of the individual soul is to know itself as it truly is, in its own experience. I have learned that this is accomplished by *creating* itself as that. Life is not a process of discovery; it is a process of creation.

The hitch here is that in Ultimate Reality it is not possible to create anything, because everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be has already been created. So the Process of Creation turns out to be, after all, not actually Creation, but Perception. It is about seeing what has always been there, knowing what has always been true, and experiencing the Only Experience There Is. We call this, loosely: God.

The challenge here is that one cannot experience The Only Experience There Is if it *is*, in fact, the "only experience" there is. This is because in the absence of That Which Is Not, That Which IS, is not.

Put simply, in the absence of darkness, the light is not. In the absence of cold, hot is not. In the absence of up, there is no such thing as down. None of these things can be *experienced* in anything other than relative terms. The same is true about God. And, for that matter, about the human soul. For the human soul IS God, in part. It is a holy and individuated aspect of That Which IS.

If there is nothing in the environment, if there is nothing in the vicinity, that is NOT That Which IS, then That Which IS cannot be known experientially. If there is nothing in *existence* that is NOT That Which IS (and by definition this would have to be true), then That Which IS cannot be experienced. Nor can any Part of It. It can be fully *known*, but it cannot be *experienced*. That is, it cannot be

known in *relative terms* (which is what "experience" is), but only in absolute terms. This is what is true in the Realm of the Absolute.

Remember this always:

EXPERIENCE IS THE KNOWING OF THE ABSOLUTE IN RELATIVE TERMS.

So in the Realm of the Absolute, That Which IS cannot experience Its own magnificence. It cannot know the glory of Itself, the wonder of Itself, the Truth of Itself.

This is the condition faced by God (That Which IS), and this is the condition faced by your soul. You now understand the reason that physical life as we know it exists.

The creation of Physicality produced a solution to God's conundrum—a solution that is ingenious and spectacular: *create an entire reality based on Illusion*. That phrase in itself, "reality based on illusion," is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms, but it gets the idea across.

And so we find ourselves in this Alice in Wonderland world (an Alice in Wonderland universe, really) in which we swear that what is So is Not So, and that what is Not So is So. It is a "wonderland" in the sense that it allows us to experience the True Wonder of Who We Really Are. We do this by calling forth the Opposite of Who We Are, and by *experiencing ourselves in relation to that*.

Suddenly, we have a point of reference by which we may know ourselves. (Remember that I said that the mission of the individual soul is to know itself as it truly is, in its own experience.)

All of this lays down the theological basis for my (finally!) direct answer to your direct question. That which is opposite to us, that which is "not us," exists for a very holy reason: so that we may announce and declare, express and experience, become and fulfill Who We Really Are.

Therefore judge not, and neither condemn.

Raise not your fist to the darkness, but be a light unto the darkness, and curse it not.

Our "mission" vis-a-vis people of other faiths is to accept them exactly as they are. Not to seek to convert them, not to judge them, and certainly not to condemn them.

Now Matt, you have placed your question inside a riddle that offers two choices---yet these choices are not, in truth, mutually exclusive. It does not have to be one or the other, as you have posed it. You have asked: "Should we try to show others what we consider 'true', or should we only try to share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships?"

I believe we can do both.

As we share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships, we DO "show others what we consider true." In fact, *that is the most effective way to show it.*

Thus, we set people free from their own limiting beliefs about *us*. This eventually will set them free from their own limiting beliefs about *themselves*. Soon they, too, will know Who They Really Are.

And so, Matt, walk through the world not as one who seeks to convert or convince others of anything, but simply as one who seeks to know others as Everything. When you know all of it as Everything, then you know your Self as Everything as well. You see your Self in every other person. Indeed, in every other thing that exists. Suddenly, the magnificence and the glory of Who You Are becomes apparent to you. It becomes part of your *experience*. It is no longer something you know intellectually; it is something you know *experientially*.

Many people have had this experience (the experience of being Everything) momentarily. They have had it in meditation, perhaps, or in a time of pure silence, or in the midst of an impactful interaction with another (such as sexual union or laughing until tears come, or weeping together, or walking alone through the woods on a sunlit morning, or swimming in the ocean, or, simply...washing dishes.)

I call this The Holy Experience.

It is when you know Who You Really Are.

While many people have had this experience momentarily, the trick is to have it continually. Or at least a great deal more of the time. That was the yearning of the Buddha. It was the journey of the Christ. It is the opportunity placed before each of us.

Many Masters have shown us the way.

The way is for us to BE the way.

I am The Way and The Life. Follow me.

This is what all Masters have declared. This is what all Students have understood.

Therefore, do not look for your Master, BE the Master for whom you have been looking. Do not seek the Truth, BE the Truth you have been seeking. And do not attempt to change another, BE the change you wish to see.

That is your mission, Matt, and there is no other.

Bless you, Matt, with the knowing of Who You Really Are. May God be experienced by you *through* you, and through the living of your life.

Love always, and all ways...

Neale.

The questions that plague us all

So there you have it. In responding to Matt's inquiry I stumbled upon my definition of the Holy Experience. After all these years I can say that I know what I have been searching for since I was a child. I have been searching for the experience of knowing Who I Really Am.

All my life I have been trying to figure this out. Who am I? *What* am I? Why am I here? What am I supposed to be doing? Is there any reason for what I am doing? Does anybody care? Is there any *outcome*, other than the doing of it? *What is the point of life?*

These are the questions that plagued me as I tried to make some sense out of all this. There is a possibility that they have been plaguing you, too. If they have, you have come to the right book.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Three

I said it before and I'll say it again. All my life I have been trying to figure out...Who am I? *What* am I? Why am I here? What am I supposed to be doing? Is there any reason for what I am doing? Does anybody care? Is there any *outcome*, other than the doing of it? What is the point of life?

The Holy Experience brings us the answers to those questions. The Holy Experience *is* the answer.

The Holy Experience is when you know the difference between Divinity and Humanity --- and when that difference disappears.

Whoa! Did you hear that? The Holy Experience is when you know the difference between Divinity and Humanity --- and *when that difference disappears*.

Whew! That was a mouthful.

Divinity and Humanity can become One in your experience, and when that occurs you have entered the Holy Moment. You cannot enter this Moment, however, until you know the difference between Divinity and Humanity—and why it exists.

So let's explore that, shall we?

For me, the difference between Divinity and Humanity is that Divinity seeks only to distribute, and Humanity seeks only to gather.

That is not the only difference, of course, but it is a milestone difference. It is a humongous difference. So let's not gloss over it. Let's not read past it and move on, without really grasping its implication. Let's state it again. I *said*...

The difference between Divinity and Humanity is that Divinity seeks only to distribute, and Humanity seeks only to gather.

Divinity and Humanity *can* become One in your experience, and when that occurs you have entered the Holy Moment. You cannot enter this Moment,

however, until you know the difference between Divinity and Humanity—and why it exists.

Divinity understands that it is only through the distribution *OF* Itself, the giving away *OF* Itself, that it can be magnified and glorified. Humanity believes that it is only through the gathering *TO* itself, the bringing *TO* itself, that it can be magnified and glorified.

So there you have it. Giver and Gatherer. That's the difference.

It is an astonishing difference. It is an exact opposite. That is no small distinction. Yet when it is deeply understood (not simply casually comprehended), everything becomes wonderfully clear at last, and the chasm between the two may finally be closed.

Divinity seeks nothing for Itself. Human beings will find it difficult to seek nothing for themselves so long as they imagine themselves to be human. That is because humans imagine themselves to have needs. Divinity does not. Divinity has no such thought about Itself. (Nor any such thought about you, either.)

So in order for Humanity to seek nothing for itself, humans must understand themselves to be Divine. They must understand that Humanity is not separate from the Divine, but *IS* divided from the Divine. This sometimes helps people wrap their minds around the concept of our Oneness with Divinity.

Many folks have a very difficult time seeing themselves as Divine. Yet if you tell them that they are *part* of that which is Divine, many people can go there. They can hang out in that place. They can embrace the concept. Partial magnificence is acceptable, total magnificence is not.

So we might say, for our purposes here, that Humanity is a Division of the Divine. That Which Is Divine created many divisions of Itself, and one of those divisions is called Humanity.

Even as a large company or corporation may have a division here and a division there without any of those divisions being in any sense separate from, or *other than*, the whole, so, too, does the Divine have a division here and a division there without any of those divisions being in any sense separate from, or *other than*, The Whole.

It is possible to be a division of something without being divided from it.

That's an important concept for you to grasp if you are to have the Holy Experience. Please let me say it again. I said...

“It is possible to be a division of something without being divided from it.”

Think about that for a minute. Hold that concept in your mind.

Humanity, as a Division of Divinity, is neither separate from, nor other than, The Whole.

This is the one thing that most of Humanity has not understood. This is the one thing that most of Humanity’s religions have not taught. In fact, most of those religions have taught exactly the opposite. They have taught that Humanity IS Separate from Divinity. Some have called this separation The Fall of Man, and in that description they are correct. The idea of Humanity’s separation from Divinity *has* been humanity’s downfall.

From Downfall to Upliftment: reversing the effect

The transformation of Humanity’s downfall into Humanity’s upliftment may be achieved through a simple reversal of thinking. It is a shift from Separation Theology to Unity Spirituality. It is the reunion of God and Humanity.

It is easier to experience Reunion with God on an individual basis than it is collectively. That is because it takes a great deal more energy to alter Collective Consciousness than it does to alter Individual Consciousness.

Yet Collective Consciousness *can* be altered *when the alteration of Individual Consciousness reaches critical mass*. When sufficient individual energies are lifted, the entire mass is elevated to a new level.

The work of Conscious Evolution, therefore, is the work of changing consciousness at the individual level. This follows directly from the Third Illusion of Humans, given to us in *Communion with God*, which is that Disunity Exists. When we attempt to change others we are implicitly affirming this illusion, which is why such efforts are invariably wasted. We can only change the One of Us That Is, and the aspect of the One of Us That Is which is most present to us is our experience of self. Therefore, when we change ourselves we change the world. *That is why every effort to do so is critical*.

Every individual undertaking, every individual thought, word, or action which leads to the transformation of the Self and to the lifting of any other being, is of extraordinary importance. It is not necessary to move mountains to move

mountains. It is necessary only to move pebbles.

We must become People of the Pebbles. We must do our work on a person-to-person basis. Then we shall move mountains. Then the mightiest obstacles shall crumble, and the way shall be made clear.

So let us undertake to deeply understand on an individual level (and then to *demonstrate* on an individual level) how and why it is possible for The Divine to want nothing for Itself, and to seek only to distribute.

We begin by coming to clarity on who and what The Divine is.

The Divine is Everything. All that is seen and all that is unseen is The Divine. All that is known and unknown is The Divine. All that is experienced and unexperienced is The Divine. All that is here and all that is not here, all that is now and all that is forever, all that is limited and all that is unlimited is The Divine. All that is comprehensible and all that is incomprehensible is The Divine.

There is nothing that Is that is not The Divine.

Divinity is everywhere at once, and thus, it is nowhere in particular. Divinity is NOWHERE. Divinity is NOW/HERE.

All of this has been given to us in *Conversations with God*. None of this is new. It has been given to us a thousand times before *Conversations with God*. It has been given to us a thousand times since. Indeed, in every moment of every day, through a thousand individual manifestations of Itself, is Divinity revealing Itself. Yet we do not see. Or we see, but do not believe.

We do not believe the evidence of our own eyes. We do not hear the truth in the sounds of silence.

Yet, for those who have ears to hear, listen. And Watch. Observe. Observe the Self. Watch over your Self.

Look at what you are doing on this day. Are you spending most of your energy gathering, or giving? And if you are giving, are you giving in order to gather? Do you do the work you do in order for it to pay off for you? And what, exactly, is the payoff? What are you gathering?

God, of course, cannot gather. That is the one thing that God cannot do. God cannot gather anything. That is because everything God would gather, God is. There's nothing to gather.

I gather that you understand this.

What, then, to do?

Yet if God cannot gather, and if you are God, then you cannot gather, either. Perhaps you've already noticed this. Perhaps you've already noticed that, even if you do manage to collect a few things along the way, sooner or later it all disappears. At the end, none of it is there. You go on, but none of it goes with you.

What is it they say? "You can't take it with you."

In fact, it's all starting to disappear right now. You don't have the friends you had. You don't have the stuff you had. You don't even have the feelings you had. Everything you thought was "you," or that at least helped to define you, has disappeared. There is nothing that is permanent. There is nothing that stays. Everything goes.

Which is an interesting fact about life.

Everything goes.

And when you understand this, everything goes. There are no restrictions anymore. You can do anything you wish, say anything you wish, think anything you wish, because you're not trying to hold onto anything anymore.

What's the point? You can't hold onto it anyway. It's all going to go away. In the end, if not before.

This may sound like a desolate and despairing scenario, yet the truth is, it's liberating. You can't have anything forever. If you had it forever, the having of it would mean nothing.

The Holy Experience is knowing this.

Each moment becomes truly holy, because each moment ends. It cannot be held onto forever. Not a single moment can. Therefore, every single moment is sacred.

Like a snowflake, the moments fall and form a collection that melts into the stream of our lives that evaporates into nothingness, disappearing from sight but not from Reality, condensing and forming cloudy formations, which then drop down as new snowflakes, new lives, starting the whole cycle over again.

Each snowflake, each moment, is utterly magnificent; cryingly, achingly, tearfully beautiful, unfathomably perfect. As is each life.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Four

I had the Holy Experience today. I had it this morning. I am still having it as I write this.

The experience feels interestingly like a new beginning. So many things are changing in our world, and so many things are presenting themselves for change in my life. I experienced this morning that I want to change how I am. I wish to become more loving, more patient, more compassionate, more giving.

Yes, much, much more giving.

This is wonderful, this feeling of being willing to change and to become a larger version of myself than I am experiencing today. It is part of the continuing adventure, of the never-ending process, that is the expansion of my humanity and the evolution of my human soul.

Just when I think "the game is over," *it never is!* This is what is so extraordinary about Life. Even after what we imagine to be our death, life is not over. *It never is and it never will be.*

I don't know why I am feeling all this right now, why I am knowing this as part of my experience today more than usual, but I am. It just feels like a new energy is coursing through me. And that feels good. I thank God for it. I thank God for letting me get up today with such revitalized energy, even at my age. I am not a young man any more, but my heart feels young as ever.

I think that part of what is behind all of this may have to do with the fact that I had a memory in my sleeping/waking moments this morning that I once spent the entire weekend going over the "script" of my life, and I was remembering that. And when I say I was going over the script of my life, I mean literally, not figuratively. I had the screenwriter, the producer/director, and the director of photography of *Conversations with God: The Movie* at my house for the three days a few years ago, going over the first draft of the script for the film. They were asking me to describe, in some cases moment-by-moment, many of my most meaningful life experiences—and that can throw one into deep

introspection, as you might imagine. It is also something you do not forget, because it is very rare that a person sits down for three days and summarizes his entire life.

I haven't lived my life the way I would have liked to. Some of the choices I have made have been very hurtful to others, and I deeply regret that. Yet I see now, whenever I review the entirety of my life, that certain things had to happen exactly as they have happened in order for me to be here now, just as I am—and for the others in my life to be where they are as well.

I know that sounds like the perfect self-absolving philosophy, a wonderful thought system that allows one to escape regretting one's past—and even to, in some ways, *justify* that past.

I promise you, this idea brings none of those benefits. And least, not for me. I will always regret certain choices and actions in my past. And I can never justify those choices based upon a thought that things needed to happen exactly the way they happened. Nor could I possibly “justify” making those same kinds of choices and decisions today.

Yet regret is not guilt, and that is what is important here. “Guilt” is about feeling that I did something “wrong,” while “regret” is about feeling that what I did is not something I would do again. For it is as poet Maya Angelou has said: “When we know better, we do better.”

And what is it that I “know better” now? I know *myself* better. I know better Who I Am—and who, in the future, I choose to be. You see, there is one thing I did not understand back there. In my past, I did not understand what I was doing here. On the earth, I mean. Then *Conversations with God* set me straight. It said, “Every act is an act of self-definition.” It made it clear to me that I was not my body and that I was not my mind, and that I was not even my soul, but rather, all three combined. And that the reason this Triune Being that I am came into the Realm of Physicality was so that I might both Know and Experience Who I Really Am.

Conversations with God taught me that God and I are One; that I am God, *goddling*; that the purpose of my life is to recreate my Self anew in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever I held about Who I Am.

This is *not* a journey from nowhere to nowhere. This is a process. Life is a *process*. It is a process with purpose and meaning. It is a function of the Universe. It is the Present Action of an Eternal Activity. I am *not* an infinitesimal spec of

dust on the cosmic floor, unworthy to even be seen, much less celebrated. I am a big and important, and yes, an even *glorious* part of an Ever Ongoing Expression of Divinity.

Conversations with God also taught me that God forgives me completely and utterly for my “offenses” -- which God sees as merely “mistakes,” “misunderstandings,” and simple “errors,” holding me in the cradle of Her love, embracing me in the warmth of His compassion and deep understanding, encouraging me now and giving me the strength to move forward with my purpose in this life: to know myself as Who I Really Am, and to *experience* that.

In this way, God experiences IT-self...and it is the only way God *can*.

The mission of all of us

Each of us, I have come to see, embraces a mission. That is, there is a singular “assignment” (if I could use the word) that we give ourselves in each lifetime. (Oh, yes, we have multiple lifetimes. An infinite number, in fact.) Each assignment allows us to express and experience additional aspects of Divinity.

My assignment is this lifetime, it has become clear, is plain and it is simple: to give people back to themselves, and to change the world’s mind about God. In a very large sense, this is the mission of all of us, and each of us is playing it out in the way that is natural and perfect for us in every incarnation.

We are given the gift of God's joy and God's peace in our heart, and offered an invitation to share it with everyone whose life we touch--regardless of exterior appearances that sometimes seem to make it impossible to do so.

I have come to see that all of life's circumstances, conditions, events, and experiences have been sent to me as opportunities to do that. Each moment—even (and especially) the worst among them—is a gift, creating a Contextual Field within which I might choose how I wish to experience myself, and decide what part of that interior experience I shall express in physical form.

And so I thank God for each and every manifestation of life now producing that Contextual Field. I shall judge not, and neither condemn.

This living without judgment is the hardest part for me, but it is the beginning of the Holy Experience, and as I have looked at the depth of my life it has been made clear to me that so many people would have to live without judgment of ME in order for me to feel the love that is all around me. And so the

least I can do in exchange for this unspeakable blessing is to offer the same in return, and to live without judgment of others. For who among us shall cast the first stone?

I was invigorated this morning by this freedom-giving thought: I am forgiven, by God and by all those who love me. I choose now to forgive *myself* as well, thus to dwell in the joyful place of enlivened creation. For nothing good is created from guilt, and all things wonderful emerge from joy.

What a *joy* this life is, with *all* its sadness and pain, its strife and travail, its tests and its obstacles. What a joy to be alive and experiencing all of it, and to be able to choose which *part* of it to internalize and call my own. Having this choice, and *exercising it*, is the Holy Experience.

The end is the beginning

I said in the last chapter that each moment in life is truly holy, because each moment ends. This is not something that everyone knows. Everyone knows that each moment *ends*, but everyone does not know that for this reason each moment is holy.

And even while everyone knows that each *moment* ends, many people hope that no really wonderful *experience* ends. This is a contradiction in terms, yet people still engage in this wishing. They hope that their perfect relationship will never end, or that their perfect job will never end, or that their particular and present happiness, however it is showing up, will never end—*but it always does*. This does not mean that it will not or cannot be replaced by a new happiness, but *the present happiness will always end*.

This is something that is very important to remember. It is also important to know that the end of our present happiness is the beginning of our new happiness.

Now if one's happiness is tied to present and particular circumstances, one's happiness is always and forever in jeopardy. Yet if one's happiness rides the tide of all events, and, indeed, *creates them*, then one has discovered and embraced the Holy Experience.

It is the very *fact* that each moment is like a snowflake, breath-takenly beautiful, awesomely perfect in its design, absolutely individual and unlike any other, that makes it so remarkable, and renders it holy.

Do we not fall in love with people for this exact reason? Why not, then, fall in love with *moments* in precisely the same way? Deciding to do this is the beginning of the Holy Experience. It is the Choice Point of Sacred Creation.

The power and the inspiration

There is nothing more profoundly inspiring and absolutely empowering than this fact that each moment is new. It is born, it lives, and dies, right NOW.

Right here, right Now, is each moment born. Right here, right Now, is each moment lived. Right here, right Now, is each moment ended. It is all happening at one Time, in *this moment, right Now*.

The wonder of all this is that This Moment can be recreated from moment to moment, or created in a new way, with whatever modifications, enhancements, alterations, or adjustments that we choose.

We are not who we were yesterday. We are not even who we were a moment ago. Nothing is. And yet it can be, if we choose for it to be. All we need do is recreate it.

In life we can recreate ourselves as we just *were* or we can recreate ourselves *anew*. We are always remaking ourselves. It is never a question of whether, but of how. Are we recreating ourselves as we were before, or in the *next grandest version of the greatest vision ever we held about Who We Are?*

The Holy Experience is the experience of recreation. It is the experience of Total Knowing that the Totality of You is Never Known. It cannot be, because it has not yet been experienced by your present consciousness. Thus, it seems as if it has not yet been created.

Understanding infinity

Everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be, *is now*. And so, in the language of the Realm of the Absolute, there is nothing that has not been created. Only in the language of the Realm of the Relative could the statement be made that the Totality of You cannot be known because it has not yet been created.

In truth, all of You has been created. Yet all of You has not yet been *experienced* by the individuated part of You that is the localized expression of the Universal Self. It has not been experienced by your present consciousness.

The only way for the individuated part of You that is the localized expression of the Universal Self to experience all of You is to recreate parts of You until all of You has been Known. Yet the All of You is infinite and eternal. Therefore, it cannot be known or experienced in any relative sense, but only in an Absolute Way. Since the Local You does not *know* that it is the Universal You, it imagines that it is *creating*, rather than recreating, itself in each moment. This is its conceit. The Holy Experience is the dropping of this conceit. It is the shedding of this illusion. It is the lowering of this veil. This is an act of great humility and an act of great self-glorification, both. It happens when we come to know that we are not who we thought we were.

It occurs when we understand that we are nothing at all, except exactly what we are right here, right now. And that we can change that at our absolute discretion. Is this not what it means to be Divine? And is there any more glory than that?

Look to see, then...who are you right now? What are you? Are you confused? Are you frustrated, finding all this difficult to follow? Are you annoyed that you are not "getting it" ... or overjoyed that you are?

You are none of these things unless you say that you are. And you cease to be these things the moment that you say you are not. That moment is the Holy Moment. That experience is the Holy Experience.

When you understand the truth of Who You Are, you understand infinity. You can actually *experience* this understanding. That is, you can embrace it not only intellectually, but *experientially*.

There are at least five areas in which you can do so. Many more, I am sure, but five that I can immediately think of. You can experience infinity in:

1. **Love**
2. **Wisdom**
3. **Abundance**
4. **Energy**
5. **Divinity**

These five areas of life expression have, in my mind as I think of them, several sub-areas. And so the complete listing looks to me like this:

1. **Love/Relationship/Sexuality**
2. **Wisdom/Awareness/Consciousness**
3. **Abundance/Wealth/Health**
4. **Energy/Creativity/Aliveness**
5. **Divinity/Joy/Peace**

These are the areas of life expression in which it is possible to encounter or create the Holy Experience. But before we get into that, let me see if I can even more closely describe the Holy Experience, by more broadly defining it.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

I have already given several indications in this manuscript of what I believe the Holy Experience is. Now let me say, please, that it is all of this—and more.

The Holy Experience is as varied and as infinite as Life. It is a particular aspect of Life that *explains life TO life through the process of life itself*.

The Holy Experience is the experience of knowing, and of knowing that you know. It is the experience of being, and of being what you are being. It is the experience of having, and of having what you have.

I know that all of this may sound like just so much gobbledegook—circular talk getting nowhere—but if you will have a little patience, I think you will be well rewarded.

When I speak of the experience not only of “knowing,” but of “knowing that you know,” I am speaking of two distinctly different encounters with life. A wonderful teacher once opened me to the awareness that there are those who...

...do not know, and do not know that they do not know.

...do not know, and know that they do not know.

...do not know, but think that they know.

...know, but do not know that they know.

...know, but pretend that they do not know.

...know, and know that they know.

All of us fall into one of these six categories. So it is one thing to know, and another thing to know that you know.

Now the truth is that *all of us know* all that there is to know. Yet not all of us remember this, and so we have the experience of not knowing, or of knowing, but of not *knowing* that we know. In the moment that we know, and *know* that we know, we have had the Holy Experience.

Because this experience is so vast, it is almost more difficult not to have it than to have it. Yet most people still manage to not have it—even though half the world is yearning for it. That is because half the world does not understand that it is yearning for that which it already has.

For instance, peace.

The world's people yearn for peace, yet they do not experience it, nor do they demonstrate it. That is because they do not understand that they *are* peace. And in denying that which they intrinsically are, they deny themselves the experience of it.

This is what I meant when I said, just a bit ago, that the Holy Experience is being, and the experience of *being* what you are being.

To give you an example of what this means, or of how this could “show up” in real life, I can remember my father raising his voice at me in frustration when I was in high school because of the poor grades I kept bringing home.

“You’re smarter than this,” he would say, waving my report card at me. He was right. It was one thing for me to “be” smart (I was), but quite another for me to be *being* smart in my daily life—that is, to be *acting like that*. I was not *demonstrating* what I was, I was not *demonstrating* what my father knew me to *be*. I was IT, but I was not *being IT*.

To be, or not to be...that is the question.

Similarly, it is one thing to have everything in life, but if you are “having none of it” (that is, if you do not *believe* that you have it, or cannot *acknowledge* that you have it, or do not *appreciate* that you have it), then you may as well not have it at all.

You will not experience having it because you are not willing to “have” what you have. You are not willing to hold what you have been given.

That is why the marriage vow says “to have and to hold.” You can have something, but if you do not hold it, it is just the same as not having it at all.

It is as if someone had given you a great gift, but you dropped it the moment you got your hands on it. You let go of it. You still have it. It is still in your possession. The person who gave it to you has long since disappeared. But you will not pick it up and hold it. And so it lies there at your feet, as useless as if you did not have it at all.

I cannot tell you how many people I have seen ignoring their talents in exactly this way. They have been given great gifts, but they will not pick them up, they will not use them.

And so the Holy Experience is knowing that you know, being what you are being, and having what you have. It is a large experience. It is a huge experience. It is the experience of *who you are*, writ large.

Is the Holy Experience something you create?

Okay, now I said earlier that there are five areas in which it is possible to encounter or create the Holy Experience. You may have read that sentence and glossed over the word “create.” You may not have given it a second thought. But let’s think about it now.

Is the Holy Experience something that we *create*? Whoa. For many, many people that would be a new thought. A *whole* new thought. Because many people think of the Holy Experience as something that comes over them, or something that they encounter along the way. It is something they stumble on, or open themselves to through prayer or meditation or fasting or the like. But it is not something that they consciously *create*.

Yet it can be. It is true that we can *encounter* the Holy Experience or we can *create* it.

If we wait to encounter it, it might be years, perhaps a lifetime, before we do—IF we do. Yet if we choose to *create it*, we do not have to wait one moment longer. We can have it right here, right now.

I know of five steps to creating the Holy Experience:

- 1. Believing that it is possible for you to have it**
- 2. Understanding that you are worthy of having it**
- 3. Knowing that you are having it**
- 4. Declaring that you are having it**

5. Sharing it with others, so that they may have it

We will explore each of these steps in the next five chapters, and in the five chapters following that we will look at the areas of life expression in which you can create the Holy Experience if you now choose to.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Five

The first step in creating the Holy Experience is **believing that it is possible for you to have it.**

Now you may think that this is an elementary step—almost a *given*. Yet for many people this a very difficult step because they find it hard to believe that any kind of “holy experience” can happen to them.

(1) Some believe it is impossible to have the Holy Experience because they do not believe that such an experience even exists.

(2) Others believe it is impossible to have such an experience because, while it may exist, they do not know what it is or how to access it. They believe it is understandable and accessible only to ascetics and monks and holy ones—people who have devoted their entire lives to the search for inner truth and higher realities.

(3) Finally, still others believe that while it may be accessible to regular, ordinary people, they, themselves, are not worthy. They believe this for one reason or another. Some feel that there is something *specific that a person has to be, do, or have* in order to enter into the Holy Experience. It is, they believe, reserved for a *special class of people* who, while they may be ordinary, are single-minded in their determination to know of this experience, and are clear that *their particular doctrine*—which tells them that there is only one way to have the Holy Experience—is absolute and correct and is to be applied without exception. Finally, there are those who feel that because of their own behavior in this life, they are not sufficiently “holy” to have the experience in any event.

It is with these varying ideas that people approach the Holy Experience—and life itself. And ideas, of course, rule all human experience. The idea that one has about anything produces one’s reality around that. And where do ideas have their birth? In how you look at things. Your *perspective* about a thing is what creates your idea about it.

If your perspective is created by your Mind, it will be based on Data. If your perspective is created by your Soul, it will be based on Awareness. If your perspective is created by your Mind *and* your Soul, working co-jointly, it will

create Wisdom.

Perspective creates perception, perception creates belief, and belief creates experience. The experience that belief creates for you is what you call "truth."

(For a wonderful and rich explanation of this, see *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*, Emnin Books, distributed by Hay House.)

Because I know this, I try very hard these days to look at everything from the perspective of my highest desire. This means not looking at things through the prism of what I expect or imagine or think realistically will happen, but rather, seeing things as I *choose* and *desire* for them to happen.

This is not easy. I find that I have been *programmed by society itself* to look for the worst in everything, to anticipate the least desirable outcome, to worry about and fret about and agonize over how bad things can be, rather than how good something could turn out.

I have had to fight this tendency toward pessimism all my life. What's funny about this is that I am *at the very same time* the supreme optimist. I believe that I walk in luck, that God is always with me, that everything good happens to me, and that I can emerge from any difficulty—any jam, any situation—and land on my feet.

So these are the two sides of me. Fortunately, the positive side shows itself 80% of the time and the negative only 20% of the time—but both sides are definitely there. So I have to remember to *think positively* and *eliminate negative thoughts* from my mental diet. I've got to come from the Awareness of the Soul and not the Data of my Mind.

When I was a child there was a song that was very popular. I remember some of the lyrics to this day...

*You've got to ac-centuate the positive,
Elim-inate the negative,
Latch on to the Af-firmative,
And don't mess with Mr. In-between*

Positive thinking about the Holy Experience

Now when it comes to anything having to do with God I have been blessed with absolute faith. I am utterly convinced that (a) there IS a God; (b) God is “on my side”; (c) the power of God can be used at all times in the creation of my inner reality and my outer encounters with life.

Because I believe this, the idea of my having the Holy Experience is not even a little bit of a stretch for my imagination. I know that this experience exists and I feel sure that I can have it. I am *convinced* that I am *going* to have it. I believe that *everyone* has the opportunity to have it. I believe that it is ours for the asking.

The result of this is that I enter into the Holy Experience on a regular basis. My next goal, my next step, is to *remain* in it much longer; to live in it, to have my being within it and to come *from it* in the day-to-day of my life.

If you are in this place of mind as well, or if you can go to this place now, you have taken the first step toward having the Holy Experience. Yet how can you go to this place if you do not know that it exists, or doubt that you are worthy of being there? Those are the key questions. Let’s take the second one first.

The issue of worthiness

This may very well be the biggest stumbling block of all. At first blush you may think that not many people believe themselves to be “unworthy” of holy encounters (or of much of anything, actually), but you would be amazed to find that low self-esteem and lack of self-worth are among the most prevalent mental and emotional afflictions (along with loneliness) suffered by people in the world today. This is especially true in terms of our relationship with God.

Why?

It is really quite simple.

Many millions of people have been raised to believe that they were born in “original sin.” Insofar as God is concerned, they were unworthy at birth. This is what many have been told by their religion. Therefore “unworthiness” is, for many people, an article of faith. Not to believe in one’s own unworthiness is not to believe in the Word of God.

Other religions teach us, as well, that we are all sinners, and while they may not claim that we were unworthy at birth, they now pretty much agree that life in human form has turned us into less-than-perfect beings, unworthy of sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty unless we are perfected, or “saved.”

Indeed, most religions, not only just a few, teach that some form of purification is required in order to qualify for entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. Paradise, it seems, comes at a price.

We must all, we are told, repent of our sins and walk the narrow path. How many of us have done so with sufficient success to meet the requirements of God is arguable—or so conventional wisdom goes.

It is not difficult to understand, given these continuous teachings from our elders, how it comes to pass that millions upon millions of people do indeed think of themselves as unworthy to meet God—and meeting God, of course, is what the Holy Experience is all about.

Defining the experience

Oh, yes, perhaps we have not made that clear before. That IS what we are talking about here. That is what we are discussing. When we talk about the Holy Experience we are talking about meeting God. It is a face-to-face meeting, too, not something that exists only in conceptual constructs.

We are talking about looking at Divinity directly, seeing It right there in front of us, knowing It as part of us, experiencing It as integral to us, and merging into It as our felt reality.

This is precisely our experience following our death, and God has made it clear to us that we are not required to wait until death in order to have it. We may embrace—and, indeed, create—this experience at any time. But we must feel that it is possible, and that we are worthy, to do so.

How, then, to shake off our own thoughts of unworthiness?

The first step is to re-identify ourselves. We must decide again—and for many decide anew—who we are. So long as we imagine that we are other than Who We Really Are, thoughts of our unworthiness will be possible. The moment that we re-identify ourselves, assuming our true and real identity, the idea of unworthiness as it relates to us becomes impossible to conceive.

Ending separation

Currently, most people imagine themselves to be separate from God, from each other, and from everything else that is. In truth, we are all intrinsically connected with everything—including that which we call Divinity. When we drop our idea of separation—which is part of what I have called the Earth’s “Separation Theology”—any thoughts of our unworthiness drop with it.

Robert Heinlein, the famous science-fiction writer, included a line, said many times by many characters, in his novel, *A Stranger in a Strange Land*. The line was, “Thou art God.” In his book, Heinlein had many people greeting and saying goodbye to each other in this way. The line, and the book itself, though meant to be fiction, offers a powerful statement of what is really so. And Heinlein knew it.

On the day that you embrace your True Identity as a Division of Divinity you will abandon forever your thought that you are somehow not “up to” the Holy Experience, or not “worthy” of being included in God’s Kingdom.

God’s Kingdom is right here on Earth, and the Holy Experience is life itself, lived as a demonstration of the unity of everything, in joyous celebration of the wonder and the glory of All That Is.

So many people have a very difficult time with this idea of their Oneness with God, however, that it has become virtually impossible for humanity to drop its idea of separation from God and embrace its true worthiness at last.

In *Home with God* this matter is addressed head on. Here’s a preview of what the dialogue with God in that book reveals. God’s words are in bold.

I've often heard the analogy that I am, to God, as a wave is to the ocean. The same stuff, exactly. Just smaller in size.

That analogy has indeed been used many times, and it is not inappropriate. So now, let us define this "ocean." Let us propose here that God is The Creator. Very few people who believe in a God at all have an argument with that.

If it is true that God is The Creator, this means that you, too, are a creator. God creates all of life, and you create all of your life. It's that simple.

If you think of it that way you can hold it in your consciousness.

You and God are creating all the time—you on the micro level, God on the macro. Are you clear?

Yes, I see! There is no separation between the wave and the ocean. None. The wave is one part of the ocean, acting in a certain way. The wave does the same thing the ocean does, in smaller degree.

That is exactly correct. You are me, acting the way you are acting. I give you the power to act as you are acting. Your power comes from me. Without the ocean, the wave does not have the power to be a wave. Without me, you do not have the power to be you. And without you, my power is not made manifest. Your joy is to make me manifest. The joy of humanity is to manifest God.

Now there's a statement.

Here's another...

Life is God, made physical.

What is important to understand is that there is no single way in which life makes God physical. Some waves are small, barely a ripple, while other waves are huge, thunderous in their sweep. Yet, whether minuscule or monstrous, there is always a wave. There is no time when there is not a wave on the ocean. And while every wave is different, not a single one is divided from the ocean itself.

Difference does not mean division. Those words are not interchangeable.

You are different from God, but you are not divided from God. The fact that you are not divided from God is why you can never die.

The wave lands on the beach, but it does not cease to be. It merely changes form, receding back into the ocean.

The ocean does not get "smaller" every time a wave hits the sand. Indeed, the incoming wave demonstrates, and therefore reveals, the ocean's majesty. Then, by receding into the ocean, it restores the ocean's glory.

The presence of the wave is evidence of the existence of the ocean.

Your presence is evidence of the existence of God.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Six

The second step in creating the Holy Experience is **understanding that you are worthy of having it.**

We touched upon this briefly in the preceding chapter. You might say that the first step in creating the Holy Experience is believing that such a thing is possible, and the second step is believing that such a thing is possible for *you*.

As I said in Chapter 5, most people who suffer from unworthiness around this picked up their thoughts from religion. Many people have been told that they are sinners, that they were born in sin, and that they will die in sin, their only hope for salvation being their constant call for forgiveness, and God's mercy in granting it, or their belief in God's Son as the Redeemer.

Others have been told that even if they were worthy of seeing God—which is what the Holy Experience is all about—they would not be able to see God anyway, because God is so magnificent and utterly unfathomable that God *cannot* be seen, comprehended, or experienced.

Still other religions teach that to even try to fathom God, to try to understand God, is blasphemous. God is the Inexplicable, and should remain so.

Conversations with God tells us that all of these premises are false.

No one is "born in sin." Indeed, sin itself does not exist. There is no such thing as "offending" God. Nor is God subject to stress, anger, frustration, or disappointment. That is simply not the nature of That Which Is Divine.

Perhaps this is a good juncture at which to undertake a brief review of just who and what God is.

In *The New Revelations* we were told...

"God is not a singular Super Being, living somewhere in the Universe or outside of it, having the same emotional needs and subject to the same emotional

turmoil as humans. That Which Is God cannot be hurt or damaged in any way, and so, has no need to seek revenge or impose punishment."

We are told something else there as well, something perhaps a bit more unexpected:

"God needs nothing. God requires nothing in order to be happy. God is happiness itself. Therefore, God requires nothing of anyone or anything in the universe."

Now if these statements are true (and I they are), there is no reason for us to worry about God being angry with us, nor to assess ourselves unworthy of God's love, or of God's presence in our lives, or of the Holy Experience.

Two years later, in *Tomorrow's God*, we were given an even more comprehensive close-up view of God and the nature of Divinity, with some of the earlier revelations being essentially repeated, but with new ones added. Few of the ideas found there, however, are held by the majority of people in today's society. Nearly all of these concepts violate most people's most fundamental beliefs about God. Yet if we were to embrace these concepts, I believe that our whole lives would change.

Here is what that extraordinary text tells us:

** Tomorrow's God does not require anyone to believe in God.*

** Tomorrow's God is without gender, size, shape, color, or any of the characteristics of an individual living being.*

** Tomorrow's God talks with everyone, all the time.*

** Tomorrow's God is separate from nothing, but is Everywhere Present, the All In All, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Sum Total of Everything that ever was, is now, and ever shall be.*

** Tomorrow's God is not a singular Super Being, but the extra-ordinary process called Life.*

** Tomorrow's God is ever changing.*

** Tomorrow's God is needless.*

** Tomorrow's God does not ask to be served, but is the Servant of all of Life.*

** Tomorrow's God will be unconditionally loving, non-judgmental, non-condemning, and non-punishing.*

Stepping away from arrogance

Given all that we have now come to know about God, any thoughts of unworthiness melt away. This assumes, of course, that we *accept* these new understandings and embrace them as truth.

In order to do this we would have to be willing to step away from practically everything we have been told in the past about God and ourselves. We would have to consider the possibility that there may be something we do not fully understand about God, *the understanding of which would change everything*. We would have to give up our spiritual arrogance.

That may seem like a strong phrase to use, and it may not even apply to you, individually. Yet the fact is that the vast majority of the world's people who believe in a God are, in fact, spiritually arrogant, in the sense that they have adopted as their particular conceit the idea that all there is to know about God is now known as fully as it can possibly be, all there is to understand about God is now understood as fully as it can possibly be, and all there is to explore and say about God has been explored and said, as far as it can be.

My friend Bill Fiscofer likes to say, "In fairness, no religion claims they 'understand' God, for all believe that He is infinite and thus beyond understanding. The problem, always, is that our concepts of God are too small. Since God is infinite in all 'directions,' wherever one turns one finds an inexhaustible terrain. Religion A and Religion B both find themselves in infinite fields of wonder and thus assume that they have 'found God.' Indeed, they have, but God is so unfathomably vast that what they fail to notice is that God is 'big enough' to contain the entirety of their (seemingly different) infinite vistas (and more). This is why it is in the *mystical* traditions of religions that one finds spiritual unity (and, of course, in *Conversations with God*), for only here is this larger realization glimpsed."

The followers of many of the world's so called "mainline" religions will tell you that everything you need is in the doctrines and dogmas of their particular faith. It's a complete road map, and all we have to do is follow it. It's the surest path to our salvation. Indeed, say some, it is the *only path*.

Yet that path has not brought humanity to its salvation, but rather, to its knees. It is time now to do something that we have not been willing to do. It is time to *question the prior assumption*.

Our prior ideas about God and Life and each other may very well be incomplete. I do not believe that they are “wrong,” but I do believe that there is more to know, that there are gaps to close, that there are blanks to fill in regarding our understanding of who we are, who God is, and what life is all about.

I believe that the gathering of this knowledge (presuming that we have the courage to do so), the closing of these gaps, and the filling in of these blanks will render obsolete all question of your worthiness for the Holy Experience.

Forgiving ourselves

Yet even if we accept that God will never judge us and never has, there is still the question of our own self-judgment—the harshest judgment of all. And so a major process for us, a huge portion of our internal work and of our personal preparation for the Holy Experience, has to do with self-forgiveness.

Some of what I’m going to say now is going to sound repetitive, and that’s on purpose. You can’t hear this stuff enough. So hear *this*...

Almost always, it is easier for people to embrace the idea that God forgives them than it is for them to forgive themselves. We have a whole list of “wrongs” we imagine ourselves to have done in our lives, and we can’t forget them.

We, and only we, know the inner workings of our mind, the quiet scheming of our heart, the sad assessment of our very human conscience, as we look at our lives and give ourselves a grade.

The trick here is not to try to forget our misdeeds, but to do just the opposite. Remember them, and remember them vividly – for it is what you resist that persists, and what you look at that disappears. That is, it ceases to have its illusory form.

Remember all of your alleged wrong-doings, then do two things at once: (a) agree with yourself never to repeat those behaviors again, and (b) allow yourself to let go of any guilt you have about them, replacing all guilt with regret.

Guilt and fear are the only enemies of man. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross used to say that (it was one of her most oft-used lines), and she was profoundly

right. So get over your guilt about what you've done in the past. Just get over it. *Get over it.*

All of us have made mistakes – and for some of us they have been some pretty big whoppers – but that has nothing to do with your worthiness to see God, to be loved by God, and to have the Holy Experience.

Indeed, *part* of the Holy Experience is understanding this.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Seven

The third step in creating the Holy Experience is **knowing that you are having it.**

In truth, one does not *create* the Holy Experience at all (nor, for that matter, does one create anything). One simply expands one's perspective, allowing one to notice that the experience is already occurring and is just waiting for us to realize it.

All things that “are” now, have ever been, or ever will be, *are now*. In our Timeless Multiverse (we do not live in simply one Universe, but in a multiplicity of universes—something that science is now telling us), nothing will ever be created again. Everything already exists in the Eternal Moment of Now. It was *all created at once!* Ours is to merely reach into that Moment and all that it contains and, with the tool of our perspective, pull out anything that we wish. Like a magician pulling a rabbit from a hat, so, too, do we experience the wonder and the magic of Life.

Remarkably, few people are aware that they are now having the Holy Experience. There are two reasons for this.

1. Most people do not know what the Holy Experience is.
2. Most people do not know who they are.

Our extraordinarily limited perspective allows us only a very limited perception. You can only see what you are able to see. Thomas Aquinas put this eternal truth wonderfully in his *Summa Theologica* when he said: “The thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower.” Total Knowledge, True Knowledge, is not possible for Aspects of Being or Individuations of Divinity of limited perspective—and *all Individuations of Divinity hold a limited perspective of Ultimate Reality by virtue of the fact that they are Individuations.*

Yet all is not lost, for the *degree* to which one's perspective may expand is, in human terms, beyond extraordinary, and, in cosmic terms, virtually

unlimited. This presents a dichotomy, for how can a thing which is inherently limited be virtually unlimited?

One of my friends, who I have quoted before here, Bill Fiscofer, adds this: “Mathematically, this is the distinction between being infinite and being unbounded. The divine is an actual infinity, something which is completely beyond any attempt at comprehension. Individuations of the divine are finite but unbounded, meaning that at any instant they have finite extent but that their capacity for growth and new experience is not limited. We are thus asymptotes of the divine.”

(I probably would spend the rest of my life without ever using the word “asymptotes, but then, Bill is a genius and I, a mere human.)

The solution to the paradox lies in the fact that we are unlimited in what we can ultimately know and experience of ourselves—and the moment we know and experience all that there *is* to know and experience, we will immediately create *more* to know and experience. So we can know our Selves completely, and the moment we know our Selves completely, we do not. We accomplish this neat trick by simply changing the definition of “completely.” Only a God could do this, and that is, of course, exactly who we are.

Reversing the paradigm

Earlier I said that “knowing” you are having the Holy Experience is the third step in “creating it.” (Again, for clarity: I use the word “creating” here in the limited human sense. Everything has already been created. What we call “creating” is really a “remembering” or a “noticing” or an “awareness” that something is already there, already exists, and always did. Yes? So if we understand this, then I will continue to use the word “create” in the human sense.)

So...earlier I said that “knowing” you are having the Holy Experience is the third step in “creating it.” Some people will see this as a juxtaposition of *knowing* and *creating*, and, of course, it is exactly that. Such a juxtaposition is required when we speak (as most of us usually do) within the limited understandings of our current perspective.

Allow me to explain.

Many people believe that creation precedes knowing. That is, you can't truly "know" about something that "is not." This is how it seems to work in the actual living of our lives. Yet what I am saying here is exactly the opposite. We cannot create anything that we do not first know about. Knowing *precedes* creation, and produces it. This is a reversal of the paradigm within which we generally experience ourselves. With such a reversal comes a complete turnaround in our experience.

Knowing is part of the act of creation. It is the first part. It is what must happen before anything else can happen. When one thinks about it logically, it becomes obvious that this is true.

Conversations with God tells us that the three Tools of Creation are:

- Thought
- Word
- Deed

The first step in the creation of anything is to have an idea about it. An idea about something is your Thought about it. It is what you "know" about it. So, knowing is the beginning of creation.

That initial thought may come to you in First Form as a picture, or a feeling. Eventually, you shape that thought into a Word, or several words, or many. This is the second Tool of Creation.

Finally, you turn your Words into Action—the third Tool of Creation—and you have manifestation.

This is an elementary way of understanding the process of life. It is an extremely primitive perspective. Yet it works. For people living within the paradigm of an extraordinarily limited perspective, this crude device, these three very crude tools, can seem like magic.

In truth, because there is no such thing as Creation, there is only a Knowing that everything has already been created, and our task is to merely Call It Forth. This is a higher level of understanding, and is demonstrated through consistent and predictable physical manifestation, which is accomplished by very few people, whom we have called masters and avatars. The rest of us may produce such demonstrations on occasion (perhaps even on several occasions, but rarely on many, and never on every), and such moments inevitably lead us to deeper comprehension.

Deeper comprehension is, of course, the Holy Experience. It is Knowing more fully, through the demonstration of it, Who We Really Are.

Thus it is possible for everyone, and not only masters, to have the Holy Experience (or, in more accurate terms, to Know that we are always having it). This, of course, is the promise of God, and the pledge of all true religions.

Knowing you are having the Holy Experience is as simple as knowing that you are Life. All people know they are living, but few people know they are life. And what is life? A *process*.

You are, therefore, a process.

Knowing what you are

Very few people think of themselves in this way. They may think of themselves as something that IS, but they seldom stop to ask themselves, “is *what?*”

Others think of themselves as a being, a sentient biological creature. Yet they seldom stop to ask themselves, a creature being *what?*

Still others say that they are not their body, but rather, they are that which is *using* the body as a tool. But a tool in the creation of *what?* Themselves, they say. Yet what is that? They will not know until they have created it, they say. And they are right. Profoundly right.

And so, we are all nothing more than a process. We are also nothing less, which is saying a great deal. For we are the process called Life—and that is All There Is.

Our identity becomes more clear to us when we really *hear* those last words—because “all there is” is, of course, another way of saying, “God.”

Putting this into practice

None of this verbal explanation will mean anything if we cannot put it into practice. None of it has any use if we cannot place it on the ground, minute to minute, in our every day lives. Ruminations can be fascinating, but they carry no practical value if we cannot make them live and breathe and manifest in our reality.

From *rumination* to *manifestation*—that is the journey. From our thought about ourselves to our experience of ourselves—that is the path. It is the path upon which the Soul is embarked eternally. It is the Eternal Joy of God.

Putting esoteric wisdom into practice and making it part of our daily lives is the greatest opportunity we will ever have—and we have it every moment. It is the opportunity to know and experience our divinity.

Practicing Esoterism is a lifelong undertaking. Very, very, *very* few people attempt it. Most do not even know it is there to attempt. They are far too busy simply staying alive. That is why it is the first duty of every society that would call itself enlightened to lighten the load of those who barely survive. What we will do for the least among us tells us everything about what we will do as a species.

When the least among many can take their minds off of the constant worry and anxiety of day-to-day survival, they can at last turn their attention to achieving a larger understanding of the matters that will make simple survival a given. *This is the means by which is accomplished the transformation of an entire society.*

Personal and societal transformation is arduous. It is immensely challenging. It is not work for the feint of heart or the weak-spirited. It is work for the strong and the courageous. It is the last step in having the Holy Experience.

The next step is declaring that one is going to do just that.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Eight

The fourth step in creating the Holy Experience is **declaring that you are having it.**

Declaration is the most powerful fuel in the engine of manifestation. It is about “speaking your word.” The three Tools of Creation are Thought, Word, and Deed, and declaration is the second and third tool *combined*.

Declaring that you are having the Holy Experience requires, of course, that you are *aware* that you are having it. You must be *aware* that *every moment of your life is Holy*.

The Secret of Awareness

Awareness is one of the most important experiences that I could ever give my Self during the time that I’m here, living upon the Earth.

To be aware, it seems to me, is to be *alive in the extreme*. It is to live in Completion every moment. Or, as wonderful science-fiction writer Robert Heinlein put it, it is to “grok in fullness.”

Awareness is a Quality of Being. It arises out of a decision that we, and only we, can make a very *conscious decision* to open our Selves to the wonder and the glory and the beauty of Life. Also, to the sadness and the hurt and the darkness.

When one decides to become Aware, one is choosing to be deeply committed to observing, and consciously noticing, the Totality of Every Single Moment.

That’s an interesting phrase, isn’t it? *Conscious Noticing*.

Awareness is not merely observing, but *noticing* at a very high level of *consciousness* exactly what is happening and exactly what is “so”... Right Here, Right Now.

Recently I was walking down the street with a friend and I looked at one of the trees that we were passing on our city street. "Wow, look at that!" I exclaimed. "Isn't it just beautiful the way that tree just sort of hugs that building over there?" My friend hadn't even noticed, until I mentioned it. "That's what I like about you," she said. "You see everything."

Well, I'm not sure that I see *everything*, but I do try to see as much as I possibly can of what is going on around me. Wouldn't it be great if we all did? Someone once said that "enlightenment" is nothing more than *paying attention*.

One thing I don't see as well as I wished I did is myself. I'm not always aware of the way I'm moving through the world, and how that is impacting and affecting others.

So I think that Awareness is not just noticing what's going on around you, but what's going on within you as well. And, what is going on within others.

Of course, we can't always know that, and this is nothing to be playing guessing games with, so one thing we might do if we're unclear about such an important matter...and yes, what is going on within others IS an important matter...one thing we might do is to *check in* with them, and simply *ask*.

Becoming spiritually vital

At the very least, this shows that you are totally present and care genuinely about them and about how things are with them and about how you are impacting them. This is another way of saying "I love you," and it feels very good on the other side of the room, I can tell you. I'm not sure that we spend enough time checking in with each other.

So I think that Awareness is a very, very important aspect of Life. I think it's an important quality to nurture and to grow. If we can grow in Awareness, I think that we grow in one of the most vital ways. I think that Awareness is Vitality. I think it is *Spiritual Vitality*. I think that one is "spiritually vital" when one is Aware---and I think that when one is Aware one becomes "spiritually vital." I'm saying that I think the effect is circular.

So look deeply into each moment. Savor each nanosecond. Don't miss a single cloud formation, if you can help it. Or a single fragrance. Or a single nuance in the energy of your Beloved. Don't miss this; *don't miss this*, DON'T MISS THIS.

When you are aware—deeply aware—of the wonder of Now (Eckhart Tolle has written marvelously on this subject), you find it really very easy to declare that you are now *having* The Holy Experience.

In the previous chapter I said, “Personal and societal transformation is arduous. It is immensely challenging. It is not work for the feint of heart or the weak-spirited. It is work for the strong and the courageous. It is the last step in having the Holy Experience. The next step is declaring that one is going to do just that.

Now I want to tell you that personal and societal transformation doesn't *have to be* arduous. It can be easy when you step out of Yesterday and into the Now.

Stepping out of Yesterday is as simple as realizing: *that was THEN and this is NOW*.

NOW has nothing to do with THEN. We think that it does, but it does not. Yesterday was Yesterday, and it has nothing to do with Today. You are not who you were Yesterday, and nothing you did Yesterday, and nothing that happened to you or through you Yesterday, has anything to do with Today.

Each moment is the Moment of Creation.

This is the Wonder and the Glory of Life. This is precisely *why* each Moment IN Life is, in fact, a Holy Experience. What makes it *holy* is that it embodies the sacred process of creation itself.

This is not something that most people know, or realize in the specific sense. When they do, they often declare openly that *they are having The Holy Experience*.

Yet we do not have to wait until we are having that experience (or *know* that we are having it) to declare that we are having it. Indeed, the very act of declaring it *produces* it.

That was a mouthful right there, that was an extraordinary thing that was just said, and so it deserves to be said again. With regard to The Holy Experience, the greatest secret in Life is that *the act of declaring it produces it.*

This is true of ALL of Life. What you declare is what you produce. Speak your Word, and the word is made flesh and dwells among us.

So never look over your shoulder to know Who You Are right now. You are NOT who you WERE. You are who you are RIGHT NOW. Let go of Yesterday and of all that has happened to you and through you, then simply declare: I Am That I Am.

I Am What I Am Right Here, Right Now.

And just exactly what is that? *It is whatever you choose for it to be.*

Do not “future-ize”

Declaring that you are having The Holy Experience right now also requires that you refuse to step into Tomorrow before Tomorrow comes. This means that we must give up our habit of “future-izing.”

Future-izing is a common human trait. All people look into the future, their own future in particular, and begin to construct realities around that. They imagine what is going to happen and how it is going to happen—and, amazingly, they very often imagine the worst. Then (and here comes the sneaky, tricky part) they *live their lives in this moment, Right Now, as if that negative outcome is certain to be a reality.*

Future-izing is not the same as visualizing. Worrying is not the same as creative visualization. It is all well and good to imagine a positive Tomorrow, but it is even *more* powerful to experience a positive NOW.

Future-izing is the act of living Today as if it were Tomorrow.

The Bible advises us (and I am paraphrasing here)...

So don't go around asking “What are we to eat? What are we to drink? Wherewithal shall we clothe ourselves?” Each day has problems of its own. Keep your eye where? On God, and the Kingdom of Heaven—and all else will be added unto you. For where your heart is, there will your treasure also be.

I have stopped worrying about Tomorrow. When you worry about Tomorrow you cannot know that you are having The Holy Experience right now. Worry robs the Present Moment of its awesomeness.

Why declaring is so powerful

People tend to have the experience they say they are having. Did you know that? This is an amazing truth, and it works. I mean, as a process, it *works*. Announce the truth you wish to experience and more often than not that is the truth you will encounter. This is because all of Life is creative, and the Tools of Creation, as we have already learned, are Thought, Word, and Deed.

Each day when you awaken, thank God for The Holy Experience. Then declare to your Self, "I am having the Holy Experience, Right Here, Right Now. I AM THE HOLY EXPERIENCE."

This Act of Declaration has more power in it than you may ever have imagined. Try it. Try it for seven weeks running, without interruption. Make your Declaration every morning, noon, and night.

I mean that literally. Stop what you are doing every morning, every day at 12 Noon, and every night and make this declaration: I AM THE HOLY EXPERIENCE.

Do this for seven weeks running. It will change your life.

The final step

So, having firmly decided to dwell in the Here and Now, and having firmly declared yourself to be *having* the experience, right now, that you have so long desired, take that Holy Experience and share it with all the world. Do whatever it takes to *make it known* that not only are you *having* The Holy Experience---you ARE The Holy Experience.

This sharing is your next and final Step in the five step process that will allow you to move into The Holy Experience in all times and places, at will.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Nine

The fifth step in creating the Holy Experience is **sharing it with others, so that they may have it.**

This is a bold step. It takes spiritual courage. You must be willing to be seen as someone whose head is above the crowd. For not many people in the crowd called humanity are aware of having the Holy Experience. As I have said now several times, they are not even aware that it is possible for them to have it. They believe that such an experience is for avatars and masters and monks, or “holy ones.” The idea of the Holy Experience being available to anyone, to everyone, is not something that most people can easily accept.

The fastest way to convince others that it *is* available to everyone is to tell others that *you* are having it right now. Of course, if you just do this “out of the blue,” others may look at you as if you are a bit daft. You have to find the time and the place for it. You have to create a context within which your announcement will make sense and be heard, not be ridiculed and ignored.

Why bother? If you are having the Holy Experience, why not just keep it to yourself? Because your experience of *everything in life* is magnified and verified when you share it with another. Held within, kept secret, you may eventually come to think that it is all just a figment of your imagination. Shared with another, it becomes real.

There is also the larger point that until others are having it, you are not having it. Not completely. Not fully. That is because the You that is having the Holy Experience is larger than the “you” that you may imagine yourself to be. The You that you are does not stop at the end of your fingers. It extends outward to all the world. The only thing that ends at your fingertips is the particular physical manifestation that you *call* “you.” But the You that You Really Are encompasses every other person. Therefore, if they are not having the Holy Experience, then You are not. Not completely, but only in part.

So, if you want to have the Holy Experience completely, cause another to have the Holy Experience completely—and another, and another, and another. Share your experience with others, that they, too, may have it.

It's like money

The Holy Experience is just like any other form of wealth. You cannot fully experience it until you share it with others. What good does it do you to have inherited a million dollars if you never spend so much as a nickel of it? Like the Walt Disney comic book character Uncle Scrooge McDuck sitting there ogling his pile of gold, you'll find that there's not much joy in holding onto it. Yet if you grab a handful of it and give it to others—go on a “spending spree”—suddenly you know *experientially* what having that money is all about.

Similarly, if you keep the Holy Experience all to yourself, you will find after a very short while that you are experiencing the smallest part of it. Yet if you grab a handful of it and give it to others – go on a “spiritual spending spree”—suddenly you know *experientially* what having the Holy Experience is all about.

There is a wonderful instruction in the *Conversations with God* material that says, “That which you wish to experience within yourself, cause another to experience.” CwG also says, “That which flows *through* you sticks to you.”

The very act of flowing the Holy Experience out to others causes that experience to stick to you, and if you ever doubted that you were having the Holy Experience, sharing it with others removes that doubt absolutely.

The easiest way to share it

As I explained in the second chapter of this book, the Holy Experience is the experience of knowing Who You Really Are. It is the actual *experience* (as opposed to the intellectual “knowing”) that you *are* every other person and thing. It is the *experience* of nothing being separate from you. Not even God.

Especially not God.

How to share this experience? The easiest way I can think of to cause yourself to know that you are not separate from anyone else is to cause

everyone else to know that they are not separate from you. *That is why sharing the Holy Experience with others works.*

And the easiest way to cause others to know that they are not separate from you is to *act that way*.

This means that you may have to change your whole ground of being. You may have to alter the entire way that you relate to other people. You can begin with feelings.

Feelings: the key to closing the gap

The next time you are with someone, try to gauge what they are feeling. Don't just listen to their words, look deep inside to see if you can get a handle on what they are feeling. Read between the lines. Look *past* the words. Practice what I call Active Listening.

This is a form of listening in which you tune into the communication of the Soul rather than of the Mind of the person before you. Feelings are the language of the soul. This is not a language that it is impossible for you to understand. In fact, just the opposite. You can often understand a person's feelings a lot faster than you can understand their words.

Think of how many times you have listened to a person who is distraught or frightened or very sad or deeply disappointed. Often, their words come out in jumbles, and make no sense at all. You may even have caught yourself saying, "You're not even making sense." You might even have used this as a defense during some verbal exchange.

A person who listens to words rather than feelings often will throw another's words back in their face, reciting perfectly what they've just said word-for-word in order to show them that they are making no sense at all. Right about then is when the other person will say, "Can you hear anything at all about how I am *FEELING?*"

Right about then is when you know that you have been listening to that person's Mind, and have made a decision to have nothing at all to do with their Soul. If that other person thinks that he or she is your "soul partner," this can be a devastating experience. They will wonder why you cannot *hear* them at the level of Soul, but insist only on taking their *words* apart, one by one, and analyzing them to show them how silly they are being.

A few experiences such as this can change a relationship forever. Someone who was once very close to you can decide that it is not safe to remain that close—that perhaps they were *never* that close—because you have no idea at all of how they are *feeling*.

The fastest way to let someone know that you and they are One is to feed back to them exactly what they are *feeling*. This means giving up *defense* in all verbal exchanges—even arguments—and realizing that, if the two of you are One, *there is no one to defend against*. There is only to understand what the Totality called the Oneness of You is now experiencing.

This means honestly looking at your own feelings and opening to the feelings of others.

Defenselessness is the Holy Experience

In the Holy Experience one is defenseless. There is no need to defend because the experience of attack is not possible, nor is the experience of damage. There is only what is happening, what is now going on, but it is labeled neither attack nor damage by The One, hence, there is no need for defense, judgment, or forgiveness.

This is exactly what was experienced by Jesus when he was crucified on the cross. He understood that The One was doing this to Oneself, for purposes much higher and grander than that which was seen or understood by the Individuations of The One who stood in the moment, observing everything but seeing nothing.

When having an exchange with another, be sure that you are not standing in the moment observing everything but seeing nothing. Too often among human beings this is the case. Not only when people are arguing with each other, either. Sometimes this happens even when they are loving each other. *Even when they are making love*. They are observing everything but seeing nothing.

To have the Holy Experience, share the Holy Experience. Do this by sharing in the feelings of others. As you listen to what they are saying, do not repeat their own words back to them. *Never repeat someone's own words back to them if you want to get closer to them*. Do you think they do not know what they have just said? Or, if they do *not* know, do you think that they want this pointed out to them?

What they want is to be *heard* at the level of *feelings*. Therefore, instead of repeating their words back to them, say what you think they are feeling. This is Active Listening. A dialogue with an INactive listener could go something like this:

“You always come home late from work, even when you promise that you’ll be on time for dinner.”

“I do not *always come home late from work*. I was not late even yesterday. You always do that. You always make it worse than it is in order to make your point.”

“I’m *not* making it worse than it is! You may have gotten home on time yesterday, but today is the third time this week you’ve been late!”

“Third TIME? I didn’t even GO to work on Monday. I was sick, remember? You see what I mean? You don’t even know what you’re talking about.”

“Okay! It was twice this week, three times last week! I don’t have a calendar on my wrist. All I’m saying is that you’re late again, and I’m tired of yelling about it.”

“*You’re* tired of yelling about it? I’M tired of yelling about it. Now I don’t even want to EAT dinner. Forget it. I’ll be in the den if you want to talk to me nicely for a change...”

Now that exchange *could* have gone a lot differently, if even one of the two people had been an Active Listener...

“You always come home late from work, even when you promise that you’ll be on time for dinner.”

“I see that you’re disappointed that I’m home so late, and I’m really sad that you’re disappointed. Is there anything I can do to make you feel any better?”

“This is the third time this week you’ve been late!”

“Wow, you’re really upset.”

“I *am* upset, and I’m sorry to *be* so upset, but gosh, this keeps happening all the time.”

“I hear that you’re sad, and even a little angry. I want you to know that I hurt inside when you’re sad or angry. I love you.”

“I love you, too. Could you please try to make it home on time a little more often?”

“I’ll try. Sometimes the time gets away from me. I’ll try to watch the time more closely. Thanks for saying you love me. I know that if you didn’t, none of this would matter to you. It feels good to be loved that much.”

“Well, I *do* love you, for heaven sake. So come on over here and sit down. It’ll take me just a minute to warm our dinner.”

This is just a simple example of what it is like to have the Holy Experience in an Everyday Life kind of situation.

The Holy Experience is when you give every person back to themselves. It is when you cause them to know who they really are. Namely, that they are important to you, that they are *part* of you. And that they are part of God. You treat them as if they were Godly, as if they were Divine.

This is the Holy Experience, made real.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Ten

There are many areas of life, many situations, in which you may choose to have the Holy Experience.

Now that may sound like a strange thing to say, so let's take a look at it. At first, it may seem strange to speak of the Holy Experience as something that you "choose to have." Most people think of things that are holy as things that are rare. Or at the very least, not controllable *in the first person*. That is, they do not seem themselves as being at cause in the matter.

In fact, they are. We all are. All of us. We are "choosing to have" all of the experiences that we are having, moment-to-moment.

Now remember, I said all of the *experiences*, not all of the *conditions, circumstances, or events*. An "experience" is something that you feel inside about something that is happening outside. Your "experience" of something is "how it felt to you." It is nothing more, and nothing less, than that.

In the world of Duality Thinking (which is the world in which most of us live), you could imagine that somebody else is "doing something" to you, or that some seemingly uncontrollable outward condition, such as the weather, has been encountered by you, without you having anything to do with it. (This is impossible, actually, but in the world of our illusion such impossibilities can seem very real.)

The world of Duality Thinking says that there is US and IT, or US and THEM. In the world of Non-Duality Thinking there is only US and US. There is nothing else *but* US, in differing form.

If there is only US, then nothing can be happening TO us, and everything must be happening THROUGH us.

This is, in fact, the case. Nevertheless, an event could have the *appearance* of happening TO us—and when it does, if it is a negative event, it will be very hard to stop from thinking of ourselves as the victim of that

circumstance. We see ourselves as the victim, rather than the creator, of our present situation.

The movement from victim to creator is an astonishment. It is the movement that Masters make.

Everyone can be a Master—indeed, everyone already is a Master—and it is true that not everyone knows this. In fact, few people do.

What it takes to experience the fact one is already a Master is to make a commitment to having the Holy Experience every day. Indeed, *all day* every day, if it is possible. And it is.

Let us look now into the various areas or aspects of our lives, to see, one area at a time, how one may move into the Holy Experience, *at will*.

Looking at life, one part at a time

Let's break down the average person's life into five distinct areas, then use the next five chapters to explore each of them as they relate to the Holy Experience.

Loosely, most people's lives might be broken down into these areas or situations:

1. Yourself
2. Your significant other
3. Your family
4. Your work or chief activity
5. Your larger life in the world

Of course, such arbitrary "categories" are always deceiving, always incomplete, always fuzzy as to borders and boundaries. Nevertheless, it could be said that, in the main, one's activities during a typical day will involve interactions with either one's self, one's significant other, one's other family members, one's work or chief activity, or one's "larger world" contacts, acquaintances, and outside-of-the-house connections (the clerk at the post office, the lady at the supermarket, the people at the hair styling salon, etc.)

As already noted, there are overlaps, certainly. But let's focus in, for the purposes of this exploration, on those five areas of human interaction.

The Holy Experience and Yourself

This is where it all starts. This is where everything begins, if it is to begin at all. All experience commences with the Self. All experience *resides* within the Self. All experience is created *by* the Self. Absent the Self, there is no experience at all.

That is the answer to the classic question: *Does a tree falling in the forest make a sound if there is no one there?*

The answer is, yes, of course. Yet the tree *making noise* is an *occurrence*. The act of someone *hearing* the noise is an *experience*. In life, if a thing has occurred but it has not been experienced, its occurrence means nothing at all.

Nothing has any meaning, save the meaning we give it. If there is no one to give it meaning, *it has no meaning*. Things do not have meaning in and of themselves. There is no such thing as *intrinsic meaning*. As well, there is no such thing as intrinsic truth.

This is the Holy Experience, right here. The Holy Experience is the *giving of meaning* to something by us.

It is in the moment that we give something meaning that the most sacred experience takes place.

The experience is pure creation—and that is sacred, indeed. It is the most extraordinary thing that a sentient being can do.

There are two ways to give something meaning: (1) we can pull the meaning from our Past, or (2) we can choose the meaning in our Present, as Highly Evolved Beings would do.

(Once again, this is explained with wonderful clarity in the CWG book *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*, where will be found an extraordinary explanation of the Mechanics of the Mind and the System of the Soul.)

Lower animals do not *create* meaning, they simply remember it. A deer hears a twig snap in the forest and “decides” that it means danger. The

deer doesn't wait around to see if he's right or not. The deer scampers. Because the deer remembers.

The *first* time that deer heard a twig snap, he may have been very young, and he watched his parents scamper. So he scampered, too. Now he scampers even though his parents are not there. What made his parents scamper? *Their* parents scampered. What made their parents scamper? *Their* parents scampered. Deer-scampering has been going on for generations.

Higher animals do not scamper if they hear a twig snap in the forest—unless they choose to. Higher animals hear the same sound, but go through an entirely different process. They *think about* the snap. They think about who or what might have made the noise, how close the noise is, what it means, and what level of danger they are in, if any.

As soon as you think about something you are *acting*, as opposed to *reacting* (which means to “act as you did before”)—which is what deer do. You give the snap meaning. Just as you give everything in your life meaning. What meaning you give the events of your life depends on whether you are coming from your Past, or your Present; from you Mind or from your Mind PLUS your Soul, working co-jointly.

Most people come from their Past. In fact, most people find it impossible *not to*. They make their decisions based on their prior thought about a thing; their Past Data. Masters, on the other hand, make their decisions based on their Total Comprehension (a product of the Mind AND the Soul, working together) and their Future Intention.

Memory, or Intention.

That is the choice.

Always.

When you come from your memory, you create one kind of experience. When you come from your intention, you create another kind of experience altogether.

Always, with your choices, you are answering a single question: *Who am I?*

Remember what *Conversations with God* taught us. Every act is an act of self-definition.

I said, *every act is an act of self-definition.*

Study that sentence carefully. When you embrace its implications utterly, you begin the process of the Holy Experience with your Self.

Who are you when you are alone?

Self-creation is a Holy Experience. It is sacred. It is you, deciding Who You Are.

What do you think of yourself in the morning? First thing in the morning, what is your idea about yourself? How about the last thing at night? What is your final assessment of Self just before falling asleep?

This is you, deciding about you. Some people call it “wrestling with your conscience.”

In the quiet moments of your day, what do you think and do? When you are with your Self and no one else, how does life proceed for you? Do you eat well, or do you “sneak” a treat that you would not have if someone were watching? Do you meditate every morning, or only the mornings that another is there? Do you exercise each day, or only on the days that another reminds you, cajoles you, shames you into it? *Who are you when you are alone?*

You and you

Are you reconciled with your Self? When you talk to your Self, in your mind or even out loud, is your Self happy with you? How do you make the Self happy? How do you bring the Self joy? The answer to these questions says a great deal about you.

From where does your joy originate? Is it from something exterior to you, or from something interior? Is it from something you are doing, or something you are being?

And how do you bring your Self peace?

Finally: who do you think you are, anyway...?

The Holy Experience with the Self is the *living of the highest decision you have made about yourself*. The beginning of that experience is the making of that decision.

Who do you think you are, anyway? Do you think you are a scoundrel? Do you think you are a trustworthy person? Do you think you

are a teller of truth, always? Do you think you are a less than consistently truthful person, who slips and slides around the truth just a little in order to get through the moment? Do you think you are a person of integrity, who never cheats? Do you think you are a person who will cheat a little on others if it gets you something you want?

Who do you think you are, anyway?

Do you think you are a person of patience? Do you think you are a person of compassion? Do you think you are a person who easily becomes impatient, and then snaps at others? Do you think you are a warm and humorous and loving person? Do you think you are a person who instantly brightens up whatever room you enter?

Do you think you are who you were yesterday, or who you choose to be right now? Do you think you are a product of your ideas, or of the ideas of others? Do you think you are doomed to repeat old behaviors, or designed to create new ones?

Who do you think you are?

Are you a person who becomes annoyed easily, or are you easy-going? Are you a person who laughs easily and lustily, or who grins quietly and holds most of the joy in? Are you a person of quick generosity, who does not think twice about giving away money, allowing the use of your possessions, and extending your home and your time and your love to others, or are you a person who is a bit more circumspect, a bit more cautious, in these matters?

Are you the person you wish you were?

Most people cannot see themselves. They are one thing, and they see themselves as another. They act one way, and they swear that they don't act that way at all. Their behavior has to be pointed out to them over and over again before they will even look at it, much less accept it. Some people wouldn't believe it if you showed them a video tape of themselves. They would say you edited it, or doctored it, or that, well, you may have caught them at a bad moment, but that is unfair and that is not how they really are.

It is an irony of the human condition that most people deny the worst of themselves—and *that most people deny the best of themselves.*

Yet if they would embrace the best of themselves, claim it and call it real, the “worst” of themselves would soon fall away and disappear. This is the Holy Experience: embracing and claiming the best of yourself.

Of course, there really is no “best” and “worst”. Those are judgments that humans make, having nothing to do with Ultimate Reality. But there ARE many ways of showing up in the physical world, and you get to choose which way speaks most clearly of Who You Choose to Be, and of Who You Really Are.

Do you think you are a messenger?

You are. You are bringing a message TO life, ABOUT life, through the process of Life Itself. You are doing this in every moment. You are a messenger and a creator.

The Holy Moment is when you understand this.

The Holy Experience is when you become it.

You and God

Of course, a major part of your experience of your Self is your experience of yourself as you relate to the thing that you call God. Somewhere along the way in your life you have to make some pretty big decisions. You must decide, for yourself...Is there a “God”? If so, Who or What is this thing you call The Divine? What is Its purpose? What does it want, need, or require? What is your true relationship with It?

I cannot answer these questions for you, but only for myself. Yet you must answer them, it seems to me, if you are ever to have any peace of mind. At the end of the day, each human being must decide, *What is my relationship to all the Rest of This? What am I doing here? Why am I doing it? What happens, if anything, when this is all over?*

I want to suggest to you that your answers to those questions will color the entirety of your life and the way you experience it. These are not, therefore, unimportant matters. The answers that I have found extremely helpful to me may be found in the *Conversations with God* dialogues. If those explorations assist you in finding your own answers, I am blessed and grateful that they have served you.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Eleven

I said in Chapter 10 that we were going to break down the average person's life into five distinct areas, then use these chapters to explore each of them as they relate to the Holy Experience.

Loosely, most people's lives might be broken down into these areas or situations:

1. Yourself
2. Your significant other
3. Your family
4. Your work or chief activity
5. Your larger life in the world

In Chapter 10 we looked at the Holy Experience and yourself. Now let's look at the Holy Experience and your significant other.

Everyone has a significant other—whether they are in an intimate, romantic relationship or not. Of course, the term “significant other” does not refer only to a person with whom you sleep. It refers to any being with whom you share the largest portion of your life. That could be a sister or brother, a parent, a child, a close friend.

When discussing the Holy Experience and yourself, I said: “Always, with your choices, you are answering a single question: *Who am I?* Every act is an act of self-definition. When you embrace the implications of that sentence utterly, you begin the process of the Holy Experience with your Self.”

Now I am going to say the same thing, only as it pertains to your significant other. Always, with your choices, you are answering a single question: *Who is this other?* Every act involving another is an act of definition of the other. When you embrace the implications of that sentence utterly, you begin the process of the Holy Experience with your significant other.

Everyone is who you say they are. If you say they are your best friend, they are. If you say they are your enemy, they are. If you say they are your most trusted companion, they are. That is because *you are the one doing the deciding*.

Other people tend to show up in our lives exactly as we think that they will. Even if they don't in their world, in *our world* they do. This is another way of saying that if you have a definite thought about someone, it almost does not matter what they do. You will still think of them in the way that you do.

Have you ever noticed how two people can have nearly polar-opposite experiences of the same third party? One person says that the third person is wonderful, while the other says that the third person is horrible. Both are right, for both have created *their experience* of that third person in their reality.

It doesn't matter *what* that third person does. In fact, that third person can do the *exact same thing* to both of the others, and one of the others will think it's wonderful while the second will think it's horrible. I've actually seen this happen!

I saw a person bid \$10,000 once at a local charity auction, and two people with whom I am acquainted saw it in entirely different ways. The first thought it was wonderful and incredibly generous; a typical gesture of a very kind and open-hearted man. The second thought it was show-offy and incredibly gauche; a typical "over the top" gesture by an ego maniacal power grabber and attention-getter.

Osama bin Laden was thought of in one way by millions, and in the exact opposite way by millions of others. Our experience of our significant others depends more than we will ever know on our own thought about them.

The Holy Experience is an act of creation. That sentence is important enough to repeat. *The Holy Experience is an act of creation*. It is not something you step *into*. It is something you step *out of*. It is where you *come from* as you encounter any other person.

Love is not a reaction, it is a decision.

I'll never forget the first time I heard that wisdom. I think it was in *The Road Less Traveled* by M. Scott Peck. It hit me like a ton of bricks. I was

knocked out by it. Wow, I thought, *what a revelation*. True love, real love, is not a reaction, it is a decision.

Your relationship with your significant other will be exactly what you make of it. When you understand this, you will understand the Holy Experience of love. Love means seeing another as Who They Are even when they are not acting like it.

This is what God does with *us*.

This is what we very often fail to do with each other.

A childhood barb; an adult magic

When I was a boy I remember a schoolhouse bully who used to bump into me whenever we passed in the hall. If I had any kind of reaction at all he would turn around and come at me, taunting, "You wanna make something of it?"

As I grew older I realized that there was a great deal to learn from this childhood interaction. It was *I* who was making something of it; of *everything*, really.

I am now very clear that this is what we do with our significant other. We "make something of" that person, and what we make of them is how we experience them.

To a large degree, this is true. Certainly, there are some things that the other person is doing, too, to create themselves, and we are co-creating our relationship together. That is what is "so." But it is undeniable that my own idea about my significant other and of what she is doing is, well...*significant*.

I have turned a childhood barb into adult magic. In my significant relationship, it is what I "make of it" that it is most likely to become.

Now what we have to guard against is making that other person more perfect and more idealized than they could ever hope to be. This kind of "projection" can create an image that is very difficult for our significant other to live up to. So we have to be balanced in our view of the other. We have to create the space for them to be human. It will do no good at all for us to put them on a pedestal.

Yet we can put them in a place of high regard. And we can choose to see them as blessed beings, who bless us by being in our life.

The Self and the Other become one

The most powerful thing we can do when we form a romantic relationship with a significant other is to see them as ourselves. “And the two shall become one.” This is the essence of the Holy Experience.

The Holy Experience as it relates to your significant other is the forgetting of the Single Self through the enfolding of that Other into the Self as a part of the Self, as one with the Self, and identical to the Self. It is when there is no place where the Self ends and the Other begins. When there is absolutely no experience of separation, real or imagined.

In day-to-day relationship with your significant other, when something—anything—happens, you give that happening meaning. Just as you give everything in your life meaning. What meaning you give the events in your relationship depends on whether you are coming from your Past or your Present.

As I have made clear now several times, most people come from their Past. In fact, most people find it impossible *not to*. They make their decisions about what is going on in this moment in their relationship based on their prior thought. Masters, on the other hand, make their decisions based on their future intention.

Memory or intention. That is the choice. Always. When you come from your memory, you create one kind of experience of relationship with your significant other. When you come from your intention, you create another kind of experience altogether.

This coming from intention rather than from memory is the adult magic that can make all your relationship dreams come true. It is the shift from *reaction* to *creation* that makes all relationships feel brand new. Just as you can recreate your self anew in every golden moment of now in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever you held about Who You Are, so, too, can you recreate your relationship anew. And if the person with whom you are *in* relationship truly *is* your *significant* other, this is what you will want to do in every golden moment of now. As it relates to your most intimate friend, this is the Holy Experience.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Twelve

I said in Chapter 10 that we were going to break down the average person's life into five distinct areas, then use these chapters to explore each of them as they relate to the Holy Experience.

Loosely, most people's lives might be broken down into these areas or situations:

1. Yourself
2. Your significant other
3. Your family
4. Your work or chief activity
5. Your larger life in the world

In Chapter 10 we looked at the Holy Experience and yourself. In Chapter 11 we looked at the Holy Experience and your significant other. Now let's look at the Holy Experience and your family.

"Family" is the closest we will ever come to creating, embracing, expressing, and experiencing the true nature of our ultimate reality. The feeling that most people have inside of the family environment is the feeling that the soul has when it returns to God.

It is a feeling of oneness, of what might best be described as "singularity in multiplicity." Within a family we feel as if we are experiencing a "singularity," and within this singularity family members experience themselves as a "multiplicity." We are multiple members of a single unit. We have individuated experiences of a single, *combined* experience.

When we are with family, we feel we are "home." This is true wherever those family members and we may be at the time.

This is precisely the experience that the Individuated Essence that we call the Soul moves through when encountering The Single Essence that some of us call God.

When the experience of "family" is a good one, it is the experience of being loved without condition, protected in every situation, encouraged and supported in each endeavor, and never really feeling alone.

This is precisely the experience we have when we observe that we are part of the eternal and endless Family of God.

What life invites us to experience is an even grander version of that. We are invited by life to, first, notice the wonder of the experience called family, and then, to extend it. To extend that joy and love and safety and wonder to all those whose lives we touch.

We are invited to experience ourselves as members of the *human* family, and to imagine how we would treat others if we really thought that we were exactly that: *members of the same family*. This is the Holy Experience as it relates to our family.

You can know that you are having the Holy Experience when you consider every other member of the human race to be a member of your own family. When you *experience* them in that way.

For many people this is extremely difficult because it goes against the grain of everything they've ever learned or been taught or understood.

Many cultures actually teach their children not to think of people outside of their immediate cultural group as members of their own family. In fact, it goes further than that. Many cultures actively instruct their children to think of some of the people who are outside of their immediate cultural group as *enemies*; to oppose, even to be *at war*, with other cultures because of cultural differences which they believe to be antithetical to their own survival.

For centuries and millennia the human race has lived within a social construct of separation and division. This has been created out of our earliest thoughts that we are separate from everything we see and separate from that Source of All Creation which we have imagined to be responsible for the universe around us.

From the beginning of time, human beings have understood that something Larger Than Us was responsible for the outer world of our observation. We looked up at the night sky and saw something more expansive and a magnificent than anything we knew humanity was capable of creating. We watched the elements play their effect on our daily lives -- the wind, the rain, the fires, and all the elements of life -- and we knew that

something greater than us had to be responsible for these as well. We watched the changing of the seasons and we observed the phenomenon of weather -- the ravages of hurricanes and tornadoes and earthquakes and floods and other natural disasters -- and once again we came to the conclusion that something *outside* of us, or *larger* than us, or *other* than us, had to do with all this. Surely *we* had nothing to do with it, so Someone Else must.

From these and other observations we came to the natural conclusion that something that we today call "God" or "Allah" or "Jehovah" or "Brahman" (or any one of a hundred other names) *must exist*. We were correct in our conclusion, even if we were incorrect in our means of reaching it.

The First Mistake

God does exist, but the incorrect part of the conclusion that we reached is that God exists outside of us, as an aspect of life that is *separate* from us. This idea of separation is what might be called, in the New Spirituality, "Original Sin." Of course in the New Spirituality there is no such thing as "sin," and so perhaps this idea of separation might better be described as "Original Perception."

Our early ideas of separation produced a separation cosmology -- that is, a way of holding life itself. This separation cosmology eventually produced a separation theology, which eventually produced a separation sociology, which has now produced a separation pathology.

It is this separation pathology that we see in evidence wherever we look, that is expressed in virtually every one of the choices, actions, and decisions of all of our human institutions -- including government, education, commerce, our collective economies, and our social constructions of every kind...not the least of which we call our religions.

Under such conditions it is no wonder that we find it so difficult to think of people outside of our immediate environment—to say nothing of people of other cultures—as members of our own family. Yet the failure to think of people in this way is what has produced the vast majority of the suffering and the pain and the anguish and the difficulties and the challenges and the human-created disasters that we witness on our planet every day.

It is both the great sadness and the great irony of the human condition that 90% of all human suffering could be disappeared from the face of the earth if we simply embraced every human being as members of our own family.

What it would take to do this is a shifting away from our lifelong human experience and a movement into the Holy Experience of which we have been speaking in this book.

Movement into the Holy Experience can be a matter of will, not just a matter of luck. It is something that can occur spontaneously, yes, but it can also occur intentionally. We do not have to wait for the Holy Experience to fall upon us like some magic rain from a mystical heaven. We can *cause* the Holy Experience to be a part of our own daily encounter with life, part of our own daily experience of our Most Holy Selves, part of our daily expression of Divinity Itself.

What I'm saying here is that the Holy Experience can be created as well as awaited. I have said this before, earlier in this text. As with many of the other points I have made, I am repeating it here for emphasis. That little bit of poetry is something that we might beneficially put to memory, so let me repeat it:

The Holy Experience can be *created* as well as *awaited*.

When we choose to create it as an active demonstration of our will when we look into the face of humanity every day, we understand how the Holy Experience relates to the human experience called "family."

Forgiveness as part of the Holy Experience

Of course, we could not begin to see all the human beings as members of our own family unless we could begin to forgive all other human beings for what we imagined them to have done to us. Forgiveness is essential to the experience of family.

Now the New Spirituality teaches that forgiveness is never necessary. It tells us that God never forgives us for anything, because God finds nothing in our behavior for which we have to be forgiven. This is because God can neither be damaged nor destroyed, nor hurt in any way whatsoever. Since

God is incapable of being hurt, God is incapable of being vengeful. For what would God seek vengeance?

When all human beings see themselves as expressions of the Divine, all human beings will also understand themselves to be impervious to hurt or damage. They then, too, will find themselves incapable of being vengeful. For what would they seek vengeance? What reason would they have to yearn for revenge when they have never been in any way injured?

The idea of revenge disappears when the idea of our injury is dissolved. And the idea of our injury is dissolved when the idea of our own divinity is embraced. This is the threshold of a new way of being human. This is the borderline between the New Spirituality and the old way of experiencing ourselves and God.

With the disappearance of the need to forgive comes the disappearance of the need to remain separate from anyone. Ultimately, all we have to do is remember Who We Really Are. When that occurs, forgiveness is rendered obsolete, and separation become impossible to experience except in our own imagination.

We may indeed wish to *imagine* that we are separate in order to serve a particular moment's agenda, but for that purpose and that moment only, not across a lifetime. Indeed, even the imagining of separation is not necessary. We needed merely to experience our *individuation*.

When we see ourselves as individuated, but not separated, we begin to at last understand the true nature of our Real Self. This is the breakthrough for which we have been waiting. This is the revelation which we have been promised from the beginning of time. It is a revelation that has been made before, yet we have not heard it, or if we have heard it, we have not embraced it, or if we have embraced it, we have not put it to use as a practical matter in our day-to-day lives.

The difference between *individuation* and *separation* is the Divine Remembrance. It is the Grand Secret. It is the Holy Grail. It is the Ultimate Truth.

And so we should say that it is *remembrance* that is essential to the experience of family. Indeed, all of the Holy Experience is instigated by *remembrance*. Remembrance this is the key that opens the lock to the golden door of eternal wisdom.

You have been brought here for the purpose of remembering. That is why you have placed this book before you. That is why you have caused these words to come to you. The question now is not whether you know what it is you are invited to remember. The question is, will you accept the invitation?

The Holy Experience

Chapter Thirteen

I said in Chapter 10 that we were going to break down the average person's life into five distinct areas, then use these chapters to explore each of them as they relate to the Holy Experience.

Loosely, most people's lives might be broken down into these areas or situations:

1. Yourself
2. Your significant other
3. Your family
4. Your work or chief activity
5. Your larger life in the world

In Chapter 10 we looked at the Holy Experience and yourself. In Chapter 11 we looked at the Holy Experience and your significant other. In Chapter 12 we looked at the Holy Experience and your family. Now let's look at the Holy Experience and your work, or chief activity.

I want to begin this exploration by telling you that your life was never meant to be about "work." Not in the way that most people use the word.

The dictionary defines *work* as: activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result; such activity as a means of earning income; employment; a task or tasks to be undertaken; something a person or thing has to do.

Life was meant to be joy, joy, and more joy—all attainable with no work at all. Mind you, I did not say without *effort*. I said, without *work*.

"Effort" does not have to mean "strain" or "stress" or "difficult or unwelcome exertion." Effort can mean, simply: "energy expended." And if that energy is expended happily—as in, for instance, a loving and frolicking sexual encounter, or the making of a snowman, or the swimming of laps in a pool on a sweltering summer's day—it can be a *joyful* effort. It takes "effort" to swim those laps, but it does not take "work." It takes "effort" to build that

snowman, but it does not take “work.” It takes “effort” to make love, but it does not take “work.”

Any undertaking, even if it is at a place of employment, that brings you happiness, that leaves you brimming with excitement and pleasure, can hardly be called “work.”

The Holy Experience is the moment in which we realize that we are being *paid* to do something that we absolutely love; something that we would pay *another* to let us do. Musicians often experience this. Actors and singers and dancers often do. Carpenters and bakers and artists and clothing designers often do. Real estate sales persons often do. In fact, *anyone* does who *loves what she or he is doing*.

I’ll never forget my first full years in the “work-a-day world.” I was 19 years old, had attended college for two years and was invited by the Dean of Men to leave the university in favor of someone who wanted to use my seat to actually learn something—which my grades had demonstrated that I clearly did not seem to care much about.

I was *free!* My father, who was paying for my tuition and was not too pleased with my flunking out of school, said, “Okay, son. You think you know best? You’re on your own.” And then I did what I had always wanted to do; something I had dreamed about doing since I was 9 years old: I got a job in radio! I became a bona fide, real live, genuine *radio announcer*.

(How I got my start in broadcasting is detailed in the book *Friendship with God*, if anyone has an interest!)

I can remember my very first payday. I could not believe—really and truly, plainly and simply, could not *believe*—that someone was going to *actually give me money* for doing what I was doing!

What I was doing was sitting in front of a microphone, playing my favorite music for four hours, and talking. In later years I used to tell the joke that I had to turn around and reach behind my back to grab my check because I couldn’t look my boss in the eye and take the money. I just loved what I was up to! It was, for me, so *easy*. It wasn’t *work at all*.

It was right then that I experienced that I didn’t have to do something that I didn’t like to do, that wasn’t any fun, or that I wasn’t really all that good at, in order to “earn my keep.”

Since that time I've had only one job that I didn't like. I won't bother getting into my Whole Sad Story around that. It's enough to say that I held the position for all of seven months, and then found a way to "get out of it" with honor. (I couldn't just walk away. The wonderful woman to whom I was married at the time was eight months pregnant with child #1.)

I was 23, and from that day to this I have never again found it necessary to "earn" money by "working." I have generated income by "playing." By doing things I loved to do. Broadcasting. Photography. Journalism. Political Campaign Media Rep. Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations. A little bit of acting. More broadcasting (talk show host). And, finally, published author.

I'm not bragging here. I'm hoping to make a point. "Work" should be a joy. And it can be. It was meant to be, it was designed to be, and it can be. But first, a person must understand the purpose of "work." And here is the secret. It seems to be something that I intuitively knew from my earliest days as an "adult." Don't ask me where I picked this one up. I just sort of *knew it*:

"Work" has nothing to do with "earning" your way. We do not have to *earn* the right to be here. We do not have to *earn* the right to take up space on the planet. And we do not have to *earn* the right to stay alive and to help keep those that we love alive. These are *natural rights*, and they should not have to be *earned*. Life *itself* should provide for Life Itself.

And it does.

It does.

Life is a process that provides for Life Itself through the process of *life itself*.

All we have to do is get out of the way and let Life flow through us. "Let the force be with you." Let the energy that enlivens *you* enliven *life*.

Too good to be true

Now I know that this sounds too simple, and waaay too good to be true. But it *is* simple, and it *is* true.

Yet, to be fair, I need to admit that I did not understand all this myself until I was in my 50s, after my conversation with God experience. Before then I thought I had been just "lucky." I thought I just managed to catch all the

breaks. I thought myself extremely fortunate; one of those people for whom things always seem to work out.

Only after my conversations with God did I realize what had been going on all those years, from the time I was 19. It was my *attitude*. It was all about the *energy* that I had historically put out. It was the way I *thought* about it. I *thought* that I was an uncommonly lucky person and so I *was*. I *thought* that things always work out, and so they *did*.

I had been using a *system*. Inadvertently. Unknowingly. But effectively.

It turns out that the way you think has an enormous effect, perhaps even a disproportionate effect, on the way you live. Very early in my conversations with God I was told that there are three Tools of Creation. These are Thought, Word, and Action.

The use of these tools throws our focus on what it is that we choose from what Deepak Chopra calls “the field of infinite possibilities.” How you experience your life depends on how you look at it. If you look at it as a constant stream of difficulties and challenges, messes and problems, it will show up that way. If, on the other hand, you see it as a continuing flow of good fortune, one good thing after another, that is what you will encounter.

In life, it really *is* a case of “what you see is what you get.” Even when so-called “bad” things have happened to me, I always had a sense that everything would ultimately work out. And work out, I might add, in my favor.

And they always did.

Even my time as a homeless person worked out. True, it took a year, during which I lived in a tent at a campground populated largely by vagrants, but everything began ultimately falling into place, and today I see the time that I spent panhandling on the street as one of the most pivotally important passages of my life.

Realization produces actualization

The Holy Experience for me as it pertains to my work or my chief life activity came when I realized that Life is on my side; that Life always works out for me not because I’m one of the lucky ones, but because Life is always

working out for everyone, and that I'm simply one of the few who sees it that way.

I came to this realization after the age of 50, following a half-century of day-to-day occurrences on this planet and, not coincidentally, following my conversations with God experience. Because of that experience I now see every outward circumstance, every Exterior Event, as being for my benefit. I may not see or recognize or understand the benefit right then and there, in the moment something is happening, but I know deep inside that everything that is happening is happening for my own good.

My life has *shown* me that. More than once I have undergone an experience that I thought, at the time, was the worst thing that could ever happen to me—only to realize, after the passage of time, that it was one of the *best* things that ever happened to me; that if it had *not* happened, the good things that were happening to me now could not be happening!

This is really an amazing revelation. It's a sacred, really...a sacred realization.

Everything is happening for my own good. It could be no other way in the Kingdom of God.

And that is where I am. This is *not* "hell on earth." This life is *not* a "trial and a tribulation." We are not in a "school," having to "learn our lessons." Life is not a "test" that if we pass we go to "heaven," and if we fail we go to "hell."

That's not what's going on here.

We are not simply biological creatures, the result of a happenstance of chemical processes, walking the earth just trying to get through it all with a minimum of harm to ourselves and others. We are Creations of the Deity, Products of the Divine, Individuations of God. We are Singular Expressions of The Singularity, Essential Elements of the Essence of Life Itself.

God gave me a wonderful model with which I could hold all of this in my Mind. I used this allegory earlier. Let me expand on it here. God said: "Think of yourself as a snowflake. A snowflake is eternal, did you know that? The very first snowflake in the history of the world is the snowflake that is falling today. It falls from the sky as a highly individualized physicalization. There are no two snowflakes alike. There never have been, in all the history of snowflakes.

“The flakes are awesomely beautiful in their individual design. No one who sees them falling from the heavens can fail to see their beauty. You run outside when you see snowflakes fall, beholding their breathtaking beauty.

“As they land, they merge with one another. You call a huge collection of them on the ground simply ‘snow.’ You don’t say, ‘Look at that big pile of snowflakes.’ You say, ‘Look at that mountain of snow.’ You see all the individual snowflakes as One. And indeed, they are One with One Another.

“Soon the sun comes out and the snow melts, each flake disappearing, one by one. They don’t, of course, disappear at all. They simply change form. Now they are water, rippling together in a sparkling puddle, or flowing together in a little stream.

“The sun continues to work its magic, and soon the water itself disappears. Or *seems* to. Actually, it, too, simply changes form. It evaporates, rising into the air as invisible vapors, and gathering there in such concentration that they are visible again—as clouds.

“As more and more vapors gather, the clouds become heavy with their moisture. Soon, once again, the moisture falls, raining down upon the earth. And if the temperature is just right, the falling rain turns into snowflakes again—no two snowflakes alike. Ever. In the history of snowflakes.

“And so, in the snow, we see the Cycle of Life and the Story of You.

“There was never a time when You were not. There will never *be* a time when You will not Be. You appear from the Heavens, physicalized as individual aspects of All That Is. While each physicalization is absolutely and gloriously non-identical, they are nevertheless All The Same Thing. And so they merge into a single essence, a particular life expression that you call “humans.” Then, to the Heavens each Essence returns, once more *invisible-ized*. You are not “no longer here,” You are simply “no longer visible.” Yet You exist, fully self-conscious and fully self-aware, until You return again to total visibility and full physicalization.

“And here is a great secret. You are never *not* ‘physical.’ You are sometimes simply *less* physical. Even as a snowflake is never not physical. When it is snow, it is physical. When it is water, it is physical. When it is steam, it is physical. When it is vapor, it is physical. When it is moisture, it is physical. When it is unseen and utterly invisible, it is physical. When it falls from the clouds as rain, it is physical. And when it hits the freezing

temperature beneath the sunlit clouds, it crystallizes, becoming a snowflake once again. What a journey the snowflake has taken! Changing form, changing form, evermore changing form, finally returning as another snowflake, magnificently different from its earlier version, but still, in essence and content, exactly the same thing."

What does this have to do with 'work'?

Now you may say, "Nice. Very nice metaphor. But what does this have to do with the Holy Experience and work?"

Fair question. For me, once I embraced this metaphor, I understood that it didn't matter what I did, I was always going to be *alive*. I would never die, I would merely change form.

Abruptly, I lost my fear of death. And then something miraculous happened. When I lost my fear of dying, I lost my fear of living.

Someone very wise once said, "All fear is a fear of death." Something or another is going to "die," and go away. It will "be no more." Yet when you realize that while everything ends (a point we made earlier in this book), everything that ends begins again as something new, you never again fear the loss of anything.

Not even *income*.

And that's when your freedom bell rings. Because when you are no longer afraid of the loss of income (nor of physical death, which could result), then the acquisition of income becomes a preference rather than a necessity.

Wow. When you *prefer* to live, rather than *need* to live, everything is different. You are no longer engaged in a process of Survival. You are engaged in a process of Celebration.

From Survival to Celebration: the longest journey

This is, in essence, the traveling path of life. We start out thinking that we have to survive, and basing many of our life decisions on that. Then, when we achieve the awareness that the struggle for survival *is not necessary* because our survival *is guaranteed*, our decisions are based on something else: What will bring me the most joy?

What brings us joy, the highest joy, is self-expression. For it is through the fullest expression of Self that the fullest experience of Who We Really Are is achieved. And *that* experience is *what we came for!*

With this marvelous realization comes actualization. We become self-actualized beings. And two things happen at once. First, we never again “work” at a job we don’t like. Second, we never again “don’t like” a job at which we are working. That is because our “work” has become a “joy”—*even if it’s the same job we had before.*

Why? How? Because we suddenly realize *why we are doing it.* We suddenly see clearly that we are not doing it because we *have* to, but because we *want* to; because it *serves* us to; because it is *a means to an end.* Our job is our tool. It is something we are doing in order to experience something we wish to experience.

This experience *is not mandatory.* We can have it or not, *as we decide.* So if we are choosing to have This Particular Experience rather than That Other Experience, how can we not be joyful, no matter what our job? Are we not getting our way?

This is a shift of attitude, not of circumstance. Nothing has changed, but everything is different.

This is when you will know you have had the Holy Experience.

The Holy Experience is when nothing has changed, but everything is different.

What has been altered is not the Exterior, but the Interior. Now you are clear that you are *choosing*, and that nothing is being forced upon you, with regard to how you are experiencing Life.

Really? What about those who *are* being forced?

Now I am clear as I write this that this idea, this attitude, could only be easily embraced by people who are living in a free society. For other human beings—many, many other human beings—who live under the rule of despots, who do not have access to any kind of real economic or occupational opportunity, talk such as what I have been rolling out here might understandably fall on deaf ears.

“That’s easy for you to say,” those people might mutter. And in a human sense they would be right. Only from the standpoint of the Soul would any of this make sense in all human situations—even life under the thumb of a despot.

One would have to ask, from the level of Soul...Why has the Soul chosen to incarnate, to take a physical form, in a circumstance of such personal oppression? Could it be that the Soul knew exactly what it was doing?

Yet why would any Soul *do* such a thing on purpose?

Could it be that Souls who live physical lives of oppression or pain do so with the highest spiritual awareness and intention? Could it be that many who are doing so are doing it in order to give those who are not living such lives the opportunity to experience themselves as helpers, as healers, and perhaps even as liberators?

Could it even be that those who live such lives in the extreme allow themselves, at the Soul level, to endure such physical experiences in order to ultimately prove and demonstrate to the rest of us Who We Really Are? Could they be showing us that our Being is not merely a Body and a Mind, and that our physical suffering ends when the Body and Mind are raised to the highest level of awareness of our true identity?

Could this be what The Resurrection was all about?

Was what happened to Jesus something that Jesus had to endure, or something his Soul chose to experience? *Which was it...?* And if it was the second, was the Soul of Jesus *the only soul in the history of the world* to make such a choice?

I have been told that the answer to that question is no. I know it is difficult to believe, but I have been told that the answer is no. Many souls, I have been told, experience their own individualized persecutions and crucifixions—and for exactly the same reason.

Now this does not mean that we should ignore all suffering, look past all of another’s torment, and proceed as if nothing bad is happening in the world. Quite to the contrary. All of the circumstances on our planet, all of the conditions of Life, are placed BEFORE us BY us (remember always: we are acting *co-jointly*; there is only One of us) in order that we may decide, express, and experience who we really are in relationship to them.

Thus do those who suffer, and those who end the suffering of others, both experience Who We All Really Are.

I believe this is exactly what is happening here upon the earth. I believe that everything that is happening is happening perfectly so that all of us may awaken. I believe that many Souls are doing what you and I would call suffering and dying, so that all of us may have awakened, within, the Divine qualities of compassion, caring, forgiveness, understanding, patience, love, and, most of all, the Unity and Oneness of Life.

And now, finally, a word about ‘suffering’

To the unaware observer, this may seem like a cruel way for Life to inform Life about Life through the process of Life Itself. Why should people have to suffer in order to demonstrate to themselves or others Who They Really Are?

That is a salient and important question. It is a question that every thinking person must ask if these spiritual understandings are to have a leg to stand on.

The answer is found in *Conversations with God*, which tells us that, in fact, people *do not* have to suffer in order to demonstrate to themselves or others Who They Really Are. Suffering as a means of producing such demonstrations is, it turns out, a choice. Perhaps it is a choice that is made for emphasis, so that the Demonstration will not soon be forgotten. I do not know. I do not know the agenda of an individual Soul. I will agree that it is not a choice that most people make consciously. At the Conscious Level of Creation, most human beings would not choose to suffer. Yet CWG tells us that we are producing our reality at four levels of creation: Conscious, Subconscious, Superconscious, and Supraconscious.

It is within this larger context that CWG informs us that pain is an objective experience, and suffering is a subjective one. Pain is a physical phenomenon, and suffering is our thought about it.

Put another way, pain is simply pain, but if we make a judgment that it is not okay, not welcome, not acceptable in favor of a larger good, then it becomes suffering. Yet if we make the opposite decision—that it *is* okay, that it *is* welcome, that it *is* endurable for a larger good—then our suffering ends, even as the pain goes on. *Nothing changes, but everything is different.*

There even come times in the experience of many when pain can actually be celebrated (believe it or not), changing its very definition from suffering to joy.

Anyone who has had an aching tooth pulled and endured the machinations of the dentist and the injection of Novocain, knows exactly what I am talking about. Many women who have given birth have lived this experience.

It is when we make this shift that we move from Survival to Celebration. From then on, nothing can touch us in a negative way. This understanding truly *can* “deliver us from evil. For thine IS the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.”

Is it not written, “Ye are Gods”?

When ‘work’ becomes ‘joy’

When we finally understand all that has been written above, we are in a position to make what we call “work” what we call “joy.” The Holy Experience as it relates to your work life comes when you understand that no matter what you are doing to produce income, it is a joy because it *is* producing income—and income, rather than lack of it, is what you choose. Therefore, you are *doing what you want to do*.

The Holy Experience expands when you realize that you can allow the flow of Life Force through you in the way that you find the most exciting and the most fun, without thought of “how much money you can make,” and that you will still be alive at the end of the process. (Unless you’re not, in which case it won’t matter anyway.)

I was presented with a plaque many years ago by Rev. Terry Cole-Whittaker, a hugely popular and wonderfully wise minister who has been sharing life truths with thousands of people for many years. The plaque said:

NEALE...
YOU ARE ONE OF THE COURAGEOUS ONES:
SOMEONE WHO HAS CHOSEN TO MAKE A LIFE, RATHER THAN A LIVING.

I never forgot that because it put the way I had been living, as well as what I am trying to say here, perfectly. It does take courage to make a life rather than a living. But it can be done.

It takes courage to embrace the notion that Life was meant to be happy, and that the activities of our life were meant to be a joy. The purpose of work is not to “earn” our keep, thus to “justify” our taking up space on the planet. God’s love (and what comes with it, including a Good Life) is not something we “earn,” it is something we *are given*. And we are given it freely, not only if we *do something* in particular (say a Rosary, bow to the east, fast, or remain chaste, or travel to Mecca, or chant, or whirl like a dervish, or take a vow of poverty, or “go and sin no more”).

The purpose of work, as is the purpose of all of life, is for us to announce and declare, express and fulfill, become and experience Who We Really Are.

There is no other reason to do anything. Knowing this is the Holy Experience.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Fourteen

I said in Chapter 10 that we were going to break down the average person's life into five distinct areas, then use these chapters to explore each of them as they relate to the Holy Experience.

Loosely, most people's lives might be broken down into these areas or situations:

1. Yourself
2. Your significant other
3. Your family
4. Your work or chief activity
5. Your larger life in the world

In Chapter 10 we looked at the Holy Experience and yourself. In Chapter 11 we looked at the Holy Experience and your significant other. In Chapter 12 we looked at the Holy Experience and your family. In Chapter 13 we looked at the Holy Experience and your work, or chief activity. Now let's look at the Holy Experience and your larger life in the world.

The most amazing message I ever received in the *Conversations with God* dialogue consisted of six words. In just a half dozen sounds I was given everything I needed to know about the experience I was having on the earth.

I was in a deep place of wondering why, up to that point, my life was not bringing me the happiness I was seeking, even though I was almost always doing work that I loved to do, being with significant others that I loved to be with, and enjoying a family that I loved to enjoy.

"What is wrong with me?" I asked God. "Why can't I be *happy*???"

"It's all very simple," God said. "You think your life is about you."

I wanted to know what God meant. What was God saying? Then I heard the six words that changed my life,

"Your life is not about you."

Then who, pray tell, is it about? I wanted to know.

“Your life is about everyone whose life you touch,” God told me. “And it is about how you touch them. How you touch them determines how you experience your Self—and how you experience your Self determines how happy you are.”

In this sense, my life *was* about me...but in a “reverse English” kind of way. I was to pay attention to myself by paying attention to others. I was to help myself evolve by helping others evolve. The fastest way for *me* to be happy was for me to make *other* people happy.

Now before I go any further, a caveat, please. This does not mean that you must focus on making other people happy to the *exclusion* of yourself. When making another happy is at the cost of you being unhappy, you are defeating your own purpose. So we are not talking here about rolling over and playing dead, or turning yourself into a carpet to be walked all over.

If another person will simply not *receive* the gifts you find joy in giving—or worse yet, receives them and takes advantage of them, then treats you without respect or kindness—you may wish to continue giving to that person, but in another way. Such as, for instance, giving them their freedom to pursue a close-knit relationship with another.

There are nearly 7 billion people in the world, and you are not required to continue endless giving to a person who does not value, appreciate, or honor your gift. Of course, you are not offering your gifts *in order* to be honored. You are offering your gifts in order to experience and express a part of yourself that speaks of who you are. Yet if who you are is not valued, but ignored or abused, then you actually hurt, rather than help, the person to whom you are giving your gift—for you have taught them that the way to continue receiving the best from others is to return their worst. And this is *not something that you want to teach anybody*. It is actually *unkind* to teach someone this.

But do not worry. As I said, the world is filled with people, and my life experience has shown me that the vast, vast majority of human beings receive gifts with gratitude, and act as wonderful mirrors for those who offer them.

There is a reason that taking the focus off of myself and placing on others has worked so effectively in changing my life. The reason is that there’s no such thing as “other” people. Everyone else is *me*. We are all one.

Separation is an illusion. No one is separate from anyone else. Therefore, what I do for you I do for me, and what I fail to do for you, I fail to do for me. What I give to you I give to me, and what I fail to give to you, I fail to give to me. What goes around comes around.

As noted above, you may not always receive it in return from the exact person you gave it to, but in the overall scheme of things Life will bring to you—sometimes from totally *unexpected* sources—what you bring to it.

Turning outward won the prize

As soon as I turned my life outward—worrying very little about how a thing affected me, or how my life was going, or what I imagined that I needed, but focusing outward instead, looking to see if there was some place or some way in which I could offer my gifts to bring help or joy to others—I found a pathway to real happiness and genuine inner peace.

That wonderful spiritual teacher of mine who I mentioned earlier, the minister named Terry Cole-Whittaker, once asked a room full of people, in which I was seated: “What would you do if you felt that you were through with you? What if you were finished, and God told you there was nothing more you had to do to make yourself better, or more perfect? What if God said you are fine just the way you are, that you are perfect in God’s eyes just the way you are showing up right now. Then what would you do? What would you work on? What would you tell yourself you had to ‘fix’ over there, or heal about yourself, or accomplish in order to feel ‘whole’?”

“What if you didn’t have to go to one more workshop, attend one more seminar, hear one more sermon, or read one more book? What if God said, ‘You’re done! You’ve got it.’ *Now* what will you do? If you had nothing you needed to do to ‘fix’ yourself, if someone told you that your life is perfect just the way it is, what would you do then?”

Well, Terry said, you might just decide to reach out and see what you could do to help *others* realize the same thing about themselves. And in that moment your whole experience of yourself would shift.

It is clear to me upon reflection that Terry understood, at a very deep level, what God said to me several years later in those six words...

YOUR LIFE IS NOT ABOUT YOU

Powerful, powerful words. Life *changing* words. And when I embraced those words, and all they brought when put into action, I had given myself the Holy Experience as it relates to my larger life in the world.

How? By giving me a direct experience of Who I Really Am. And that is what I came here for. That is what I'd been yearning for. That is what I had been searching for, hoping for, working for. I just didn't know how to *produce* that experience in my own reality.

Until I did.

Until God gave me the clue, in those six words.

Changing priorities

With the adopting of that message as my personal mantra (switching the words to the First Person: *My life is not about me...*), I quickly found my personal priorities changing. No more was I concerned with when I was going to have my next happy moment, but when you were; how I was going to feel the most joy, but how you were; whether I was going to find real peace and honest, true love, but whether you were.

Of course, you can only imagine what this produced in my life. Suddenly, everything I had spent years "efforting" for came flowing to me easily. I took special note of the CWG message: BE THE SOURCE. I was advised by God to no longer be the Seeker, but to be the Source in the life of another of that which I had been seeking in my own life.

"What flows through you, sticks to you," God said, and *I got it!* I got the message!

God has been sending this message to all of us through all of God's messengers from the beginning of time, of course. I just had not been listening.

Looking back on it now, I see how this message has been delivered to me in my own childhood faith tradition: *Do unto others as you would have it done unto you.* I just interpreted it differently. I thought that meant, if you want others to treat you well, treat others well. It does mean that, of course. But it also means a great deal more. It also means: When you cause *others* to have the experience that *you* wish to have, *you, too, must eventually have it.*

This will be true for the simple reason that *you cannot give away that which you do not have*. The very act of giving something to another causes you to notice that you *have* it to give—and that *you had it all along*.

Now, all at once, everything began making sense to me—including the teaching that none of us is really “creating” anything, but merely noticing that it is already there.

It doesn't end there

The Holy Experience is what results when you notice what is already there in your life, and step into the *demonstrating* of it as you walk through your daily moments. Everything shifts in those moments, because you are experiencing them in a new way. *Nothing has changed, but everything is different*.

And don't be surprised if it doesn't stop there. For once you have embraced the Holy Experience in your larger life in the world, your life in the world becomes larger.

People—in many cases total strangers—will begin to notice you. Your own inner guidance will lead you to grander and greater expressions of your wonderful Self. You'll find yourself doing all sorts of things you might never have thought you'd be doing...or could only have dreamt of doing before now. Like writing poetry (and having it published), or taking up photography (and having people asking you for your pictures). Like running for office, or joining the hospital board. Or picking up a musical instrument. Or starting a business focused on bringing benefit or beauty to others. Or singing your song and dancing your dance in the wondrous way that is perfectly suited to you and only you...as the only snowflake quite like you in the Universe.

Suddenly you won't worry about what you can get out of it, but of what you can put into it—so that *others* might get as much out of it as possible. Making money at it won't matter. You'll find time to do what you find joy in doing, to offer what you find your bliss in offering, and the job you hold in the work-a-day world, if the two are not one and the same, will facilitate your bringing your gift—which will make *that job* a joy as well, for you will see it as supporting you, rather than stopping you, in presenting the most special part of you to the world.

And do not be surprised if after a little while your whole life is turned around and your joy *becomes* what you do in the world that produces income. Because this is what the Holy Experience can produce in your larger life in the world. A complete turn-around.

Take it from me.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Fifteen

There are many situations in which you may choose to have the Holy Experience. Now that may sound like a strange thing to say, so let's take a look at it.

At first, it may seem strange to speak of the Holy Experience as something that you "choose to have." Most people think of things that are holy as things that are rare. Or at the very least, not controllable in the first person. That is, they do not see themselves as being *at cause in the matter*.

In fact, they are. We all are. All of us. We are "choosing to have" all of the experiences that we are having, moment-to-moment. Remember that an Experience and an Event are not the same thing. An "Event" is something that is occurring in your exterior environment. All Events are co-created by the lot of us. An "Experience" is something that is occurring in your interior environment. All Experiences, without exception, are created individually, each human being producing their own Reality.

The proof of this is that three different people can participate in, or witness, the same event and *all three can have a different experience of it*. This is what is meant by the New Age teaching: "You create your own reality," which I will go into in even more useful detail in the next chapter.

You *do* create your own reality. You do this by how you interiorly hold the Exterior Events that are created co-jointly by every person who is touched by them.

What kind of reality you create around the Exterior Events of your life depends on whether you use, as your tools of creation, only the Mechanics of the Mind, solely, *or* the Mechanics of the Mind *and* the System of the Soul, together. When you combine with Wisdom of the Soul *with* the Data of the Mind, rather than relying on the Data of the Mind alone, you expand the data itself, giving you much more information to choose from as you "make up your mind" about what is going on, or has gone on, around you.

For instance, right now you get to “make up your mind” about the fact that the beginning of this chapter sounds suspiciously like the beginning of a chapter you’ve read before—namely, Chapter Ten—and you get to create your own Reality around that.

It is intriguing that the two chapters start out nearly the same way? Is it boring? Do you think that the author made a mistake? Do you assess that he did it on purpose? If so, why?

All of these thoughts will be your own. The Exterior Event has been created by the two of us. I wrote the beginning of both chapters, and now you have read them. So that’s a co-creation. What you *think* about the two chapters starting out the same way is up to you. In this way you are indeed “choosing to have” all of the experiences that you are having, moment-to-moment.

Do you live in a world out of control?

It is sometimes assumed that you have *no* control over exterior conditions, circumstances, or events—and I know that it can very often feel that way—but, in truth, as I hope I have just shown, you are *co-creating* them with others in your life—remembering, of course, how we are using the word “create” as a synonym for *remember*.

(To recap: When you “create” things you are actually remembering, or becoming aware of once again, what always was, is now, and always will be. Your awareness expands to the boundary-less place beyond Time and Space, into the spaciousness of all the When/Wheres of Existence.)

Within that context, you “created” (remembered) *this*. This very moment. And the first words of this paragraph were meant to *illustrate* all of this for you.

This is what *déjà-vu* is all about—and if you experienced what seemed like a bit of “Hey, I’ve been here before” as you read the opening of this chapter, it is because you were meant to. It was co-created to *produce* that experience.

Just like the script of your *life*.

You have co-created the *outward circumstance* called repetition in order to create the *inner experience* called understanding. It is for this purpose that

you are creating, one by one, all the conditions, circumstances, and events of your life.

This is a very difficult thing for many people to believe. It is a challenging concept to embrace, a transforming understanding to accept. When you accept this understanding, you accept Who You Really Are. And that IS the Holy Experience.

There is no other.

When you fail to accept this understanding, you fail to accept the Truth about your Self, and then you live the lie about you. Your whole life becomes a lie, as one falsehood feeds and perpetuates another.

Escaping the world of duality thinking

The initial step to Mastery is the acceptance of this Divine Truth at the first level. If you cannot accept that you are co-creating all of the conditions, circumstances, and events of your life, at least accept that you are creating your experience of them. You, and you alone, are deciding how you *feel* about them. No one else can tell you how to feel about anything. Surely that is undeniable.

Any delivery person can leave a package at your door. They cannot require you to take it into your house. You do not have to do so if you do not wish to. You can leave it on the front stoop.

So when a person brings a package of Anger to your door, leave it on the front stoop. Do not take it in. When a person brings a box of Rudeness to your door, leave it on the front stoop. Do not take it in. When a person brings a container of Unkindness to your door, leave it on the front stoop. Do not take it in.

Deciding how you wish to feel about whatever is happening around you, and then *causing yourself to feel that way*, is the first step to Mastery.

("I wish I wouldn't become so upset every time she's late getting ready for us to go somewhere. I wish I could remain calm and loving and accept this part of her..."—"I wish I could learn to deal with disappointment better. I wish I could just be philosophical about it..."—"I wish I could stop being so hurt when someone else has been sarcastic with me...")

These are all common self-wishes. You can make such wishes come true. Always, always, always remember: Your “experience” of something is how you feel about it. And how you feel about anything is something that you can (and do, whether you know it or not) control.

In the world of Duality Thinking (which is the world in which most of us live), you could imagine that somebody else is “doing something” to you, or that some seemingly uncontrollable outward condition has been encountered by you, without you having had anything to do with it.

Such a thing is impossible, given that Duality is not the Reality, yet in the world of our illusion such impossibilities can seem very real.

The world of Duality Thinking says that there is YOU and IT, or YOU and THEM. In the world of Non-Duality Thinking (which is the world as it is, and the world in which Masters live) there is only YOU and US. There is nothing else *but* US, in differing form.

If there is only US, then nothing can be happening TO us, and everything must be happening THROUGH us. Nevertheless, an event could have the *appearance* of happening TO us—in which case “us” changes to “you” very quickly in our thinking. Especially if what is happening is what one would call a negative event, it will be nearly impossible (depending upon one’s level of mastery) to stop from thinking of oneself as the victim, rather than the co-creator, of a present situation.

This is what occurs when, in your thinking, you separate your Self from the Us that is the Only Thing There Is.

It is this “victim consciousness” that prevents you from having the Holy Experience. Remember that it has been said: The Holy Experience is nothing more than the immediate experience of Who You Really Are.

Who You Really Are is The Co-Creator. That is your True Identity.

When you are choosing to experience yourself as the victim of any condition, circumstance, or event you, in effect, deny your True Identity and prevent yourself from having the Holy Experience—much less changing the condition, circumstance, or event that is occurring outside of you.

You can only change the condition, circumstance, or event that is occurring outside of you when you take full responsibility for having co-created it to begin with. This is something that even you know at a very deep

level. The limited understanding of humans does not prevent us from seeing this. You know intuitively that you cannot easily change what you consider to be the sole creation of others, but you see just as clearly that you *can* change what you and others have put into place *together*.

("I may not be able to do much about what you have done, but I can do something about what I have done.")

Herein lies the key to all physical manifestation. It is the acceptance of responsibility for all the events of your life as co-creations. To take such collaborative responsibility is a sign of spiritual awareness. You have become conscious of the role that you and others are jointly playing in the process by which humanity is expressing and experiencing itself, individually and collectively, so that God may know Itself wholly and completely.

Because I consider this to be one of the single most important understandings to which any human being could come, I am going to devote another whole chapter here to it. Please indulge me, because it took me the better part of 50 years to get this, and I would really like to see if even further elaboration might cut short that time for you, yes?

The Holy Experience

Chapter Sixteen

The message that for many years spiritual teachers have been sharing—that “you are creating your own reality”—can be a dangerous teaching if it is not fully explained. And so, to reiterate...

There are two things you must know about the “you create your own reality” teaching.

- (1) First, it must be explained (as we have done several times here now) that you are not in “creating” anything, but merely noticing or remembering its existence, then, by *focusing* on it, calling it forth as a “manifestation” from the Field of Infinite Possibilities that is the Always Now / Always Here of things. What you *are* creating is your Interior Reality of these manifestations. It is in *this* sense that the statement “You are creating your own Reality” is true.
- (2) Second, you must understand that even what we *call* the act of “creating” the Exterior Events of our lives is not something that anyone is doing alone. No Exterior Event in Physicality is created by any single individual. Such a thing is impossible.

These two little points are not “little” points at all. Indeed, no small matters, they. For with these huge understandings we are relieved of the mental and emotional stress, frustration, pressure, and problems which could eventuate from us imagining that we are responsible for all that is going on in the world—or for that matter, in our personal lives. Even more beneficially, these are marvelous tools with which to *move through* those occurrences, integrating them with greater ease into our earthly experience.

So let’s take one final look at these two points.

Point Number 1:

Since everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be, IS NOW, the act of pure creation is impossible. What we call “creation” is really an act of awareness. It is the act of becoming aware of a particular portion of What Is So.

Awareness is achieved by putting your attention on something. You are seeing that something is there, but if you are recognizing that it is there for what seems like the first time, the seeing of it produces the impression that *you have placed it there*.

This is the illusion called “creation.”

As I have endeavored to point out here now multiple times, there are two kinds of Events in our experience on this planet. There are Exterior Events, which are Physical, and there Interior Events, which are Metaphysical. Put simply, there is what is *happening*, and there is what we *think about* what is happening.

Most people don't contextualize their movement through the moments of their life in this way. Yet this is precisely the way we are getting through our days.

First, something happens. Either we do something, or something is done to or around us. Second, we have a thought about what is happening. Our thought follows the occurrence so quickly that we often meld the two into one. We imagine that the Exterior Event and the Interior Event are the Same Event.

They are not. And this is one of the greatest secrets ever withheld from humankind. We are not told this in school. We are not informed of this by our society. We are not brought in on this secret by our common culture. *No one wants us to know this*. Why? Because if we know this, we suddenly have *complete control over our Reality*. And that is the last thing that our society wants us to have.

How can a society *as a group* be controlled if every member of that society has complete *individual* control over his or her own Reality? The aim of every totalitarian society, then, is to get you to *stop thinking for yourself* by *doing your thinking for you*, and to convince you to adopt its thinking rather than embracing your own.

The First Freedom is not “freedom of speech.” The First Freedom is Freedom of Thought.

Always remember that.

And this is the one Freedom that *no one can ever take away from you*. That is what makes you a Divine Being. That is what makes you the Sovereign in your own Kingdom. That is what makes you “God.” For you do, *indeed*, have the power to “create your own reality,” *interiorly*, of any Exterior Event.

You can think *anything you want to think* about what is going on around you; about what has happened in your life; even about a future that you imagine might occur.

Your Thoughts are your powerful tools, and no one can stop you from using them. Nelson Mandela proved that during 26 years of incarceration by the rogue minority white regime that had for so long controlled South Africa. St. Joan (also known as Joan of Arc) proved that during the French persecutions. And Jesus proved that during the entire second half of his life.

Others have proved it as well. Winston Churchill proved it when the Exterior Events produced by Hitler’s Nazi air force would have had him believe that England was doomed. Jonas Salk proved it when medical science would have had him believe that there was just no cure for polio. Martin Luther King Jr., Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Harvey Milk proved it when American society said that blacks, women, and gays were *not* equal to white male heterosexuals, and should therefore not be given equal opportunity, equal pay, or equal rights.

And *you* prove it every time you decide that Conventional Wisdom about anything just may be wrong—or at the very least, incomplete—and that you and you alone get to decide what is Real and True for you.

You do this by using the Mechanics of the Mind. This is how your Interior Reality is created. It is far too sophisticated a machinery for me to describe it to you here. I strongly, *strongly* advise you to find a copy of *When Everything Changes, Change Everything* and read it from top to bottom. Take notes in the margins. Underline or highlight in yellow its many incredibly powerful and pertinent passages.

Get the book and read it now. It is changing lives all over the place.

(Am I trying to sell one more copy of a book I have written? No. I have already sold 7.5 million copies of books I have written. I don't need to sell any more. What I *am* hoping to do is help change your life. I am hoping to offer you something that could open a doorway to that.)

Point Number 2:

Okay, so once more, for good measure: Everything in your exterior world is being "co-created." That is, it is being manifested (or *seen, noticed, and remembered*) not only by you, but by the lot of us; by everyone.

This is true because There Is Only One Of Us. Or, as *Conversations with God* says, "All things are One Thing. There is Only One Thing, and all things are part of The One Thing There Is."

It is this "One Thing" that is doing everything. Nothing that is occurring can occur without the participation and the concurrence of The One Thing. By definition, such an event would be impossible.

Life...exactly as it is happening here and everywhere in the Universe...is the expression of The One Thing That Is. In my vocabulary, The One Thing That Is is called "God." Everything that you, as an individual, appear to be doing is actually being done co-jointly, with the participation and the collaboration and the collusion of The One Thing.

I like this little metaphor: Imagine that you are your little finger. Now when you move, who is doing the moving? Is it you, as a finger, or is it your *body*, as that of which you, a finger, are a part?

Ah, you might say, it is your brain! Your brain sends a signal to your finger, via the pathway of your nerves, and your finger responds to the impulse; it plays out, in action, your brain's prior thought. The time lapse between Thought and Action may be infinitesimal, but there *is* a time lapse. The thought comes first. Then comes the passage of the neural impulse through the network of nerves that serves your body. Then comes the movement of your finger.

So, *your whole body is involved in the moving of your little finger*. You couldn't so much as *lift a finger* without your Body and your Mind.

Well, my friend, you and I are part of The Body Of God. We are like tiny little cells...like sub molecular particles...in The Body of God. Now if we

are not careful, when we do something *we'll think we are doing it all by ourselves*. Of course, such a thing is impossible. Our action is merely a manifestation of the Will of God.

We can do nothing—*nothing*—against God's Will. The arrogance of imagining that we *can* is the greatest folly of the Human Mind.

We see, then, that all manifestations of our exterior reality—what we might call the physical world around us—are collaborative. They are the products of the joint creation of every human being, at some level or another, and of God.

I have come to understand that the amount of energy expended by any Individuation of the Divine on any physical manifestation is directly proportional to the degree to which that Individuation is impacted or affected by the manifestation Itself.

In other words, the more a person is impacted by a manifestation, the larger was that person's collaborative role in co-creating it.

Thus, a person in Hong Kong likely had less to do, energetically, with the traffic jam in which you find yourself in Los Angeles than, say, another person in Los Angeles—to say nothing of the person seven cars ahead of you whose vehicle breakdown *caused* the traffic jam in the first place.

On the other hand, if the person in Hong Kong was anxiously waiting in her Executive Conference Room for a Skype call from you to exchange timed-to-the-minute details of a business transaction that her company and yours were on the verge of completing, and if she needed this information instantly in order for this deal to go through, and if she needed this deal to go through in order for her to get a long-sought-after promotion...AND...if she feels *unworthy* of receiving the promotion and being invited to join the company's top brass, her Energy of Unworthiness might very *well* have played a role in causing the man seven cars ahead of you to have his car break down, thus snagging you in a traffic jam that makes it impossible for you to get to your Skype call and send that vitally needed data to China.

Thus do the dominoes in life fall. Thus is it true that at some level every living entity co-jointly creates every manifestation of physical life. Or as some contemporary physicists have put it, if a butterfly flaps its wings in Singapore, the current of the wind is affected in San Francisco.

Why bother going into this so deeply here, over and over again in narrative covering several chapters? Because it is as I have said: The idea that “you are creating your own reality” can be dangerous if not fully explained.

People who have been told this and have taken it to heart, without deeply understanding the teaching, could easily find themselves depressed, wondering why they would have “created” certain things for themselves or others. Their own molestation at age seven, for instance. Or their grandmother’s death in an auto accident. Or the end of their marriage. Or, on a larger scale, a revolt in Libya, an earthquake in Japan, or a global financial meltdown.

Why do I keep creating these things!?, they may ask themselves in frustration, taking full responsibility for all exterior manifestations. They may even make themselves so “wrong” for what is occurring or has occurred in their life—or in the life of the planet—that they develop deep self-doubt, self-blaming, or even self-loathing. Then, eventually, *life-loathing*.

So it is very, *very* important for spiritual teachers to emphasize the now-little-known details of what is meant by “you create your own reality.” It is imperative that everyone be told that all manifestations of our exterior reality—what we might call the physical world around us, as well as our own personal physical experiences—are *collaborative*, and we thus have only a proportionate degree of personal control over the Collective Consciousness that produced them. These are the products of the joint creation of every human being, and more broadly, they are the expressions of Life, and thus, of God.

Let me make this more clear with a rhetorical question: If God did not want something to happen, could it happen? No. Nothing happens outside the Will of God. Therefore if a thing is happening, you can be sure that it is happening because it is God’s *will* for it to happen. The question is not whether it is God’s Will...but why?

Why would it be God’s Will for hurricanes and tornadoes to occur? Why would it be God’s Will for anger and violence and pestilence and suffering and struggle and starvation to be part of the human condition? How could *any* of this be God’s Will?

Recently a man named Stephen sent me an e-mail in which he posed essentially the same question. He wrote...

Dear Neale...I will try to make this short. I ended up on the street after losing everything. I've been outside now for almost two years. Before that I'd been homeless as a kid, from age 11 to almost 16, four years straight. To end this last time, I was violently assaulted by three men, while one watched. I now have aids from that assault.

This is what is sticking to me and in me, really deep, and it has scarred me in some way I can't escape from, this not being seen or counted as a human being.

Neale, did I do this??? Did I somehow want that for myself? I swear, I can hardly breathe feeling all of this. *Did I create this reality?* And where do other people come in? I had a dream that my life was a gift to others, a dream that was like being spoken to and shown, in the same instance. I watched that a video of one of your talks once, and it seemed to me you were close to tears at one point. You know it, Neale. You know what being out there really means, what it really feels like. Help me now. I need to understand what is going on here.

I found out a few days after I received this note that Stephen, since he had sent this e-mail, had received a diagnosis of lesions on his brain. Now he really needed an answer...and he needed one fast.

And so I wrote...

Dear New Friend...The first thing I want to say to you, Stephen, is that you did not create the Exterior Events of your life all by yourself. Everything that is happening in our Exterior Experience is a co-creation, put together by the lot of us. That is, by everyone.

This is true because There Is Only One Of Us. Or, as *Conversations with God* says, "All things are One Thing. There is Only One Thing, and all things are part of The One Thing There Is."

We see, then, that all manifestations of our exterior reality—what we might call the physical world around us, as well as our own personal physical experiences—are collaborative. They are the products of the joint creation of every human being, at some level. More broadly, they are the expressions of Life, and thus, of God.

Now, Stephen, you might (and probably should) very well ask, "Why would God's Will be that these things should happen to me???" That is a fair question, a profound question, and an urgent question if we are to believe in a loving, caring, compassionate God; if we are to believe in a God That Makes Sense.

The answer to that question cannot be put into one paragraph, but let me try to bring it to you as succinctly as possible. God wants nothing for Itself, or for any of the Parts of Itself (that means you and me), that is not for the benefit of any Part, or of the Whole. We can assume, therefore, as a matter of faith, that whatever is occurring is offering benefit.

Very often in Life it is not easy, or even possible, for us to see what the benefit is, because it is always for the benefit of the Totality of You—the three-part being that we call Body, Mind, and Soul—and that sometimes can look like something that does *not* benefit one or two of those parts.

In such a situation those parts of you of being used as devices...almost as shock absorbers are used on a car to allow the whole vehicle to get where it's going smoothly and easily, even though the road it is traveling is rough. So, something that does not look like it is so good for the Body, for instance, could very well be good for the Totality of You; for the Whole Being that you are is on a journey, and sometimes the road is rough.

These three aspects of your Holy Being are tools; nothing more than pieces of equipment used by the Totality of You to move you into the experiencing of an aspect or aspects of your Divinity. These aspects could include Wisdom, Clarity, Compassion, Understanding, Mastery, Wholeness, Perfection, Patience, Generosity, Creativity, Caring, Forgiveness, and Love—to name but a tiny few of the countless characteristics of Divinity.

If the Totality of You wished to experience, shall we say, that aspect of Divinity called Divine Patience, it would have to call to itself people, places, or conditions that might not seem so perfect to the Body or the Mind, but that would be understood by the Soul to be *absolutely* perfect for the Totality of You to express that Aspect of Divinity that It wishes to express—thus to define itself as that.

Remember, *Conversations with God* says that “every act is an act of self-definition.” All we are doing here is defining ourselves. We are deciding who we are, announcing that to ourselves and others, and then demonstrating that.

This is all that Buddha did. This is all that Moses did. This is that Jesus did. This is all that Muhammad did. This is all that Mother Theresa did, all that Joan of Arc did, all that any person who has self-realized (and thus changed the world) has ever done. This is what Paramahansa Yogananda did, and then he went on to create the Self Realization Fellowship.

This is what I am doing and this is what you are doing. The path is not always easy for the Body and the Mind. There are sometimes shocks to absorb. Especially on what author M. Scott Peck described as *The Road Less Traveled*. And yours is that road, Stephen.

The answer to your question, Stephen, is no, you did not “create this” all by yourself. Yours is a co-creation, with God, with Life, and with all others *in* Life. Including me. I co-created this with you, so that I would have you to answer this question for, in order that many, many others may benefit from the knowing of this.

Your dream, in which your life was shown to you to be a gift to others, was more than a simple dream, Stephen. It was a Vision. This is the Vision of Your Soul, which knows all, which understands all, and which blesses all—even that which the Body and the Mind do not enjoy or fathom.

This is what your Soul now wishes you to hear, to fully comprehend, and to gently embrace. For the embracing of your Soul’s wisdom and its vision will allow you to create a new Reality around what is now occurring in your life, whether or not the Exterior Events of your life change in any way.

To learn more about how to use your Mind and your Soul co-jointly to create a new Interior Reality about the Exterior Events in your life, I encourage you to read *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*. It will tell you, quite specifically, how to use the Mechanics of the Mind to access the System of the Soul, thus to harness at last the creative power of the Totality of You.

I send you love...Neale.

What I have learned through the Holy Experience

All of this—all that you have read in these first 16 chapters—is the result of my having had the Holy Experience. I have called my experience a Conversation with God. You may call it anything you wish. You may also have this experience yourself.

God is talking to all of us, all the time. The question is not, To whom does God talk? The question is, Who listens? When I tell people that they, too, can have the Holy Experience, the first thing they ask me (understandably) is, “How?” Let’s move on to that next.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Seventeen

I seem to have stumbled upon Ten Instruments or tools with which one might build a platform, or an environment, for the Holy Experience. That's the best way I can answer the question, "How can I have the Holy Experience?" I've thought about this a lot, looking at my own journey and the journey of others with whom I am acquainted, and here is what I have come up with:

THE TEN INSTRUMENTS OF THE HOLY EXPERIENCE

1. Yearning
2. Willing
3. Exploring
4. Embracing
5. Explaining
6. Resonance
7. Visualization
8. Movement
9. Ritual
10. Service & Discipline

These instruments seem to me to be divided into two types: Physical Tools (1-5 above) and Spiritual Tools (6-10 above). I have called these The Five Tools of Awareness and The Five Tools of Non-Awareness of the world.

I believe that the combination of Complete Awareness-plus-Complete Non-Awareness equals Realization.

It seems to me that when one is Aware and Non-Aware at the same time (that is, when one is Physical and Spiritual simultaneously), one is Fully Realized. This is what I would call the Holy Experience.

Do not worry if you do not understand this. All of this will be explained here. For now, be willing to notice that you are “aware” that you are “not aware” of exactly what this means.

I have discovered that the Ten Instruments above may be taken sequentially or in any order that one chooses. *And...the use of these Instruments may also be skipped altogether. The Holy Experience may be had without any of the tools being utilized.*

The Instruments are just that. Merely tools. One can travel the terrain of enlightenment without using them, and many people have.

On the other hand, *using* the tools should in no way indicate a lack of spiritual clarity or power. There are many paths to awakening, and using the Ten Instruments is simply one that I have discovered through my lifelong search for a Way to Higher Consciousness, or Self-Realization. It is neither a superior path, nor an inferior one.

On the path described here, the Physical Tools (steps 1-5) can be used to build an experience or an Awareness of your individual life and all that is around you in the exterior world, while the Spiritual Tools produce the knowing of larger realities, resulting in Non-Awareness of—or detachment from—what is around you in the world. It’s almost as if, for you, the world around you is in many ways simply “not there.”

Used together, these Ten Instruments can produce a combined state that I would call Awareness/Non-Awareness. This is sometimes termed “higher consciousness” or “full self-realization.” You will remember that there is a statement in the Bible about being “in the world, but not of it.” This is what the statement means. It is when you realize Who You Really Are, and who you are choosing to experience your Self as during this particular incarnation.

All of the Ten Instruments of the Holy Experience build a path to this destination: the Ultimate Expression of Who You Really Are, demonstrated through the individualized identity you are living right now. This is the moving *through* you of you *as* you.

The Buddha was said to be a wonderful example of this. As was the Christ. So, too, others who have walked our planet. The Prophet Muhammad was said by many to have attained this state of being. The man named Moses, at whose command the Red Sea was said to have parted, and who is said to

have encountered God on the mountain top, has often been called such a spiritual master. And others as well, both ancient and more contemporary. Paramahansa Yogananda was just mentioned in my letter to Stephen in the last chapter. Baha'u'llah was the founder of the Baha'i Faith and members of this religion regard him as a prophet chosen by God to communicate His will. Mother Theresa is considered by many to have, likewise, been a saint, expressing Divine Love, Divine Caring, and Divine Compassion through the individualized identity that she was living.

And so we see that the Here-and-Now Journey of the Individuated Essence known as your Soul during this lifetime is a duplicate, in miniature, of the joyous Forever Journey of your Eternal Essence in all of its endlessly individuated forms.

That Forever Journey also crosses two avenues, or *realms*: The Physical Realm and the Spiritual Realm, and includes a third realm in the Kingdom of God, the Realm of Pure Being. (This is explained in detail in the book *HOME WITH GOD in a Life That Never Ends*.)

Because what I have just placed in this text is somewhat dense material, I would like to explain more fully, in the chapters just ahead, what has just been described.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Eighteen

To review: I have found Ten Instruments that have helped many people build a platform for, or create a path to, the Holy Experience. These steps include the Physical Tools leading to Awareness of the World (yearning, willing, exploring, embracing, explaining) and the Spiritual Tools leading to Non-Awareness of, or detachment from, the world (sound, visualization, movement, ritual, discipline).

By Physical Tools I mean activities that lead to *physical experiences*. Some of these activities may actually be non-physical, such as the step of yearning, or willing, or explaining.

By Spiritual Tools I mean to describe activities that lead to *spiritual knowing*. Some of these activities may actually be physical, such as movement, ritual, etc.

And so, ironically, it is the *non-physical* which can sometimes lead to the *physical*, and it is the *physical* which can sometimes lead to the *non-physical*.

As I have conceived of it here, the label Awareness refers to the physical. It is a physical response (even mental activity of the brain is a physical response) to one's total environment. The label Non-Awareness refers to the spiritual. It is a non-physical response (the Knowing of the Soul is an example) to everything—and to “the nothing.”

The No-Thing is what holds Every-Thing together. Most of what we see and experience is nothing. That is, it is No Thing In Particular.

Look around you right now. Most of what you see (or don't see) is the *space between physical objects*. There is more *space* in the room that you are in right now than anything else. If you are outside, the spaciousness is ever greater. There is more *space* around you than physical objects. Much more. It is *space* which simultaneously separates everything and holds everything together.

Your own body is 97% space. Looked at microscopically, this becomes immediately apparent. The *space* in which the sub-molecular particles move is 100 times greater than the width and depth of the particles themselves. The same is true of the Universe. And *everything* in it.

Experiencing is a **physical event**.

Knowing is a **non-physical event**.

The reason that your soul has come into the physical world is so that it might eventually (that is, by virtue of its combined *events*) **Experience** what it **Knows**.

The No-Thing is not really nothing. It is really quite something. In truth, there is no such thing as *nothing*. When human beings use the word “nothing,” what they usually mean is, “that which cannot be seen” or experienced by any of the five senses. But because we cannot see a thing does not mean that it is not there. Visibility does not equal Existence. A thing can exist without being seen. A thing can exist without being smelled, touched, heard, or tasted. In fact, *the most important things in life can be none of these*.

A person who expresses the physical and the spiritual at the same time is a person who is Fully Realized. This is another way of saying what was said earlier:

Awareness + Non-Awareness = Realization.

Even when your Soul is physicalized (that is, living with a physical body) it embarks upon a spiritual journey—often without you knowing it. You may not be consciously aware that you are having a spiritual encounter.

On the other hand, it is possible for you to produce such an encounter with full conscious intention. That is what the Spiritual Steps into Non-Awareness of the world are all about.

Now comes a little surprise. A being can move into Full Realization by using any *one* of these Ten Instruments. Each Instrument, standing alone, can build to the Holy Experience.

Actually, this should not be a surprise at all. I’ve already said that the Holy Experience may be had without using any of the tools at all. It therefore makes sense that using any one of them could lead to the desired destination, just as using all of them or none of them could.

So, in that context, let's take a look at these Ten Instruments. We'll begin by exploring...

THE FIVE TOOLS OF AWARENESS

...in this chapter, then go on to Instruments 6-10, the Tools of Non-Awareness, in the next.

Tool #1: *Yearning*

Yearning was my first step into Awareness of the world as it really is. Without it, I do not think I could have made it. Perhaps it is the first step for many. Particularly "regular" folks who are not conscious of entering life with an already-existent, "built in" kind of Knowing, and who just proceed from there.

Of course, we *all* enter life with a "built in" Knowing. It's just that most of us forget what we Know—until we don't anymore. We abruptly cease forgetting at what has been called our Moment of Awakening. All of us come to that moment, but many of us do not come to it until after our death. Yet our goal is to arrive at that Knowing during our time on the earth—and so we come back, we return, over and over again, seeking to Know ourselves in our own Experience. It is a joyous returning, this reincarnation event, not an arduous one, for *all* the experiences of physical life are a celebration of Life Itself in its wondrous variety, and the soul revels in every moment of it, for it is the soul which has *created* every moment of it. This is difficult to believe for the Still Forgetful. This is the major challenge of life for the many "regular folks" who fill the ranks of the Non-Remembering.

Yearning is the first step in the process of meeting that challenge. It is the announcement that the Mind has begun noticing Itself in a new way. It is the immediate aftermath of nearly all raising of self-consciousness. When a sentient being has become self-conscious (that is, when a being is able to distinguish him- or herself from the environment, and thus, separate him- or herself from that environment), that being then learns to interact *with* its surroundings—and to yearn for things within it, for the being understands that all the things within the environment were placed there for the purpose of allowing the being to Experience what it Knows.

Only creatures of a certain consciousness can do this, because only creatures at a particular place on the evolutionary cycle experience yearning. A sea slug presumably does not emotionally yearn for things. A dog does. So does a human being.

While yearning is a mental process, it can, like all mental processes, produce physical experiences. Yearning can produce a sensation in the stomach; what we might call “jitteriness” or a “jumpy tummy.” Deep and sad yearning can even cause a dull pain there. This is because *yearning* is an energy, and there is an energy center in the area of your body where your stomach is located. This energy center is called a *chakra*, and it is one of seven such centers in your body.

Energy centers translate the spiritual into the physical, the invisible into the visible, or, more broadly, what is *thought* into what is *felt*.

In short, ***chakras* are the mechanisms that turn Knowing into Experience.**

It is fascinating that, given how vital these energy centers are, millions of people are not even aware of them, or don't believe that they exist. They do exist, and they can be utilized to bring us the physical experience of our spiritual identity. This is done by *working with energy* (what is called *chi* or *ki* in some Eastern traditions).

Here is how energy can work:

Deep and sad *yearning* is an energy. It is a thought, created in the Mind. It is a physical energy formulation. It is your personal information—or, more accurately, YOU, *in formation*.

You are a three-part being: Body, Mind, and Spirit. What you know in your Spirit you will yearn for in your Mind, and you will experience that yearning in your Body. For instance, you know in your Spirit that you are One with everything. When you become self-aware, you become aware of what your Spirit Knows. You will then yearn for this in your Mind, and you will experience this yearning in your Body.

It is the function of your energy centers to translate the Soul's Knowing into the Body's Experience. A fully awakened Mind does so purely, without distortion. A Mind that is not fully awake may, by virtue of its sleepfulness, by virtue of its forgetfulness, distort the Pure Energy of your True Knowing, producing a physical experience that is less than Pure.

It is along the chakra system of the body that the Life Energy flows, *physicalizing* spirituality along the way. The chakra system does this by translating one form of energy into another. This process of translation is what some of you call *transformation*.

Thus, the non-physical energy of a deep and sad *yearning* can produce the very physical energy of an aching heart. I don't mean this as a metaphor. I am referring to an actual *physical aching*.

Positive or happy yearning can, by contrast, produce an upliftment and an enlivening of the physical senses, resulting in an actual improvement in physical health. It is not uncommon for a person to *feel better all over* when experiencing a positive yearning. Yearning to meet one's God, or deep devotion to the Divine Being and the Divine Principle, is a very good example. Masters (such as Paramahansa Yogananda) have told us that living within such a yearning produces inner peacefulness and physical well being.

Ultimately, yearning for Divinity leads to the Holy Experience, for *yearning always produces the experience for which it yearns*.

One cannot yearn for something that one does not think exists—or at least *can* exist. Nor can one yearn for something that one knows not of. Worms cannot yearn for romance, nor for the perfect life partner, nor for a painless death or a glorious life in the hereafter, because such concepts are mental constructions emanating from a far different place of consciousness than that in which nearly all life forms on the earth reside.

In ultimate truth, yearning for something is an acknowledgement that it already exists. All that remains is the question of how to bring that to *you*. "Wishing" is not the same as "yearning." "Wishing" is the name we give to the weakest form of creation. That is evident in the fact that the formulation of energy known as "wishing" declares that the outcome is in doubt. When you *know* that something will happen, you don't wish for it.

When you flip the light switch as you enter a room, you don't catch yourself wishing that the lights would come on. You fully expect them to. You know that they will. This is what is meant by the statement that "the formulation of energy known as 'wishing' is a declaration that the outcome is in doubt."

Yearning is one level above wishing. The very act of yearning for a thing places it there, for yearning is an acknowledgment that the thing

yearned for *could* occur or manifest—maybe only in our “wildest dreams,” but there, at least.

(It is, of course, our wildest dreams from which all miracles emerge. Such wonderful dreams are simply non-physical formulations of energy—a highly wispy or ethereal form of thought about what we choose to be possible.)

While yearning alone can lead to The Holy Experience, for most people yearning is not enough to get us there. It is simply too weak of a force to produce manifestation in physical experience. We can, however, add other energy to this energy, multiplying the Forces of Creation.

Tool #2: *Willing*

When a Soul is *willing* for something to occur, that occurrence is much more likely to take place. When the Soul is not *willing*, it will be very difficult for most human beings to overcome this *energy blockage* and produce a desired result in physical reality.

But now, let us be clear about this articulation. I am not using the word *willing* here as an adjective, I am using it as a verb. *Willing* is not something you are *being*, it is something you are *doing*.

Most people do not understand this. They use the statement *I am willing* to mean “I am okay with this happening.” I do not. I use it to mean “I am exerting my will.”

There is a world of difference.

For years I used a favorite saying whenever I would offer a strong point of view about something. In order not to appear too arrogant, I would follow my argument by saying, “I am willing to be wrong about this.” What I *meant* was, “I would be okay” if it turned out that I was wrong. But what I was actually doing at one level was *asking to be wrong*. What I didn’t know is that by saying “I am willing to be wrong,” I was *invoking the power of my will*.

Granted, a single little statement such as this would probably not have much creative power, so it is not necessary for us to watch every single word that comes out of our mouth. It is the feeling *behind* the words we speak that

carry the creative juice. Still, if I repeat a statement over and over again, I give it more and more power, until “the Word is made flesh and dwells among us.”

Never underestimate the power of your word and the power of your will. Will-power can produce remarkable results.

Willing something to happen is what turns *yearning* into action.

When you say, “I am willing” for such and such to happen, you are saying “I am asking” that it happen. Actually, you are saying even more, because the act of *willing* a thing to happen is not an act of requesting, it is an act of *demanding*. It is a “calling forth.” As in, “My will be done.”

When I am willing for Divinity to be made manifest in my reality, the Second Step has been taken and I move closer to The Holy Experience. Sometimes I place myself within such an experience *by that means alone*.

Yet what does it take to be willing to have such an experience? It takes an agreement within the Self to let go of anything and everything that is unlike The Holy Experience. But wait. This may not be as easy as it sounds. And least, for me it was not. First of all, I did not know what The Holy Experience was like, and so, I could not know what was *unlike* it. And least, not fully.

I could make a guess about some fairly obvious things—but even those guesses were sometimes inaccurate. For instance, is it part of The Holy Experience to be angry? No, I said to myself. People who are having The Holy Experience are never angry. They never fall prey to their negative emotions.

Then I met a Master who laughed at that suggestion. “Do you really think that a person living within the Holy Experience never knows anger?” the Master asked with a chuckle. “Is that what you call ‘mastery’?”

“Uh, yes, I thought so....” I stammered.

The Master smiled. “A Master is not one who never experiences a negative emotion, a Master is one who never experiences any emotion as ‘negative.’ The Master is one who masters all emotions, and uses them on purpose, with intention, for a specific reason, to produce a particular result. The Master is one who is always creating, and *knows* that creation is always occurring, and who uses every emotion to *create*, rather than to *react*.

The Master knows that *all* emotion is chosen. And how can anything that is chosen be negative? How can you have a negative feeling when you are getting what you want? You can only have a negative feeling if you have forgotten that everything you are receiving is something you have created. Only a person who is not at mastery would think this.”

I realized when I heard the Master speak that I knew very little about The Holy Experience. That is when my real exploration began.

Tool #3: *Exploring*

I can't stay where I am and experience Divinity if I believe that Divinity is not where I am. And I apparently believed that it was not where I am or I wouldn't have gone looking for it. *Yearning* is the expression of a person who is not now experiencing. If you are experiencing something, you do not yearn for it. Yet yearning can produce an experience—in which case the yearning has ended.

When the energy called *yearning* is combined with the energy of *willing*, and when those two energies are then further combined with the energy of *exploring*, one can arrive at The Holy Experience very rapidly.

Exploring something is not the same as seeking it. You may be seeking wealth in your life, but when you *will* it (call it forth), you are then able to *explore* every aspect of what it is like. You may be searching for love in your life, but when you *will* it (call it forth), you are then able to explore every aspect of what it is like. So seeking and exploring are not the same thing.

Seeking is looking FOR something. Exploring is looking AT it.

When you are exploring something, *you already have it*, and you are moving deeply into every aspect of that experience of having it in order to know the thing fully.

It is natural after yearning for, and then willing, the experience of Divinity to begin an earnest exploration of ways in which to have that experience fully. (There are many ways in which to have the experience of wealth. There are many ways in which to have the experience of love. And there are many ways in which to have the experience of Divinity.)

Yet, natural as it may be, exploration of one's Divinity takes courage. The fact that a thing is natural does not mean that it is easy—and in this case that may be especially true. For embarking upon an exploration of something is an announcement to the Self and to anyone who witnesses our personal process that we do not now have a full Knowing of that for which we have yearned. The step of Exploration is a *stepping out*. It is an inner—and in some cases an outer—declaration that we are an explorer, that we are choosing to Know something completely, or, as the late author Robert Heinlein put it, to *grok it in fullness*.

Heinlein could not find a word in the English language that came close to the kind of total, complete, and utter

knowingunderstandingcomprehendingexperiencing

that he was describing in his novel *A Stranger in a Strange Land*, so he *invented* a word: *grok*.

To be one who seeks to *grok*, to be an explorer, may not be comfortable. In fact, it rarely is—until we redefine for ourselves what *comfort* is. (There are some people who are very uncomfortable *not* being an explorer!)

Being an explorer of the full experience and knowing of life's ultimate reality can often separate us from our family, friends, and peers, who wonder why we have not accepted the answers that *they* have found or accepted, and why we are not experiencing what *they* are experiencing.

They may even make us “wrong” for being in a place of mind and spirit other than the place where they reside, and rather than honoring us for the bravery of our exploration, they may warn us against it, or even ridicule us for undertaking it.

Siddhartha Gautama was an explorer. The son of a wealthy man who had been appointed the governor of a region in India, he left his father's palace and separated himself from his own wife and child, forsaking all of his comfort and comforting familial relationships in order to explore and *grok in fullness* the True Nature of Life.

Jesus of Nazareth was an explorer. He left his mother and his father and separated himself from his family and his society of origin in order that he might explore and know fully the True Nature of His Divine Being.

The list of such human beings contains many names, some as widely known as those above and some not known at all, yet none any less committed to their exploration, and none any less sanctified.

Your name could go on this list, as could mine. That can be our choice. Yet this you must know: it is not a choice that is made only once. *Exploration* of one's Divine Nature is not like having one's tonsils out. It is a moment-to-moment, day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month, year-to-year, life-long process.

It is even more than that. It is a *lifetime-to-lifetime* process.

It is the process of *becoming* that which one is exploring, and, in the very moment of becoming It, extending the exploration further.

Here is a great and wondrous truth: *The exploration of Divinity never ends*—because Divinity Itself is endless. It is eternal and limitless and it *expands the moment Its awareness of Itself is complete.*

In this sense, Full Awareness is never possible, only the Illusion of it. In the moment we imagine our Selves to be Fully Aware, we become Aware that there is more of which to become Aware—for Who is The One who is Fully Aware, and Who is The One who is Aware of this?

This is the great mystical question. If you were truly *fully* Aware, you would not Know it. If there is a part of you that *knows* you are Fully Aware, that means there must be a part of you that is *observing* you and *measuring what you Know*. Yet what part of you is *that*, if you are already complete and full? This must be a part of you of which you are *not yet aware*.

Asking this question places us in touch with the nature of Infinity, as best as it can be explained in human terms. Infinity always expands to exceed the grasp of the Finite. One of the best (paradoxical) definitions I've heard of infinity is "everything and more."

So long as there is a "you" that seeks to be Fully Aware, Absolute Full Awareness is not possible, because there must exist, by definition, at least two aspects of the Self: (1) That Which Seeks to Be Fully Aware, and (2) That of Which The Seeker Seeks to Be Fully Aware.

Again, let it be stated: Were one to truly be fully aware, one would not be aware that one is fully aware, because *who is the One who is "aware"*—and of *what is that One aware?*

This is why I have said: Awareness + Non-Awareness = Realization.

When you awaken to this fact, Tool #3 has been utilized completely. All *exploring* ceases.

Yet how can this be? Have I not just said, *The exploration of Divinity never ends?* Yes. Here, then, is the Divine Dichotomy. For it is when the exploration ends that the true exploration begins. We embrace this Divine Dichotomy when we see that two truths, apparently contradictory, can exist simultaneously in the same space. This understanding is what brought me to Tool #4.

Tool #4: *Embracing*

Knowing something and accepting it are two different things. I discovered this when I finished (or thought I had finished) my exploring. I had spent years looking at many different religions, philosophies, belief systems, paths to enlightenment, methods of consciousness-raising, self-realization techniques, body-mind-spirit integration trainings, personal growth retreats, programs and workshops of every type, shape, size, and approach.

I read books, listened to lectures, attended seminars, did fire walks (yes, I walked across a bed of glowing hot coals not once, but twice), meditated, put myself on ten-day liquid cleansing fasts, disciplined my body (well, a little at least), and even at one point sat atop a telephone pole for ten days and nights! (Not as part of any spiritual training. It was just one of the many weird, offbeat things I have done in my life through which I confronted myself and my fears.)

After all of this I felt that I was no closer to grander knowing or greater awareness than when I began. That is not to say that none of these activities were valuable. It is simply to notice that I was *not ready to embrace* what they had to show me. The old saying, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear” also works in reverse: when the student is not ready, all the teachers in the world will make no difference at all.

Still, I had picked up and used—without consciously knowing it—Tool #1 in what later evolved into Ten Instruments of the Holy Experience. I had

engaged the energy of *yearning*. This energy, in fact, had been engaged in me from the time I was a small boy. Even in those earliest days of my life I wanted to know more about what I understood from my parents to be God, and what I understood from them about Life, and what I understood from them about other human beings.

Later in my life I came to realize that much of what I understood was, in fact, not true. At least, it was *not true for me*. It may have been true for my parents and for my childhood role models and teachers, but it was not true for me. I had no idea if any of these understandings were even true *objectively*. I only knew that they were not *my* truth.

(I am speaking now about some of my childhood ideas about God and religion, about life and its purpose, and about other human beings.)

Standing in the Land of the Unsure was very scary. After all, the people who gave you the ideas you once held to be true were very high authority figures in your life. These are the people you would have to make wrong if you rejected their ideas and their truths, and struck out to find your own.

That wonderful teacher of mine, Terry Cole-Whittaker, once helped me understand what my resistance was to embracing a new truth, my *own* truth, about something. "Who would you have to 'make wrong' in order to accept what you *know* to be true inside of you?" she asked. In one case it was my father. In another case, it was my mother. In still another case it was my favorite childhood teacher. Rather than make them "wrong," I held onto *their* truth, clung to *their* story, and made it real.

A most striking example of this was when my mother told me, during a session of palm-reading when I was a small boy: "You'll never love anybody." She felt she saw this in the lines of my hand, and simply told me this.

"You are a genius," she said "but you'll never love anybody."

"What?" I asked. "How can that be?"

"Do you see here?" she replied, pointing out a line formation in my palm. "You have no Heart Line on either hand. That means you will never fall in love. You experience life as a mental process. You will experience love as a mental process also, not as an expression of emotion. For you love is a thought, rather than an experience."

Wow. Okay, mom, if you say so.

Now don't misunderstand. I love my mom. (She celebrated her Continuation Day over 30 years ago.) And I do not for a moment hold this little incident from my childhood against her. She was not wishing to hurt me. She was simply sharing her truth, as she knew it. But to say that it did not have any impact on me would be a lie. The fact is, I *lived out my mother's prediction* rather than make her "wrong" about that.

I likewise lived out many of my father's predictions ("You'll never amount to anything") and characterizations ("You walk around with your head in the clouds"). And those of my major childhood role models, too. My older brother Wayne, who I totally idolized, used to say about me, "All he wants is attention." So, of course, I lived out that characterization as well, for many years.

(These days I get all the attention I want, thank you very much.)

Given how high in my personal hierarchy I had placed these and other childhood authority figures, you can imagine how difficult it was for me to finally reject, one by one, these ideas about me—much less to embrace any *new* idea I may have had about myself, to say nothing of new ideas about *larger* things such as God and Life.

Yes, I had gathered much from my explorations. I gathered much from all those books, retreats, religions, seminars, and sacred interactions with others. But I was just not able to hold onto very much of it and make it my reality, largely because of *who I would have to make wrong if I did*.

Then, I finally took a big leap—using what later became the Fourth Instrument of the Holy Experience. It took enormous courage, more courage than it took to become an explorer. When you *create* what you are yearning for, by willing it and calling it forth, and when you explore it fully, it almost seems too good to be true. And so, if you're not careful, you will call it *untrue*. Like the Mad Hatter in Wonderland, you will swear that what is "so" is not so, and that what is "not so" is so.

What made it possible for me to step out of this trap was desperation. In my case, that's what it took. I created a situation in my life where I suddenly had no way of producing income, having sustained a broken neck in a car accident, and wound up walking the streets, living at a campground,

with no home, no job, no car, no money, no possessions except the clothes on my back, a tent and a sleeping bag.

God had to get me down to nothing—my last 25 cents, literally—before I was ready to admit that the way I had been “doing life” was not working.

As I look back over this period, I find myself determined to do all that I can to help others to avoid ever having to go through something like that. The desolation of that experience for me was total. I was convinced that I would never get out of that situation, never be leaving that campground, never be able to get back on my feet and find my way back to “real life.”

I was sure that I would end my days as a street person. (Mind you, I was not a young man when all of this happened. I was 50 years old.) For a while there I pictured myself dying in a gutter someplace, with nobody noticing and nobody caring.

I cried myself to sleep night after night in that cold, damp sleeping bag. Whatever wrong I have done to anyone else in my life, I told myself, I was paying for it now. I had received my come-uppance. This was my punishment, and, like hell, it was going to go on forever.

Now imagine, in a situation like this, suddenly changing your most fundamental idea about life and accepting the concept of a God who does not punish anyone for anything at all—and who does not set life up to provide such retribution, either.

Well, I was unable in that situation to do it. It was only after I had gotten *out* of that situation that I began believing the unbelievable, and embracing new ideas about God, about Life, and about all the other people in my life and on the earth.

Now I come here to tell you that you do not have to walk this path of desperation. You can use, instead, the Ten Instruments of the Holy Experience. As it was stated so beautifully in the final CwG dialogue book, *HOME WITH GOD in a Life That Never Ends*: “The Good News is that it is not necessary to go through hell to get to heaven.”

Take the Fourth Tool. *Embrace* what you have discovered through all of your *exploring*. Accept as your truth the highest ideas about yourself, about God, and about others that your Soul has sent you—and is sending you now. You have *called forth* these ideas through your yearning, through your

willing, and through your exploring. Do not reject them now because they contradict what the authority figures in your life have told you. Do not reject them because they seem too good to be true.

Embrace them. Do not betray your very Self in order not to betray others. Remember this always: *Betrayal of your Self in order not to betray another is betrayal nonetheless. It is the highest betrayal.*

Tool #5: *Explaining*

The fifth tool on the path to the Holy Experience is used when we begin to *explain to others* what we have come to understand as a result of using the first four tools.

This path of *explaining* is a very high path, and very powerful. First, because it serves others; it serves humanity. It assists those who are still yearning or still exploring in finding their way to their own truth. Second, because it invokes a fundamental Law of the Universe, as described in *Conversations with God*, which says: **That which you wish to experience, cause another to experience. Give away that which you wish to receive.**

Elsewhere CwG puts this even more succinctly: **Be The Source.**

There are only two places to be on the “playing board of life.” You can either be on the square marked Recipient, or on the square marked Source.

If you stand on the square marked Recipient you will forever be looking to *receive*. You will be looking to receive things from God, from your boss, your company, your spouse, your family and friends, and from your world. You will become a supplicant, a *requester*. You will pray or ask or beg or plead or request at some level – and then you will hope to receive what you have requested.

If you stand on the square marked Source you will forever be looking to *give*. You will be looking to give things from God, to your boss, your company, your spouse, your family and friends, and to your world. You will become a supplier, a *resource*. You will offer, source, provide, and supply at some level – and then you will experience having what you have supplied, for how could you supply it if you did not have it?

Thus, if you supply to *others* what you, yourself, desire, *you will experience having it.*

Now, if what you have desired for many years is an explanation of life and God and How Things Work, and if you begin offering this explanation to others (even as I am doing here), you will soon experience yourself as *having that.*

It has been said that we teach what we choose to learn. I choose to learn more and more about how the Universe works, about Divinity and the Essence of all of life, about the process of Life Itself, about others, and about myself. Thus, I teach about all these things. I have used the tool of the *explainer.*

One does not have to write books or offer lectures or present workshops in order to do this. Explaining comes in many forms, not the least of which is the living of one's life in a particular way. Our daily *example* is the *best explanation we could offer* of what we understand about ourselves, about God, and about life. The behavior that we model is a practical explanation of our thoughts about everything.

When we take what we have embraced as our innermost truth and allow our lives, in a hundred ways, to stand as an explanation to others, we move one giant step closer to Full Realization. We have become Aware of life in the world around us, and of exactly how we choose to live it, given our understanding and consciousness about Who We Are.

Explaining that for which we have been *yearning*, that which we have been *willing*, that which we have been *exploring*, and that which we have been *embracing*, completes the Five Steps to Awareness. Our *explanation* is our *demonstration* of the level that our awareness has reached.

The Holy Experience

Chapter Nineteen

The last five tools of Ten Instruments of The Holy Experience are:

6. Resonance
7. Visualization
8. Movement
9. Ritual
10. Service & Discipline

You will recall that the Ten Instruments are divided into two types: Physical Tools (described fully in the preceding chapter) and Spiritual Tools (which I will describe here). I have alternately called these two types The Five Tools of Awareness, and The Five Tools of Non-Awareness of the World.

You will also remember that I said, “Complete Awareness-plus-Complete Non-Awareness equals Realization.” When you are Aware and Non-Aware at the same time, you are Fully Realized. This is what is known as the Holy Experience.

Before we explore this second set of five tools, we need to look at this business of Non-Awareness that I keep talking about.

Both the state of Awareness and the state of Non-Awareness are needed, I have found, in order to live a rich, expansive, and spiritually fulfilling life.

First, we must be Aware of so many things in and about the physical environment in which we find ourselves. We can't be meandering about our world bumping into things, as it were; breaking lots of glass and stepping on the shards. We have to know what's out there, and where and how we fit in.

We also have to be Aware of the largest question, and its answer: WHY?

Why are we here? Who are we, really? What are we “up to” here? Is there a purpose to our existence? We have to be Aware of the Reason for All of Life, how the process called Life functions, and what we are trying to achieve within this framework.

This is where the first five Instruments of the Holy Experience come in handy. Yearning arouses our curiosity about these things, awakening us from our sleep. Willing provides us with the power we need to push past daily appearances and concerns and to begin, at last, our focus on larger things. Exploring moves us into a daring reaching out into the new world that the Soul invites us to know. Embracing gives us a tool with which to hold onto what we have discovered in our exploring. And Explaining allows us to share what we have discovered with others, which is one of the deepest and sweetest ways to experience it fully.

Yet, with all of that having been said, this is all still about “data.” It is about thoughts. Not exclusively, perhaps, but mainly. Data gathering and data *use* is the activity of the physical. Wisdom gathering and wisdom use is the activity of the spiritual. For this we have to become Non-Aware of that of which we have become Aware. That is, we have to know it, but we have to have none of it matter—except when it does. Non-Awareness allows us to use the data that we have gathered about Life and Self and God, without having the data use *us*.

Let me give you an example of what I mean here.

A person who grows up inside of a particular culture and has learned all about it, is married to a particular tradition, and is immersed in a particular religion, could live an entire life being *used by that data*. What this person has come to understand about the world in which he or she lives has become the framework within which life itself is experienced. Nothing (or very little) outside of that framework is considered, tried, or allowed.

The only way that such a person could step into an experience not covered by the data of their culture, tradition, religion, environment, etc., (we all know life-long Republicans or Democrats, Conservatives or Liberals, who belong to that persuasion because their families did!) would be for that person to be Nonaware of the dogma or doctrine emerging from the data. Or at least Non-Aware that it meant anything. This “Non-Awareness” would or could give them the “permission” they cannot give themselves to experience

something not covered by the original information they have been given about Life and how it is.

(You've heard the statement *Ignorance is bliss?*)

Now the connection with Life's True Joy, Real Purpose, and Ultimate Reality is what we have been calling here The Holy Experience. This is an experience *not covered by the prior data* of most human cultures, traditions, and religions. True, many of these cultures, traditions, and religions offer a *facsimile* of it, but few, if any, have brought us reliable data about Life's True Joy, Real Purpose, and Ultimate Reality. In fact, they have filled many people (perhaps most people) with exactly the opposite.

Therefore, in order to discover and experience Life's True Joy, Real Purpose, and Ultimate Reality, we have to become *Non-Aware* of that of which we have become *Aware*—using our prior data only when it is useful to us, rather than being used *by* it.

In short, we have to be *in this world, but not of it*. We have to be *Non-Aware* of the prior data, or at least *Non-Aware* that the prior data means anything. We have to adopt the attitude that “nothing has any meaning save the meaning I give it.”

The embracing of such a point of view takes enormous courage. That is why it is often said with a wry smile: “Transformation ain't for sissies.”

Non-Awareness is like walking a tightrope. It is good to be *Aware* that you are on a tightrope. You can keep your balance when you are *Aware*. You can make it across to the other side. It is also good to be *Non-Aware* of just how high up you are. Or at that you are high up at all. That is why all tightrope walkers are told, “*Don't look down.*”

Nobody is kidding anybody. The tightrope walker knows exactly what is being walked on. The tightrope walker is totally *Aware*. Yet the walker knows that looking down will increase *Awareness* to the point where the data begins to run the *person*. So tightrope walkers do not make themselves *Aware* of how high they are. They enter a state of *Non-Awareness*.

Attaining a state of *Non-Awareness* is all about the movement from data to wisdom. It is very wise to not look down while on a tightrope. It is very wise to keep looking straight ahead. The same is true of Life.

Attaining a state of Non-Awareness is about the shift from the Mind to the Soul—which knows all about the Tightrope of Life...as well as what is awaiting us on The Other Side. It knows that we can make it across the span without difficulty if we simply don't look down. It knows that in God's Kingdom, "everything is looking up."

It also knows that on this tightrope, as in most circuses, it's okay if you fall. There's a safety net, and you're not going to be hurt. You'll just bounce around a little, then make the journey across again. Ultimately you will learn (remember) that Life is a balancing act. It's just about keeping your balance while juggling the experiences of the Body, the thoughts of the Mind, and the mission of the Soul.

I want to give you a practical, real-world example of Non-Awareness before I go on, so that you can have a sense of what all this means as a practical matter in one's daily life.

I was traveling once on a long journey across the ocean to make a speaking engagement in Europe. It took many hours to fly there, and when I arrived, the person who was to pick me up at the airport was nowhere in sight. The airport was crowded and noisy, hot and stuffy, there was no food to be found without walking a long way to the main terminal, and I was travel weary.

I called the office of the person who was scheduled to collect me and his secretary said, "Oh, my God. Is that *today*? We had it that you were coming in *tomorrow*. Oh, my gosh, he'll leave right away!"

Of course, I was very let down.

Oh, who am I kidding? I was frustrated and angry. I tried to gather myself together enough to say, "Uh, okaay...", and offered a clipped goodbye. Then I sat on a bench to wait. Within moments my cell phone rang. "He's an hour in the other direction," the man's secretary told me worriedly. "But he asks you to wait there, because he needs to take you to a meeting that he thought was also tomorrow, and....well, just...can you wait for him?"

"What-*ever*...", I sighed, and said another short goodbye.

Now I knew I had an hour to wait. I seemed more tired than ever. The place seemed *noisier* than ever. I would have sworn that the temperature even rose five degrees. I was keenly (and uncomfortably) Aware of everything in my physical environment.

Then I had a brilliant idea. I decided to sit on that bench and just meditate. I closed my eyes and began calm, gentle breathing. I used the particular technique that I always use, of looking straight ahead with my Mind's eye into the field of darkness before me, awaiting the appearance of the Dancing Blue Flame that often begins flickering in the distance, then gradually moves toward me until it fills my entire field of "vision" and consumes me.

I have had this experience many times and it is sheer bliss. I am convinced it is my Soul, coming to meet my Mind, and to join in the ecstasy of Unity, the Truth of my Being...

Abruptly, I felt a soft tapping on my shoulder. I assumed it was a security guard, asking me not to sleep on the airport bench, or advising me that someone had walked off with my computer bag while I was sitting there with my eyes closed, or something like that.

It was not. It was the man who was supposed to pick me up. He had gotten there very much faster than he thought he could.

No, he had not. That was just what I *thought* must have happened. Actually, he had taken *longer* than he estimated that he would. I had been sitting on that bench for more than an hour and a quarter.

I had not fallen asleep. I was aware, and I *remember* being aware, of everything around me. The noise. The crowd. The heat. Yet at the same time I was *Non-Aware*. Everything was there, but I was Non-Aware. Somehow I had managed to meld the noise, the crowd, the heat into One Single Experience—and then to pay no attention to it. I had internally diverted my attention, turning inward and focusing only on the Dancing Blue Flame.

When I realized what had happened, I was amazed—actually, flabbergasted—at how much time had passed. My picker-upper was apologizing all over the place for the snafu and my inconvenience, and all I could do was smile at him and tell him, softly, "No problem. Really, truly...no problem. Shall we go?" I rose in one smooth motion, gently reaching for his arm and adding, "It was good of you to break away from what you were doing and come get me like this."

I'm sure he thought that I was an Ascended Master. Or at least an honest-to-goodness guru. *Who else would respond like this?*

Anybody, really, who has found the tools of Non-Awareness and used them to step away from the *Sturm und Drang* of humanity's everyday drama by simply becoming Non-Aware of it, moving instead into the lovely, peaceful, gentle spaciousness of Ultimate Reality—to which we all may have access whenever we wish. That is what being Aware and Non-Aware at the same time is like. And I want to tell you that all of us can reach that state, as I did on that airport bench, in which we become Aware and Non-Aware in the same moment.

And *this* is the Holy Experience.

Let's now take a look at...

THE FIVE TOOLS OF NON-AWARENESS

These Instruments are among the most valuable I have found in a lifetime of searching and in discussing with others their own search and experience.

Tool #6: *Resonance*

Everything in the Universe is comprised of energy. What makes one kind of energy different from another kind of energy (and, therefore, makes *differentiation* possible in a Singular Reality) is the *vibration* of the energy, or, loosely, its rate of speed. This is sometimes called its *frequency*. That is, how *frequent* is its oscillation?

Energy comes in waves. Each particle is a wave-like structure, and many trillions of such wave-like elements, oscillating at the same frequency and strung together, appear to create the Super String Theory that is so much talked about today as the basis of a Theory of Everything (TOE).

Often we speak of a “wave of emotion” that comes over us, and we are describing the experience exactly.

This vibration of the Essential Energy of the Universe creates a distinct sense of resonance within every living thing, sometimes manifesting as sound, or noise. “Sound” is one of the the most humanly accessible modes of resonance in human experience. Sound cannot be heard, of course, unless there is someone to hear it. (We looked at this ancient conundrum in Chapter

10 when we asked: *Does a tree falling in the forest make a sound if there is no one there?*) Yet sound is present even if there is nothing else present. It is simply manifesting in unheard ways.

The Resonance of the Universe manifests, among other ways, as the Sound of Life. It IS Life Itself, expressed in one of its most elemental forms. There are times when you may not be able to *see* raw energy, but you can *hear it*. (You can also, by the way, often *feel it* before you can see it.)

Mystics have been known to say, "At the heart of the universe is the sound of *om*." The most sensitive microphones that humans have been able to invent have been sent into space to be our "ears" onto the universe, and those devices have picked up a deep, low-frequency, unable-to-be-heard-by-the-human-ear, mysterious and continuous background rumble, or *hum*.

What *is* this hum? Could it be the Primal Force, the Essential Essence, Life Itself in its most elemental form? Science tells us this is the Cosmic Microwave Background radiation (CMB) which is supposed to be the "echo" of the Big Bang. This is electromagnetic in nature and is thus a form of light.

We are, at our root, basically light and sound. We resonate deeply with both. That is why we react instantly to any noise, and can be so deeply moved by certain sounds. It is why *music* is a universal language, touching and uniting people across every barrier of tongue and culture. (*Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast*, Shakespeare wrote, and he was profoundly right.)

It is said that if we ever tried to send a communication into outer space with hopes of having other sentient beings respond to it, we would send not a worded message, but *music*. Perhaps, as in the science-fiction film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, a simple five-note signature.

The thought is that, if there are intelligent beings within range of this signal, they would respond to the universal language of *sound* as *tones* much sooner than they would respond to sound as *words* in any earth language (although those, too, are sounds, yet not nearly as melodic or mathematically structured).

It is precisely because we are, at our basis, light and sound, that masters of virtually every mystic tradition throughout the ages of human evolution have invited us and exhorted us to use *our own essence* as an Instrument in the discovery and experience of *our own essence*.

Chanting and singing has thus been used to invoke The Holy Experience in virtually every religion on the face of the earth. As well, humming and *om-ing* and various other kinds of *noise making* have been the tools of soul connectors for as long as we can remember.

Meditators are often told that a good way to begin their practice is to *listen to the sound* of their own breath. Move deeply into the sound, meld with it, become one with it.

Training ourselves to listen to the sounds of life and to seek Resonance with life is a wonderful beginning on the path to Non-Awareness of the Self. We experience our Selves not as individuals, but as part of the Whole in the moments of transcendence that focusing on nothing but sound can create.

Using Resonance as a pathway to enlightenment

Resonance is the first tool of the Five Tools of Non-Awareness of the world. That is because when you use *Resonance*, when you connect with the environment of your physicality by checking to see how *resonant* you are with it (yes, Resonance can be *felt*), you can lose the awareness of yourself as an entity separate from *life itself*. You can *get lost* in your experience of sublime resonance with, say, sound.

Who in our world has not done this? You can, quite literally, *lose yourself* in the sound of a symphony orchestra, or in the sound of crickets at night, or in the sound of ocean waves gently washing over a beach, or, for that matter, in the sound of *silence*.

Yes, silence—which we sometimes erroneously think of as no sound at all—is the most entrancing state of Resonance of all.

Silence *is* Resonance. When you listen deeply to the silence, you will experience the natural Resonance of Life Itself. When you merge fully with the silence, you emerge fully from your sense of Self as a singular Other, and experience that there *is* no “other” in the Universe. You become One. With everything. You become resonant with it.

That is why all great mystical teachers have said, *Listen*. To what?, the student asks. *To nothing*, the teacher replies. How can I listen to nothing?, the pupil begs to know, frustrated by confusion. *By not listening to anything at all*, the teacher replies.

And this is how that is done:

First, find a place to sit down for a moment. Do not lie down, as this may tempt you to fall asleep. You want to be fully awake and fully Aware of being Unaware.

Did you hear what I just said?

I said, *You want to be fully Aware of being Unaware.*

Do you understand? You must deeply understand this if you are to find your way to the Holy Experience. This is a journey, and you must deeply understand that the journey moves you from where you are to where you want to be...without you going anywhere. *Nothing changes, but everything is different.*

So, next, make yourself comfortable, letting go of any physical tension that you may feel in your body.

Now, close your eyes (to limit the number of receptors receiving data from your environment) and open your ears. Listen, just listen, to the world around you. Do this for a few moments, without working at it in any way. Just listen to everything there is to be heard.

Then, begin to categorize what you're hearing. Make a mental list of the different noises to which you are listening. See how many different sounds you can identify. How many can you count?

Good. Now, begin to eliminate those sounds one at a time. That is, shift your focus away from them to the degree that you can, one at a time, until you focus keenly on only *one sound*.

It does not matter what that once sound is. It can be anything. Just focus your attention on that one sound, and that one sound only. You'll still hear the other sounds, but they will be in the background. Listen intently to the *single sound*.

In a quiet room, this could be the sound of your own breathing. In a place where there is more noise, this could be the sound of an air conditioner, or of music playing, or of people walking on a hardwood floor.

If you can't pick a sound that it pleases you to isolate and focus upon, *make your own sound*. That's right, make a sound that *you like*, and focus on that. Some monks do this, and they call it *om-ing*. They make the sound of *om*, and they listen to themselves doing it!

Do this and you will find that *you can get lost in that sound*. That is, the “you” that *you think you are* will literally be “lost” in the single sound, and Resonant with it. You will lose your sense of self and begin feeling at-onement with the sound itself. Don’t ask yourself why. Just let it happen.

Chanting can do this for some people very quickly. Either listening to chanting, or actually doing the chanting. *Chanting can be enchanting*.

Music can also be entrancing in this way, as was observed before.

Sound, which is an immediately and easily accessible way to experience Resonance, can be an effective tool and a wonderful pathway to enlightenment, a doorway into the Holy Experience.

You may wish to make it a habit to *listen to life* in this way for five minutes each day. The nice thing about this is that you can do this at any time, in any place. Just stop what you are doing for five minutes and listen. *Listen*. Listen to all the sounds of the moment, then pick out a sound that you choose to focus on and pay particular attention to that. Move *into* the sound. Become one with it.

You can do this at an airport or a train station. In a busy department store or on a street corner. At home or at work. Or listening to a symphony. And once you get into the habit of using this sound idea, you will find yourself wanting to do it again and again. You may even find yourself, in a sense, *addicted to sound*. Because you will discover that isolating and focusing on a particular sound can bring you enormous peace.

Warning: Do not do this while driving, or operating heavy machinery.

You think I am kidding, and I am not.

Tool #7: Visualization

One of the most powerful Instruments I have ever used is the tool of visualization. I’m tempted to stay away from saying something very daring here, but it is true, so I’m going to say it: I have *hardly ever* used the tool of visualization and have it not work.

I’m not going to say that it has *never* not worked, but I am going to say that the success ratio in using this tool has been very, very high for me.

Visualization, as must be obvious from its name, is a process by which we use the Mind's gift of imagery to focus the energies of Life in such a way that a particular *form* emerges—first in the Mind, and often in physical life.

Have you ever asked a friend to help you find something that has gone missing? If so, you know that one of the first things they will ask you is, "What does it look like?"

Likewise, when you wish to find something in the vast and limitless Field of Infinite Possibilities, one of the best things you can do is form a picture of it in your Mind.

When you say, "I wish to be successful," what does that *look like*? When you say, "I wish to meet my perfect mate," what does that *look like*? When you say, "I want to be happy, doggone it!", what does that *look like*?

Create a picture of what you wish to experience in daily life. The forming of pictures is nothing more than the use of energy to manipulate energy, shaping it into the objects of one's desire. What the Mind is actually doing is calling it forth from the formless. It is using itself as a sort of magnet, pulling from the vast sea of Unformed Energy those specific elements that produce the form of something in particular.

Life is like one big body

In recent years we have been hearing a great deal from medical science about "undifferentiated stem cells." These are human cells that have not taken on any particular form. Ultimately the body "coaxes" them, through a biochemical process, to take on particular and specific forms—brain cells, heart muscle cells, liver cells, the cells of hair follicles...whatever.

Medical science is now finding ways to (a) harvest undifferentiated cells—so called "stem cells"—from the human body (as found, for instance, in the thrown-away umbilical fluids of newborns) and (b) "coax" them outside the body into forming themselves into cells of any body organ or part that is desired. In this way, doctors of tomorrow hope to be able to cultivate, and then inject into body parts that are damaged, healthy cells that will allow damaged organs to regenerate themselves in whole and healthy form. We are not that far away from this kind of Regenerative Medicine.

I have been made to understand that the raw energy of Life, in its sub molecular form, is analogous at the micro level to this process at the human cellular level.

Energy in its purest form is simply undifferentiated sub molecular matter that has not yet been “coaxed” into taking on specific characteristics and joining with other sub molecular matter to take the shape of something in particular that we call a physical manifestation.

Yet this sounds a great deal like actual “creation” in the true understanding of the word, and not simply “remembering” what always was, is now, and always will be. So I asked God about this, and what I got was a remarkably clear and incisive answer.

That which always was, is now, and always will be exists in the Ever Moment of Here/Now very much like pieces of a puzzle that have been dumped from a box and are now lying on a table. The whole picture of what IS, is there, always and forever—but those pieces (or elements of energy) have to be *connected in a certain way* for a particular picture to emerge.

What causes the pieces of the Cosmic Puzzle to coagulate in this way is the attracting power of energy focused in a magnetic way, through the device that you and I would call “attention.” Your attention sets the pattern, pulling together from the cosmic soup the elements of the “puzzle” that are always there, but may not be seen from your perspective in a way that forms a particular pattern.

Brain waves are emitted from our Mind the moment that we conceive of a thing. Those brain waves—waves of raw energy oscillating at a particular frequency—attract like energy as would a magnetic, and soon a pattern emerges in your Mind. And so we are not actually creating something, but we are, by focusing on what is always there, producing a pattern of energy vibration that allows us to *see in a recognizable form* what is *always there*—like looking at the same puzzle pieces that were always on the table, but now in a pattern that connects them in a specific way.

Does this make sense? I have tried to explain the process of Visualization in a way that every one of us can understand.

Now, let’s take a look at how you can use this tool in every day life.

It’s really quite simple, the process is really very easy, and—as I said—for me *it works*.

Become a movie maker

The first thing I do is create a very short “movie” in my Mind of what it is that I choose to experience. For instance, when my first book was published I created a little “film” in which I was opening my post office box and letters were falling out by the dozen. That’s all there was to it. Just a 20-second visualization...a “close up” of my hand opening the P.O. Box and letters literally falling on the floor from being so jammed in there.

Each night and each morning I ran that movie in my Mind over and over again, about ten or fifteen times. I kept on seeing it on the movie screen of my Mind.

Of course, nothing happened at first. I went to my post office box and I found my usual mail, advertising flyers, bills, the free newspaper, etc., but nothing from a reader of the book. Then, a bit later, one or two letters began trickling in. But seven *weeks* later it was a different story. I opened the box one day and sure enough, *exactly as in my ‘dream’*, the mail fell out onto the floor. This began to happen every day, until the postmaster put a note in my box asking me if I would kindly rent a larger box, because the clerk could not get all my mail in the one I was using, and they were having to hold most of my mail behind the counter for me.

So, find a time when your Mind is not occupied with something else. For me this is almost always the last moments before I fell asleep and the very first moments after I awaken. Then watch the movie you have created. Play your little film over and over again.

Now Esther and Jerry Hicks (if I have gotten their message correctly) also suggest that you add *feeling* to your movie. That is, allow yourself to *feel* what it would be like for your movie to be happening in real life. Let your Mind generate the feelings that such an experience would produce. Mix these in with the visual images, and let the movie roll!

Finally—and in my experience this is an important part of the process—let go of all expectations, demands, or requirements. In other words, do not sit back and begin to get impatient if or when you do not see the results you are visualizing. Just forget about your movie after watching it in your Mind’s eye, and move on with your life. Let go and let God.

If your life never shows up for you the way it appears in your “movie,” let that be totally okay with you. Remember, the Universe knows

what is for your highest benefit, and it will never bring you something that is not—no matter how badly you want it, or how many times you visualize it. So *trust the process*.

But *use* the process as well. Use it to place the focus of your attention on particular pieces of the puzzle on the cosmic table, allowing yourself to magnetize the pieces that will fit together to form the picture that is best for you right now. Say to God, “This, God, or something better!”

Now if it is The Holy Experience for which you are yearning, and you wish to use the Instrument of visualization as the tool with which you can build up to that in your life, allow yourself to picture in your Mind’s eye, and to feel, what it would be like to have such an experience. Decide what that could “look like” to you; decide how it would feel. See yourself having the experience. Feel yourself aglow with the wonder of it. Watch yourself, in your “movie,” smiling gently, eyes closed, as you move through the Holy Experience of knowing and demonstrating Who You Really Are.

See yourself moving through the world as this. *Feel* how it would be to demonstrate this. Enjoy, in your little “film,” being filled with love and light, wisdom and clarity, awareness and the highest consciousness. Watch yourself as you move through regular or predictable moments in your life, your heart overflowing with soft joy and deep love, your Mind filled with vast insight and wisdom, your Body at ease and at peace, and your Soul sweetly expanding into its highest state of being. See and feel your Self experiencing this.

And then, do not be surprised if one day, during one of those regular or predictable moments, you produce in your life *exactly what you had been picturing*. Do not be surprised if you find yourself opened to, and *having*, the Holy Experience.

Tool #8: *Movement*

From the beginning of human experience our species has intuitively understood that Movement was somehow an important tool in both living a good life and connecting with an Essence larger than themselves.

It is no coincidence that even in the earliest times, when humans were feeling good about something and wanted to celebrate, *they moved*.

Intuitively, they jumped to their feet and agitated in joyous celebration. And soon their movements became coordinated, remembered, and recreated. In short, they *danced*. This is a physical expression of Resonance.

It is also no coincidence that when they felt *bad* about something, and sought help from what they understood to be a Higher Power, once again they *danced*.

We have been dancing and moving in a coordinated and purposeful way for millennia. Somehow we knew that it was *good for us*.

And it is. We were right, it is.

Not surprisingly, then, Movement is considered to this very day to be a joyful and wonderfully effective Instrument of the Holy Experience; a tool used by many to achieve outer relaxation and inner peace.

In Sufism—which is, of course, a form of Islam—some Muslims dance and swirl their way to a sense of blissful connection with the Divine. They are called Whirling Dervishes.

In contemporary America a new trend has been sweeping the land, called Ecstatic Dance. In cities and towns across the country groups meet weekly to engage in this emerging new version of an ancient form of joyful movement that can bring one an experience of *separation* from day-to-day worries and frustrations and *unification* with Life at an entirely different level. *Nothing has changed, yet everything is different*. For a moment, one can *dance into ecstasy*.

And, of course, all over the world will be found yoga classes and groups. Another rapidly spreading form of physical-spiritual connection is *Dahn Hak*, a Korean practice involving pre-set and prescribed movements that seek to unify Body, Mind, and Spirit together as a single life expression through sequenced physical activity.

Tai chi is still another form of such Body-Mind-Spirit integration activity. And then, there is just plain good old-fashioned “exercise.”

However you employ it, the tool of Movement has been known to produce significant benefit. Not only, as may seem obvious, physical toning and shaping, but metaphysical sharpening and opening as well.

This is because Movement is about *agitating energy*. It is stirring the pot of the primal soup. It is a thorough shaking of the Stuff That Is, rearranging it ever so slightly, keeping it moving, flowing, and freshly laundered.

Conversations with God tells us that *all of Life* is Movement—and so it should not be surprising that Movement would connect us more directly with all of Life.

There is nothing in Life—nothing—that does not move. Even what we call “inanimate objects” are moving. If you don’t believe it, place a rock under a microscope. And so Movement is, in that sense, sacred. It is the sacred characteristic and the secret aspect of Life Itself. Therefore, if you wish to stay connected with Life, keep the Body and the Mind moving. Exercise both. Let neither become stagnant.

Find some way to move.

Regularly. Vigorously. Continuously. Intentionally. Purposefully. One might even say, religiously.

Don’t stand still. Keep the energy coursing through your body. *Don’t stand still for anything*. Move, move, *move*.

Movement is one of the most ignored or unused Instruments of the Holy Experience. Many people don’t see it as a pathway to God. Yet Movement *is* God...and God *is* Movement. CwG says that God is a process. That process is called “change.” And change—a change in anything—is *Movement*.

Therefore, Godliness is Moveliness.

There’s no such word, of course. Movement is so seldom recognized as a direct pathway to God that there is no word for that state of being in movement. I had to make one up!

It doesn’t matter how you move, just move.

Fill your life with Moveliness and you will fill your life with loveliness, joyfulness, and happiness. And if that isn’t Godliness, I don’t know what is.

Tool #9: *Ritual*

The dictionary defines *ritual* as a series of actions or type of behavior regularly and invariably followed by someone, often according to a prescribed order.

Rituals are patterns of ordered living. By their nature they move us into non-awareness by their autonomic forms. They are essential to all societies.

When the Ritual has a strong spiritual, emotional, or psychological component, it can often be a powerful Instrument of the Holy Experience. Chanting might be just such a ritual. Or praying in a certain repetitive way, such as saying the rosary. (A form of devotion in the Roman Catholic faith in which five, fifteen, or twenty decades of Hail Marys are repeated, each decade preceded by an Our Father and followed by a Glory Be.) Or meditation, for a certain length of time in a certain way at a certain time of day every day.

Some Rituals are much shorter than others in the performing, but it is less about the length of time they take and more about the place they take the Mind—which is *away from* the day-to-day, hour-to-hour, minute-to-minute world of our exterior reality and *into* the confines of the Soul; away from the data and into the non-data, where no moment is about information, but only about experience; away from fear and into love—love of Life, love of God, and love of Self.

You may wish to find a Ritual, or to create one, which can serve you as a tool in this way.

For instance, each morning when I arise I say the same thing inside my head. The *exact* same thing at the exact same time. Just after “coming to,” I say: *Thank you, God, for another day and another chance to be my Highest Self.*

I also have a ritual when I take my daily shower. I sing *Oh, what a beautiful morning*, that fabulous song from the Broadway show *Oklahoma!*

Sometimes I sing it aloud and sometimes in my head. I sing it because...

(a) I love the opening lyrics

(b) It is impossible for me to stay in a “bad mood” while I’m singing (even if I got up on the “wrong side of the bed”), and my good mood usually stays with me for quite a while

(The opening lyrics, by the way, are...

Oh, what a beautiful morning,

Oh, what a beautiful day!

I’ve got a wonderful feeling

Everything’s goin’ my way.)

I also have a ritual when I go to sleep at night. I say, *Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better.* (This is the famous phrase that the French physician and philosopher Emile Coué told the soldiers that he was treating in tents behind the front lines during World War I to repeat 100 times a day. He called it *Auto-Suggestion.*) I say it 11 times each night. Don’t ask me why. That’s just a number I’ve chosen. Hey, it’s *a ritual!*

And finally, I have a ritual whenever I encounter anything “untoward” or challenging during my day. Again, it is a little thing that I say: *Thank you, God, for helping me to understand that this problem has already been solved for me.*

These are some of my rituals, and I have others. They are my ways of building a path to the Holy Experience.

Tool #10: *Service & Discipline*

When I was a younger man I had a great sadness. A woman with whom I was engaged to be married decided that she didn’t want to marry me after all. She broke off our relationship, and I was devastated. Paralyzed, really. I didn’t want to do anything, go anywhere, see anybody, or live anymore in a happy way. I remember actually feeling that if I were to allow myself to be happy in the future, it would taint or besmirch the memory of

the once-in-a-lifetime, more-than-extra-special relationship that I once had with this lady. I was going to *stay unhappy for the rest of my life*.

That would show *her!*

(Isn't it strange how the Mind can work?)

A dear friend of mine, a man I had then known for over 15 years (and who I still count as a friend today, over 30 years later) came a'knockin at my apartment door one Saturday following this tragic event and told me to get myself together, because I was to go with him somewhere.

"Oh, Bill, I don't want to go anywhere," I whined. "Just leave me be."

But he was hearing none of it. "Either come with me now or no longer count me as your friend."

"Wow, you would put our 15-year friendship on the line for something you want me to do with you?" I asked incredulously.

"No. But I would for something I want you to do for *you*."

Okay, he got me. I was intrigued. I did the washcloth thing, ran a comb through my hair, threw on some fresh clothes, and met him in his waiting car. Then he drove me to an apartment across town, in which lived a man in his 80s who he said was named Walter.

"What are we doing here?" I asked.

"Watch," was all Bill said.

Inside, Bill introduced me to his elderly friend and then began undressing some bandages on his right leg. After a short while I saw what he was doing. Bill was gently washing the open running cancerous sores on Walter's leg, applying some sort of ointment, and re-dressing them with a fresh wrap-around bandage.

Bill then said to Walter, "I brought my friend along so that he could see what I am doing. He's going to be doing this from now on for you, Walter."

Walter nodded and stuck out a meaty old hand to shake mine. "Glad to meet you," he said. I was aghast, but smiled a wane smile and said nothing until I got out into the car.

"What in the world was *that* all about?" I demanded of Bill.

“I’m a hospice volunteer, and I change Walter’s dressing every day at about this time. I’ve got some new patients I need to attend to, so I’m passing Walter along to you. It’s a pretty easy procedure, as you can see, and Walter’s a pleasant fellow you’re going to enjoy being around.”

“Uh...Bill, I’m didn’t volunteer for this and I’m not going to be doing it.”

“Sure you are,” Bill chuckled. “You need to get out of yourself. You think *you’re* miserable, you think *you’ve* had a tough break—you need to get out and see the world. Better yet, you need to *serve* the world; to *serve* someone. It’ll do you a world of good.”

Well, I batted that one back and forth with Bill all the way back to my place, but I lost the battle, and from that day on, for many months, I was over at Walter’s place bathing his wounds and changing his bandages. And Bill was right. I soon forgot about my own personal sadness. I became *Non-Aware*.

That episode had a huge impact on me. It taught me that Service is a wonderful tool to help put me in touch with the Holy Experience through Non-Awareness. From that time to today, whenever I find myself “in my cups” about something, feeling perhaps a little down or blue, I ask myself, *Who have you served today?*

When I put my answer into action, it changes my entire disposition.

So....find a form of service. It doesn’t matter what it is. Lead a Boy Scout troop. Coach a Little League team. Serve Meals on Wheels. Join the School Board. Volunteer as an usher at the local theater or concert hall. Read aloud to the deaf. Be a game-night organizer at the Senior Citizens Center. Become a regular visitor at a Nursing Home. *Be* with people. *Do* stuff. *Be of service*.

And now, about that ‘discipline’ thing

Finally, if it pleases you to do so, pick up the last Tool of Non-Awareness: Discipline.

I see this tool being used in two ways. First, as a means of forming and shaping my own day-to-day experience of life, so that I may be ready for the Holy Experience of Life Itself. Second, as a means of bringing consistency to

my use of the specific Instruments of the Holy Experience that we have been discussing above.

Under the first heading comes the kind of personal discipline that allowed me to quit smoking, cold turkey, 25 years ago. I now need to exercise more of that kind of discipline on my propensity to eat sweets and other foods that I could use less of. I need, as well, to discipline myself to get a little exercise now and then. And to stop being such a Workaholic. Those are the three areas in my life that I would like to see some changes in. For my own good. For my own health. So that the Holy Experience of *Life Itself* will be more fun for me, less stressful, and less filled with the discomfort and pain that lack of good health can bring.

Under the second heading comes a decision to use the other Instruments of the Holy Experience with focus, regularity, determination, and reliability. That is, without fail, continually, throughout my life.

Discipline is the hardest thing for me. I have to guess that it is for a lot of us. So I don't try to force myself with it, demanding of myself that I do this or that, or requiring myself to use all of the Ten Instruments of the Holy Experience every hour, every day of my life.

In fact, as I said a couple of times earlier, it is not even necessary to use *any* of them, much less all of them, in order to have the Holy Experience. The Holy Experience is not something that you *earn* through good behavior. It is something that simply happens, often without "preparation" of any kind, always without notice, and never without lasting impact and benefit. It is also something that you can create, as I have mentioned earlier. But it is definitely not something you create by *earning it*.

The Ten Instruments are powerful devices, not to *earn* a Holy Experience happen, but to build the foundation for one—so that if and when it occurs, if and when you create it, you won't miss it, or mistake it, or misconstrue it, or misinterpret it, or misunderstand it completely, or, worst of all, ignore it.

So...one of my disciplines is use all of these Instruments some of the time, and some of these Instruments all of the time.

Of the ten, the one I use the least is Movement. I'm just not that big on yoga, exercise, and getting my body going—as I alluded to above. So I don't move as much as I know would be good for me. Don't follow my example.

Give yourself permission to use this tool. It can be wonderfully effective. I know people who use it powerfully.

The Instruments I use the most are Visualization, Ritual, and Service. Also, Yearning and Explaining. These five are my favorites. Like me, you'll find some that suit you more than others.

I notice that I'm using at least one or two of these Instruments every day. This has helped me immensely as I have sought to build a firm foundation for fully understanding and enjoying the Holy Experience. The wonder of these tools is that they can build a bridge from the Mind to the Soul, and from the Soul to God. This is true of each of the Ten Instruments of the Holy Experience taken separately, and it is especially true of all the Instruments used sequentially—to say nothing of *simultaneously*.

And so, I offer these tools to you as my answer to the question I hear so often:

“How can I have the experience that *you* had?”

The Holy Experience

Chapter Twenty

This has turned into a longer book than I thought it would be. I'm glad. I've tried to put in here much of what I had come to understand as a result of my Conversations with God. I wanted to make sure it carried real value, good ideas, solid suggestions, real, *usable* tools. I hope you have found that it does so.

Now I want to conclude by adding a Final Tool from my own experience in life. This is in addition to the Ten Instruments I have listed above. This is just an informal, personal observation from me. Here is a Final Tool:

BE VULNERABLE, BE CLOSE, BE NAKED.

I have experienced that the quality of my life increases exponentially when I am willing to be vulnerable, close, and naked—as opposed to being totally *invulnerable*, *closed off*, and always having my backside covered.

I find that when I am close to another, I am close to myself. I find that when I am ready to share intimacy, authenticity, the Real Me and the Real You, I experience myself fully.

But let me be clear here. I am not talking about rampant sexuality, or about indiscriminate intimacy, or about runaway authenticity that gets into TMI Territory. This is not about giving people Too Much Information immediately following “Nice to meet you,” nor is it about crying on everyone's shoulder even after you've known them for a while, nor is it about undressing emotionally or physically with every person in your world.

What it *is* about is being *available* for true Openness and real Intimacy with *someone*—as opposed to going through huge portions of one's time here on earth without being open and intimate with *anyone*.

There is a reason that the worst punishment one can receive in prison is *solitary confinement*. Correction officials have learned that even while a person is already being punished, there is one more, one *worse*, punishment one can be meted out, and that is the requirement to endure confinement *alone*.

Many people who are *not* in prison nevertheless construct “a prison of their own devise.” They lock themselves inside—inside their home or inside their mind, or *both*—refusing to let anyone in. I do not observe many of these people to be inordinately joyful.

True, there is the occasional recluse who claims to be happy being utterly and completely alone. And there are persons who join religious orders or other societies in which intimate encounters (to say nothing of sexual exchanges) are not part of the norm. But for the largest number of human beings the pathway to the True Self is not best found in emotional or physical isolation, but through Openness and Closeness.

There is a reason for this. Human beings have a cellular memory, and thus an intuitive understanding, that we are all one, that unity is the natural order of things, and that isolation and separation is not simply unusual, but unnatural.

There may be *moments* during long-term closeness when aloneness is voluntarily created or provided, but the key here is “voluntarily.” In such a context, times of privacy and separateness can be wonderfully rejuvenating and are, in fact, healthy. But an entire lifestyle that excludes intimacy at any time with any other person can be very, very lonely—and, indeed, debilitating.

Loneliness is, in fact, the biggest social issue on our planet today. We’ve been living in a world of increasing isolation, where extended families have been disappearing and the opportunities for closeness with others have been vanishing. The sudden rise and almost addictive use of social networking sites on the Internet by millions around the globe is, without doubt, humanity’s collective compensatory behavior.

Yet we don’t have to turn a computer on when we can turn another human being on—to himself or herself and to us. And nothing turns people on more than moments of being authentically vulnerable, truly close, or completely naked. My best advice is to find someone with whom you can be all three.

But not just anyone. I want to strongly suggest that this be a person who is very special to you—and to whom you are willing to be very special. So there two questions you would do well to always ask yourself when choosing a person with whom to be all three. And this is especially true if you are thinking of forming a lifelong partnership with that person.

I am sharing this with you now because I am often asked, “What is the secret of happy relationships?” I have had many unhappy ones, and I openly confess that I contributed greatly to *creating* them as unhappy ones. I wish I knew earlier in my life what I know now. Especially, the Two Questions to Ask Yourself in Every Relationship.

Are you ready? Here are the questions:

Where am I going?

Who’s going with me?

Now...and most important...when you make this deep self-inquiry, *do not reverse the order of the questions.*

If you do, you could wind up asking yourself in times to come, “How is the world did I get *here*? What happened to my dream?”

So it is important to select a person who can *share your dream*. Or, at least, *support you in living it*. And not begrudgingly, either, but enthusiastically, joyfully, and wholeheartedly, *wherever your dream takes you*.

Of course, another person cannot find out what your dream *is* unless you are at least two of the three—vulnerable and close—somewhere along the way, and hopefully from the outset, of your relationship.

When two people support each other in each having their dream, and in being vulnerable, close, and naked while doing it, then a Fairy Tale is written.

It becomes *Once Upon A Time* time.

And *this* is the Holy Experience.

A few days after we were married my wife wrote about this kind of partnership. It is what she saw for us. It is what she hoped for us. It is what she chose to create for us.

We say that we will have a Good Life.

This is a guarantee

if we are kind to one another.

If we are patient.

If, when I speak, you listen

and if when you speak, I hear you.

This is assured,

if we continue to look for one another.

If we *want* to find.

If, when I am here, I am seen,

and if, when you are here, I see you.

We say that this will be a Good Life.

This is a guarantee

if We are Naked with one another.

If We are clotheless.

If, when I am vulnerable,

you shelter,

and if, when you are defenseless,

I protect.

(© 2007. From the book *Silent Sacred Holy Deepening Heart* by the American poet Em Claire)

All of this brings me to my closing statement here. I want to invite you to avoid developing preconceived notions about what the Holy Experience is all about, or what it is supposed to “look like.”

It may not be about feeling “filled with the light” or “warm all over” or “One With The Universe.” It *could* be about that, but it also may *not* be.

It may not be about only speaking softly and always moving slowly and forevermore walking around with an angelic expression on your face. It *could* be about that, but it also may *not* be.

Once in a while it may be about *going bowling*.

Do you understand?

The Holy Experience is about *joy*, plain and simple. It is about the joy of *being*. Being what? Well, whatever you imagine Divinity to be. Perhaps it's about being the pure essence of, say...Creativity. Or Caring. Or Wisdom. Or Love. Or Patience. Or Sexuality. Or Understanding. Or Joy. Or Compassion. Or Peace. Or Kindness. Or Forgiveness. Or Generosity. Or Healing. Or Playfulness. Or Insight. Or Courage. Or *whatever* you think Divinity to be, in this moment right now. (Including *All Of The Above*.)

I have learned that the Holy Experience can take any form....a fun-filled poker game or an hour-long meditation in front of candles. A night at the dance hall or part of an afternoon helping someone who needs a bandage changed. It's about fullness. The Fullness of Life, in any form that brings blessings and does no harm.

This much let me say: *Try to do everything wonderful as least once.*

You'll never get it done all in one lifetime, but don't let that stop you.

Try.

In this lifetime or in another, everybody should sing at least one song out loud in front of others, dance at least one dance that astonishes everyone, give at least one inspiring speech, receive at least one standing ovation, hit at least one home run, solve at least one problem that no one else has been able to figure out how to solve, win at least one first prize, take at least one really big risk, have at least one true sweetheart, know at least one moment of pure sexual bliss in the arms of that sweetheart, and be gifted with at least one transcendent, unforgettable, indescribable, all-consuming, mind-blowing experience of God.

I wish you this.

I wish you *The Holy Experience*.

Thanks for sharing this time with me.

Afterword

The Holy Experience has been serialized in my Internet blog at www.TheGlobalConversation.com.

I have long been saying that humanity is “one conversation from paradise.” This book contains much of what that conversation could hold. If we all started talking about the same thing at the same time—namely, the kinds of things in this book—it’s a conversation that could change everything.

Right now, it is a conversation that few people seem to be having. Though this exploration could produce a new way of living on the earth, it just is not taking place in nearly a powerful enough way. I am proposing and suggesting that you and I ignite a discussion that will begin with three daring questions:

1. How is it possible that 6.9 billion members of they claim to be a highly evolved species can all *want the same thing* (peace, harmony, safety, security, opportunity, a good life for themselves and their children) and be *singularly unable to produce it* --- even after thousands of years of trying?
2. Is it possible that there is something that this species does not fully understand about God and about Life, the understanding of which could change everything?
3. It is possible that there is something *you* do not completely comprehend about *you*, and about *who you are*, the comprehension of which would alter your life for the better, forever?

I believe that all of humanity would benefit from taking a very close look at these questions, and having a conversation about them. I further believe that this conversation can lead to an exchange of ideas that can form the basis of a brand new cultural story for humanity.

But, you might ask, why bother? Why is this important? Well, let’s look at that...

A “cultural story” is a story that we tell ourselves about ourselves. It is what we say to our children about who we are and how life is, and what it means to be human. It is the narrative that *creates the experience of our species*.

Out of our Story emerges our way of handling commerce, of engaging in politics, of being governed, of educating our young, of relating to each other, and of experiencing God. If the Story we are telling is *inaccurate*, is based on deep misunderstandings and myths and fairy tales and half-truths ...well, we are in trouble.

Now, look around. Are we in trouble? Pick up a newspaper. Turn on CNN. Jump on the Internet. Are we in trouble? Uh...yes. The human race is on a collision course with its own destruction. If we don't change something soon, something soon is going to change us. And we're not going to like how the future will look for our children, and for theirs.

What is needed now is a massive, planetary, grass-roots effort to re-write our Story. And that's what this book, and its serialization on **TheGlobalConversation.com**, is all about. That website is the Internet expression of a worldwide undertaking called **The Conversations Movement**.

This movement is creating a starting point and a platform for an urgently needed global discussion about future possibilities for humanity. Not a discussion between world leaders, religious figures, captains of business and industry, or the elite. A discussion involving *us*. You and me. The “regular people” of the world.

Because when we start discussing things, the world changes.

At www.TheGlobalConversation.com we take a regular look at what's going on in our world, place these events into the context of our present, very old, Cultural Story, and then consider them as they might be experienced within a *new* Cultural Story; a story that it is our opportunity to co-create, with input from people around the world.

The idea for this New Cultural Story came out of the writings of a series of books upon which the book you are reading is based. It is the *Conversations with God* series --- nine books that have collectively sold over 7.5

million copies (seven of them reached the *New York Times* Bestseller List). These remarkable and daring texts have caught the attention and captured the imagination of people around the world. They have been translated into 37 languages and, given hand-to-hand distribution, it is estimated that 50 million people have read them.

The CwG messages have made it clear that it is humanity's presently-in-place Cultural Story that has been causing all of our world's people-to-people problems. What the earth's people would most benefit from right now, CwG offers, is a new idea about who we are, where we are, why we are here, and what we wish to do about that. This is what would open us to the Holy Experience.

We're talking here about a new story about God and about what God wants, a new point of view about the purpose of life and the reason we are all on the earth, as well as our true relationship with God and each other. All of humanity pines for a new vision about how we can create at last the Tomorrow for which we have all yearned for so long.

I'm glad you found your way to this book. It is a major outreach of **The Conversations Movement**. I hope you will talk with others about what you have read here. And I hope you will add your ideas to those found here. You have much to contribute. Your ideas on what could be included in our New Cultural Story are being solicited every day at

www.TheGlobalConversation.com.

You can help change our ideas about our world—and thus, the world itself. I gently invite you to take that possibility, and your role, seriously.

If you would like to interact with me even more personally, and to assist me directly in getting the messages from *Conversations with God* out into our world, I invite you to join me as a member of The Messengers' Circle at

www.nealedonaldwalsch.com.

This is a membership area of a larger website, offering electronic courses, the CWG Online School, an Ask Neale section, a Life Support area, and a daily Reader's Forum where I interact individually with members who post there.

If you find yourself facing sudden, unwelcome changes in your life right now, you can receive immediate guidance from a team of Spiritual

Helpers who are deeply backgrounded in the understandings of *Conversations with God* and in how to use both *The Mechanics of the Mind* and *The System of the Soul* as explored in *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*, which is a groundbreaking text mixing modern-day psychology with contemporary spirituality. That guidance will be found at...

www.changingchange.net

The purpose of the website is to change the way change affects you. It is the Spiritual Ministry Outreach of the CWG work in the world.

Finally, and in a wider context, you may be interested in exploring CWG.tv, the Internet Video Service that programs entire one-day spiritual renewal retreats, shorter 3-hour seminars, a half-hour Get Help from Neale segment, and many other offerings, including a weekly 90-minute call-in show during which people interact with Neale by video and audio from all over the world.

CWG.tv is a long-awaited service that also offers an archive of previous public presentations of mine from across the globe. For more information about this exciting new outreach, simply go to...

www.CWG.tv

Thank you for telling people about the messages of *Conversations with God*, and about this book that you have just read. I believe these messages can change the world, and I hope that you will help us use them to do so!

With every good thought,

Neale Donald Walsch