

FOUR PHILOSOPHICAL PHASES OF A 20TH CENTURY LIFE

It seems to me my life has had clear-cut stages, in which the meaning and purpose of life itself has been rooted in very different sets of assumptions.

I don't have much interest in producing an autobiography *as such*, but there is some merit in examining these phases. In a sense they represent fairly typical steps a person in the 20th Century might take if that person were motivated to find meaning in life and to participate in human evolution. As it happens, my father was so motivated, and he passed that on to me.

From age 5 to 15 I was involved in the Oxford Group, "Moral Re-Armament" as it was called during World War II and after. This was a highly energetic, evangelistic movement, not explicitly Christian, but devoted to following God's guidance and adhering to "absolute" moral standards.

From age 15 – 20 I attended college at The University of Chicago. This was a unique program centered around the "Great Conversation," the Great Ideas of Western Civilization. It was secular, Humanistic, and spiritually skeptical.

From age 23 – 37. I was involved in learning and practicing academic, clinical psychology. This period had several important stages. I began at the University of Michigan intending to become a Freudian psychoanalyst. However an early experiment with Zen meditation opened me up to a 'beginner's enlightenment' in which I discovered the ability to witness my consciousness and observe it with detachment. This was a major discovery of the primary importance of experience, and brought body awareness to the fore: I resolved to find 'body-oriented method of psychotherapy.

After a period of working at UCLA in psychiatry, I was invited to Esalen, where I lived from 1966-70. Esalen was the very epicenter of the "Human Potential Movement" and of "Humanistic Psychology." It was the perfect place for my search for body-oriented means of psychotherapy – or as I now thought of it, as means of personal evolution. I became a student of Dr. Ida Rolf, and have practiced her method of "Structural Integration since 1968.

From age 37 to 43 I participated in the Arica Institute as a teacher, and have continued to practice Arica meditations to this day. Arica meant a return to an explicitly spiritual philosophy. It also offered me new answers to the questions which had been raised in the earlier phases, especially in Moral Re-Armament and at Esalen.

The times were also relevant. I was born in December, 1934, the very month in which important economic trends hit their lowest point and began to recover. Roosevelt's New Deal was in place, and the Great Depression was beginning to turn around. The Oxford Group (Moral Re-Armament) had formed in the early '20's, and

was in some respects a puritan counterpart to the sexual revolution of the 1920's and the socioeconomic disruption of the 1930's. During the '40's it was inspiring and patriotic. I will attempt to describe its atmosphere of inspiration more fully below.

In 1950 I entered the University of Chicago College as an 'early entrant' (after two years of high school. It was a "Great Books" program focused upon the "great ideas" of Western Civilization. The atmosphere was secular and quite skeptical of religion. It was the beginning of the Cold War, and there was another "Red Scare." Senator Joe McCarthy and the House Unamerican Activities Committee were on a hunt for communist 'sympathizers.' The faculties of the University and of the University of California at Berkeley were alone in refusing en-masse to sign loyalty oaths. What this meant for me was a profound idealism about academic and intellectual freedom and a belief that UChicago was an inheritor of an ancient tradition of integrity and honesty. Think Galileo and Bruno. As I watched the Army-McCarthy hearings I knew we were squarely on one side of the societal debate of the times.

In 1957, when I entered the University of Michigan, Clinical Psychology was a much-esteemed profession. Psychologists had served well in World War II, and had been of notable help with traumatized veterans. Freudian theory, which had so-shaped cultural thinking about sexuality in the '20's was now firmly established as one branch of 'depth' psychology in universities. It was a secular scientific 'religion' undertaking to solve the great perplexing questions of human living. However, new interest in findings of 'existential' psychology and in Zen Buddhism were soon to leaven the field with an experiential viewpoint. I got caught up in this development and wrote my dissertation on Zen Buddhist meditation, got a Ph.D., and went to work at UCLA practicing psychology in a psychiatric training facility.

In 1966 I was invited to Esalen. This brought about a further evolution in my understanding of a more experiential psychology. Esalen was a seminar center, located on the Big Sur coast, with open-air hot springs in a stunningly beautiful setting. It was dedicated to developing the "human potential." Over the years seminars became more and more experiential, more and more body-oriented. It was a marvelous place to experiment with the wide range of processes and techniques brought together by an astonishing generation of founders and originators. Culturally, Esalen was participating in the cultural revolution we now call "The '60's. Flower children were hitch-hiking down the Big Sur Highway, but Esalen was presenting the more considered and mature products of the same cultural ferment.

Toward the very end of the '60's there was a new interest in *spiritual* teachings. Esalen people studied with Oscar Ichazo and helped to found the Arica Institute, but throughout the '70's the cultural interest in spiritual teachings led to the emergence of numerous spiritual schools, gurus, and methods.

Now let's turn to a more detailed look at these four philosophical phases in my own life.

Phase One: Moral Re-Armament in the 1940's

The Oxford Group had formed in 1922 around Frank N. D. Buchman. It had two major principles:

1. Divine Guidance was possible
2. Absolute Moral Standards were necessary

It was believed possible to access Guidance from The Lord by listening to the still small voice within, and writing down one's thoughts in a regular 'quiet time' each morning. However, in order receive such guidance it was necessary to surrender and live a moral life of honesty, purity, love, and unselfishness. In practice this meant that much of one's guidance concerned lapses in these moral standards. "Purity" in particular referred to sexuality, and all temptations, 'secret sins' and erotic attractions were subject to scrutiny.

During the '20's and '30's the group had spread rapidly, especially in Europe and England. They had a very successful method of one-on-one evangelism which took place in 'house parties,' several day events in which people explored Guidance, the moral standards, and especially the possibility of surrendering one's life in order to 'change the world.'

In 1941 The Group began meeting in old resort hotels on Mackinac Island, in Michigan. For me, beginning at age 5, MRA meant staying on the island several weeks each summer. It was ideal for kids – no cars on the island, only horses and carriages and bicycles. There were many scenic features. My peers and companions were largely the same every year. It was an island of stability, figuratively, for me, as my family moved to different towns several times during the decade.

It is difficult to describe the optimistic atmosphere around MRA in those days. These were fine people, often from influential backgrounds, who were dedicated to changing the world by changing themselves and following God's Guidance.

David Belden perfectly captured the atmosphere looking back on his own upbringing in Moral Re-Armament:

"I was told that if you listen to the still small voice and obey, your life will be transformed, and a Power will be so evident in your daily experience that you will *know* God is guiding you.

"My upbringing was filled with an incessantly unfolding scholl of spellbinding stories of drunks reclaimed, enemies reconciled, miracles given, apologies sincerely offered for hurts inflicted, prayers for manpower or money for the cause answered to the man, woman, or penny, divine co-ordination of the

plans to remake the world extraordinarily evidence and, yes, wars averted, crippling strikes settled amicably, statesmen, barons of industry and communist agitators alike on their knees, humbled, making amends before God.

“I do not exaggerate. As a child this was my world. The people outside this international movement, the ones who were not guided by God, I knew were either ill-informed or willfully evil, in either case were not living in the light.” (letter, 1991)

When I read these words I instantly recognized what he was describing. David was born in 1949, raised in MRA mostly in England, left the group in 1972. His doctoral thesis at Oxford, “The Origins and Development of the Oxford Group – Moral Re-Armament” (1976) is a rich source of information, especially regarding MRA outside the United States.

I, too, gained my experience of MRA at a very young age and can claim no mature objectivity at the time, but the optimism, the excitement, the sense of relevance to world affairs Belden describes are totally familiar.

One of the sources of this energy was the very remarkable amount of face-to-face sharing, often quite intimate, with other people, especially in small groups. Today I would speculate that the focus on “Purity” facilitated this social exchange by reducing the ordinary dangers of sexual flirtation and innuendo. Today I would also speculate that much erotic attraction was sublimated into the loving, but “pure” attention given to potential converts in the one-on-one evangelism. I suspect homoerotic impulses in particular were channeled in this way.

There was no particular point at which I left Moral Re-Armament. I simply had a chance to go to college. There were important times in college when I experienced a wrenching identity crises when I finally let go of the moral universe the group defined.

I have been left with several crucial things:

1. The Question of Guidance
2. A Desire for Positive Change the World. (Closely associated with internal, personal change)
3. Appreciation of unified group energy
4. The Question of “Purity”

Looking back over all four of my “philosophical phases” I am amazed at how powerfully these themes have persisted in my life. In particular I have pursued the question of “Guidance” through an evolution through the

Freudian Unconscious, the intuitive reason of the “Body Mind”, and higher states of consciousness.

I have also had to deal with some negative things: for example, for a long time I had a peculiar assumption that in order to relate to someone intimately I had to confess something.

Phase Two: University of Chicago 1950 – 55

It is hard to overstate the impact of arriving at the age of 15 to enter a world-class university.

In the '50's the University of Chicago was formidable. The atom bomb had been virtually invented there. The College was a notable educational experiment. Under the leadership of Chancellor Hutchins and Mortimer Adler the faculty had devised a 4 year program in "Great Books." It was intended to replace the last two years of high school and the first two of college. Classes were discussion seminars, part of the "Great Conversation" about these ideas in Western Civilization. It was said that the Great Questions never change, only the answers.

We had astonishing freedom. Only the final exams at the end of the school year counted for our grades. Attendance was not enforced, being unworthy of mature learners. Since everyone in the college was taking the same fourteen courses the dialogue about classical authors took place all the time and at all hours, not just in class.

It is also hard to overstate the empowering effect of this style of dialogue learning. Many years later a classmate of mine, Earl Shorris, organized a course for homeless people at Bard College in New York. It was basically our old Humanities I. Reading Plato's *Republic* we find Socrates asking Thracymachus about the nature of justice. Thracymachus says "Justice is the will of the powerful." The facilitator then asks the class what they think of that idea, and the dialogue begins.

The effect on Shorris' group was profound. Suddenly someone was asking what they thought rather than telling them what they should think. Sixteen of the original 32 participants entered college. The New York Times reported on it at length, and the foundations began donating money for such programs.

The impact on us at the College was the same. We were expected to work out our own ideas and evolve them in discussion with others. No ideas were ever 'resolved;' this was not the pursuit of the right answer.

Of course, philosophically, Chicago was very different from MRA. In academic circles of the time "God" was rarely mentioned. Moreover, the students in the College were 60% Jewish. (The Ivy League universities limited the proportion of Jewish students; so the University of Chicago was an attractive alternative. My friends tended to be non-religious children of successful second-generation immigrants. Most of my assumptions from my previous life seemed sentimental, like pink cotton candy, to be met with the rational skepticism of my secular friends. To this day I have an inner voice that says "Aw come on, now."

I did have another brush with MRA in 1954 in which my break away from that phase became much more explicit. The Group came to the University to give some events. One of the traveling celebrities, a performer with the D'Oyly Cart company, gave a personal testimony in which he used the colloquial phrase "nigger in the wood pile." It was the ordinary unconscious racism of the decade, but it was jarringly improper at the University. I reacted with nauseated aversion. It was as if I were ejecting MRA itself. What followed was a mild identity crisis in which all the value tags I had attached to elements of the universe were all snipped away and I adjusted to a new universe.

Philosophically the university was my step into humanism. Humanism is generally defined in two major ways. First it is a philosophical and ethical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively, and generally prefers critical thinking and evidence over acceptance of dogma or superstition. Second it is a return to classical sources, as occurred in the Renaissance.

The U of C was humanistic in both senses. Rational inquiry and scientific evidence were clearly valued more than religious interpretation. In the College, a form of classicism was also in play: we were in a "Great Books" program which approached every field of human inquiry as an evolution of ideas in a "Great Conversation." Our classes were small, a few students with a faculty member who 'facilitated' dialogue about these ideas. There were no 'right answers': "The questions never change; only the answers."

Virtually every class began with the Greeks, especially Plato and Aristotle, and extended through 18th and 20th century sources. The result was a world-view in which present reality was grounded in an historical sense of cultural beginnings and evolution. It was optimistic and life-affirming: human beings were on a positive trajectory, and we students were a part of it.

It was a great time for it.

And the Great Questions?

I didn't give much thought to the meaning of "Guidance" during this phase. "God" wasn't a large figure in academia. I had the unreflective confidence of a late teenager.

Group Energy I found in fraternity life and especially in singing. We sang all the time, in the fraternity chorus, and in impromptu groups. I think the throat center is the basis for transpersonal communion, and that was the basis of my intimacies and my group spirit.

But there was another source of group spirit: our education was an identification with the ideas, questions, and achievements of Western Civilization. We were the inheritors of a great tradition. A decade later this focus on the Western Canon came

to be criticized for its failure to include materials from other cultures and other ethnic sources. While it is true that African and Asian materials were missing, I think this misses the point: we were studying the evolving answers to great questions of human life. Doubtless non-Western texts could be found to include in such a study, but the questions themselves surely remain the same.

Phase Three: Psychology

When I first decided to become a psychologist it felt like Guidance. After graduating from college I had gone through a long, hard period of indecision, not knowing what to do with my life. I was drafted into the army at that fortunate time between the Korean war and Vietnam. Having worked briefly as a caseworker in the Chicago Welfare Department, I was assigned as a social work technician in an army hospital psychiatric clinic. I observed the role of the psychologist in that clinic and decided to follow his profession. The psychiatrist was basically an administrator, the Social Worker seemed to be running errands, and the psychologist? Was he a scientist? Was he a therapist? The very ambiguity seemed to give him a great deal of scope.

But the very decision seemed inspired, determined by many factors. It seemed like a secular extension of my father's ministry. Frankly, it allowed me to relate to clients intimately without revealing myself – a one-way intimacy.. I was still shy from all the confession in Moral Re-Armament. I was also becoming increasingly aware of my erotic sensitivity toward other men.

University of Michigan 1957

Relieved at last of my vocational uncertainty, I hit the ground running when I arrived for my graduate studies at Michigan. I was not so interested in experimental psychology, but I aced the statistics exams almost in defiance. I wanted to be a psychotherapist, maybe a psychoanalyst.

Discovery of Zen

There was a lot of interest in Zen Buddhism in the '50's. Exposure to Japanese culture after the war had inspired many Americans in Japanese aesthetics and Japanese religion, especially Zen, which seemed a religion of practice rather than belief. Alan Watts had published best-sellers about it. The University of Chicago literary magazine devoted an entire issue to it. In 1960, when I was 25, I acquired a book by a Swiss psychoanalyst who was using Zen meditation with his clients. I was walking down Woodward Avenue in Detroit and browsing this book when I encountered his meditation instructions: "Imagine someone asks you 'how are you?' And they *mean it*. For a brief period you scan your body, your thoughts and feelings, your environment. This non-verbal moment of scanning is meditation."

Perhaps because I was walking rather than sitting down as I read, I immediately went into a state which I call "The Witness." Suddenly I could step behind my entire field of awareness and observe it with detachment. My thoughts and feelings, my body and everything around me became simply objects of my observation rather than impelling distractions. It was both

subtle and powerfully transforming. I went into a Greek coffee shop and looked around me: everything was both familiar and totally different.

For the next three months I could return to that state by simply asking “How am I?” I could go to the dentist and not let him use novocaine because I preferred simply observing the sensation of drilling to the numbness of the shot. (Note: I was not getting root canals in those days.) My habitual small moments of fear or embarrassment became simply elements to observe. It was profoundly freeing.

One of the things I discovered was a new understanding of my body. My body was not something “I” *had*; it was something that I *am*. It seemed profoundly, intuitively, non-verbally wise. I felt it could be an access to Truth, and I resolved to find a body-oriented method of psychotherapy.

Fortunately at so self-confident a psychology department as Michigan’s I could find support for my interest in Zen. I was even allowed to write my dissertation on Zen meditation. I wrote a paper called “A Psychological Review of Zen Buddhism” and an experimental study called “An Exploratory Study of Zen Buddhist Meditation.” My thesis chairman was a marvelous, open-minded professor named Edward Bordin. He enabled both papers to be published in the *Journal of Consulting Psychology* where they were the first publications in American academic psychology on the subject of meditation.

Psychiatry at UCLA 1962 – 66

After getting my Ph.D. I had the good fortune of being hired as a psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry at UCLA. I was 27, the ‘60’s were heating up, and, looking back, I had a lot to learn.

Without going into much detail about my private life, I had two years of classical Freudian analysis, fell in love a couple of times, and explored LSD. In fact, I quit my analysis after my first acid trip, because the analyst seemed unwilling to respect the importance of what I had experienced. He kept interpreting the resistance (trying to be my own analyst), but ignoring the excitement of my discovery (“I and the Father are One.”)

The psychedelic revolution was definitely happening in Los Angeles. Hollywood stars and Beverly Hills psychoanalysts were experimenting with LSD as a psychotherapeutic tool. I supervised a graduate student who had authored a book on her own experience as a psychedelic analysand. (“*Myself and I*” by Constance Newland) She mentored me through quite a few acid trips, none of which were as therapeutically useful to me as hers had been.

I also pursued my search for body-oriented methods of conscious development. I encountered Mary Whitehouse, a modern dance teacher who had discovered the use of movement improvisation in a Jungian analysis in Zurich. This work, which has now evolved into “Authentic Movement” was one of the most important tools I was ever to learn about exploring consciousness. She taught us simply to pay attention to the internal sense of the body and allowing its movement to unfold from within, without any interest in external performance. It was profound to me, and I used her method later, at Esalen, in all of my workshops. I use it today in my classes and with clients.

Eventually, in 1965, one of the founders of the Esalen Institute, Mike Murphy, came across my publications on Zen and visited me at UCLA. His description of a residential program being planned was exactly what I was looking for: a secular monastery to explore meditation and conscious evolution. I signed up on the spot.

At first I was tempted to treat my Esalen years as a separate philosophical phase in my life, but so many threads that led me there appeared earlier, in graduate school, and while I was working at UCLA. The whole period coincided with huge cultural developments from existentialism to acid. From the fading of Freudian psychoanalysis to the beginnings of “Humanistic” psychology and a new awareness of the body. Esalen was to be an important stage for the presentation and mutual insemination of these ideas.

Esalen

I visited Esalen after meeting Mike Murphy. We met in the lodge and he suggested we go down to the baths. When we got there I had a momentary shock as he casually took off his clothes in a room with both men and women, but it all seemed so natural that my shame dissolved immediately, and never came up again.

In September, 1966 I moved up to Esalen to participate in the first residential program: twelve of us, from many different backgrounds, had total freedom of the place. We could attend any workshops; we had special group activities of our own led by amazing faculty such as Virginia Satir, a pioneer in family therapy, Fritz Perls, the originator of Gestalt Therapy, and encounter group founder Will Schutz.

Alan Watts, Joseph Campbell, Abraham Maslow, and Ravi Shankar and a host of other pioneers in the human potential were regular presenters.

The residential fellows enjoyed amazing freedom: total access and not much obligation. Perls was a huge influence, a virtual Zen master in his adherence to the ‘here-and-now.’ Of all the workshops devoted to developing the “Human Potential”

(a term adopted from Aldous Huxley, an important influence on the founders of Esalen) the emphasis on the body steadily increased. "Esalen Massage" developed.

The '60's were in full bloom, and Esalen was an acknowledged center of the phenomenon. We had outdoor music festivals featuring famous artists such as Joan Baez, Crosby Stills & Nash, Bob Dylan and many others. One day the Beatles arrived by helicopter with the Maharishi.

Hippies, many of them from well-to-do families, were regularly hitch-hiking down Highway One, wearing buckskins, tie-dyed clothing, and faux-working-class attire. It was a children's crusade for social progress made possible by America's incredible post-war prosperity (not-yet squandered on military expenditures and Reagan tax-cuts.) Marijuana and LSD were only barely illegal, and harder drugs were not yet on the horizon.

Many of the residential fellows developed workshops of their own, especially 'encounter groups' which often became quite radically experimental. We were a second generation, integrating and synthesizing material we had learned from the originators and founders who had given the original workshops.

The program at Esalen developed an ever-increasing emphasis on the body and its role in developing human potential. T'ai Chi, Whitehouse movement, the awareness-focussed 'Esalen Massage' were only part of this emphasis. My own monthly workshops were entitled "Body Awareness and the Sense of Being. I used many of the experiential processes I had learned in many workshops into a five-day program guided by my own empathic body sense of what the group needed. Movement explorations drawn from Mary Whitehouse were an essential element.

In 1967 Dr. Ida Rolf, founder of Rolf Structural Integration, came to Esalen to treat Fritz Perls. She offered "Rolfing" sessions to the rest of us as well, and I signed up for a 10-session course. Her work put me back into an experience of The Witness; so I asked her to train me in doing the work. This was the body-oriented method of psychotherapy I had been seeking. By summer, 1968 I had completed training with her and emerged, newly minted, as a "Rolfing." That has been my primary practice now for nearly 50 years.

At Esalen we didn't have a very systematic theory of conscious growth. Especially in the encounter groups the idea was to enlarge one's boundaries by confronting and breaking through our fears. This could be rather random and unfocused. We were looking for 'break-throughs' and the 'ego death' touted by psychedelic culture.

Just at that point, when many of us were experiencing what I call 'workshop leader ennui' in which the repeated excitement of peaks at the end of

workshops were followed by a return to dull normal, Richard Alpert, an associate of Timothy Leary at Harvard, returned from studying with a guru in India. His message was that growth in consciousness involved particular goals and states, and that one needed a spiritual teacher to get there. He had been a familiar visitor at Esalen, but now he was calling himself Baba Ram Dass, meditating cross-legged in the back of his Buick sedan, and leading us in various experiments, such as staying blindfolded all day to experience other senses.

His message led to a search for spiritual teachers and led eventually to finding Oscar Ichazo who was teaching in Chile, and whose students included some members of the Allende cabinet. Several Esalen people traveled there to meet him and were impressed by his clarity and comprehension. Eventually 53 Americans, including many from Esalen went down for a 10-month training in Arica, Chile. This was Autumn, 1970. When they came back they seemed clear and radiant and quite transformed. As a result 82 of us went to New York for a 3-month training in Autumn of 1971.

Phase Four: Arica

New York was chosen as the site for the program, because if a spiritual training could work there, in the full expression of the American Ego it could work anywhere. The classes were held in the Essex House, on Central Park South, under the chrysal chandeliers of a luxury hotel. Picture 82 former Big Sur semi hippies, now living in the hotel or dragging their meditation mats in for trainings that sometimes lasted for ten hours a day.

It was an amazing process. Late in the training I had an experience of 'samadhi:' I dissolved briefly into what Aldus Huxley called the 'Ground of Being', a vast ocean of Absolute Being in which I was only a tiny drop. Brief as it was, it changed my understanding of life and death permanently.

At the end we were told that this was not only a training, but a 'school' with a 'mission', a mission to change the world by awakening the Spirit of Humanity One. Many of us were inspired to remain and work with the school. We underwent further training and then moved out across the country in late '72 to present shorter trainings in other cities. The peak of our enthusiasm lasted until about 1976, when it dwindled for various reasons. I am still very much an "Arican." I participate in trainings, now mostly personal meditations, and my understanding is structured by what I have learned in the Arica School.

How would I summarize Arica?

First, there seems to be an assertion that the laws of consciousness are sufficiently known that trainings can be designed to bring participants reliably into higher states of consciousness.

Second, the body is very important in developing this consciousness. To this end, many different maps of the body from various sources have been presented to clarify body experience. Systems of exercise and movement have also been important.

Third, a map of "Levels of Consciousness" is offered ranging from the samhadhi ("Divine Unity") I experienced, down to the lowest levels of subjectivity ("Superstitious Belief") and even insanity. In my own experience this map appears to be accurate, especially in the higher levels of objective reality where I have felt clear-cut changes in energy moving from one to the other.

Fourth, a clear definition of God. The "Declaration of Unity" defines the Absolute thus: "God is Eternal, Is in All of Us, Is in Everything, Is One Without Second."

Fifth, a definition of Love: "Love is the Recognition of the Same Consciousness in Another as in Oneself." To this end we used the exercise of "Traspasso", gazing into each other's eyes while centered in the lower body. At times one could actually see

the consciousness becoming clear in the other person's eyes. In fact, it was during one such exercise that I went beyond the 'same consciousness' into the Absolute Consciousness of Samadhi. These exercises were an important source of the group energy we experienced in those days.

Sixth, a viable, non-puritanical, psychology of sex. We were given tools of "Psycho-Alchemy" for 'transmuting' sexual energy. Instead of controlling sex by suppression, we could choose to alter the flow of energy inside the body by 'darkening' the genitals and the visual cortex. The resulting state is remarkably serene and not at all blocked or inhibited. One can use these tools or return to more sexually active state at will.

None of these elements, other than the Declaration of Unity, were presented as dogmatic beliefs, but only as tools, to be evaluated by experience. Each of us was responsible for our own evolution, free to proceed as we saw fit.

Much like Moral Re-Armament, the early years of the Arica School were characterized by a high level of group energy. We actually thought we could change the world by changing ourselves and working for the 'Realization of Humanity One'. Later the group energy began to dwindle as it became apparent that individually we were evolving rather more slowly than we had expected and the expansive appeal to larger and larger numbers of people could not be maintained. It was a brave experiment nonetheless. I have always been grateful to have participated in it, grateful to the School, and grateful to Oscar Ichazo.

Major Contributions of Arica Theory

Levels of Consciousness

Level 3: Divine Unity

This is called Samahi in Indian spiritual psychology. One dissolves as a drop in the vast ocean of Being.

Level 6: Divine Contemplation

This is the doorstep of Samadhi. One confronts the Ground of Being, but the last sense of being an ego must be abandoned as one enters the door.

Level 12: Divine Love

One experiences oneself, but surrounded by a world in which everything is permeated by love: the leaves on the trees, the ground underfoot. . .

Level 24: Divine Life

This is what the Japanese call Satori. One is fully in the body, no thoughts in the head. It is the 'body epiphany' I had so many years ago when I set out to find a body method of psychotherapy.

Level 96: The witness

This is the highest level of subjectivity. One is asleep, but one knows how to watch and wait

These levels are palpable and real. One feels the shift of energy when one moves between them. Many of the accounts reported by Willam James in *Varieties of Religious Experience* seem descriptions of Levels 12, 6, and 3. It is precisely the lack of understanding these levels that made our search for human potential inadequate at Esalen.

Trialectics

Oscar offered a logic different from Dialectics. In place of the Hegel/Marx idea of opposition leading to a new synthesis (action/reaction – synthesis), Trialectics posits movement between active-attractive-function (the natural balancing movement between the two) leading to a new material manifesting point, where the manifestations are preordained within the system, both up and down in energy levels. In terms of consciousness, these range from Level 3 all the way down into total subjectivity: belief and superstition (Level 6144) and below into madness.

And my own questions?

Guidance exists if one consults the still small voice within one's heart. It isn't too useful on stock market investments or the lottery.

Purity is not the absence of sex, but the conscious, honest assessments of one's feelings and motives, and one's use of energy.

I no longer have access to large group energy, working to make a positive change in the world.

As to the positive change in the world, I can only hope that we get through these perilous times, and I believe, with Oscar Ichazo, that our only hope is the awakening, the Realization of Humanity One.