

To whom it may concern:

In retrospect, I now see that all previous activities and occupations have simply been leading toward the search for peace and silence. That inner silence which, once one has attained it, nothing can take it away, nor is it disturbed in any way by the place or the company one keeps. Whether in a busy marketplace or in the quietude of a Cascadian peak, this inner calmness, this self-assurance, this quietness prevails. All these qualities I have found in one extraordinary man, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.

This search has lead me to extended mountain ventures, days on end in storms at sea, skiing some of the most stimulating slopes, feeling the freedom of falling through space from an airplane, hearing the sails snapping in the breeze, the wind on the face as we hike out over the rail. Yet all these external pursuits are like bamboo shadows trying to sweep the dust off the stairway in comparison to what I have found in this exceptional teacher.

For years I was involved in publishing and printing books of poetry. As co-publisher with the "Graywolf Press," we published and printed books by such well-known writers as, Rainer Maria Rilka, Tess Gallagher, John Haines, Jon Anderson, Norman Dubie, A. Poulin Jr., David Wagner and others. In the beginning, we hand-set each individual letter and punctuation mark, as well as letter-pressing each page of every book. We printed for collectors, off-setting thousands of editions from the originals for the general public's consumption. Having been so involved with the "printed word," it was easy to see the folly of it, the unaliveness of it. A curious thing happened to me as I set type or printed the same word, the same page over and over again: all written words simply lost their meaning. Try to say the same word over and over again and watch how it becomes meaningless. Taped above the press I worked at were the beginning lines of the well-known ancient Chinese book, reported to have been written in "the morning of the human race," the Tao Teh Ching. It begins:

Tao that can be talked about is not the Eternal Tao
Names can be named, but not the Eternal Name

(Tao = the Way)

.....It is wordless, nameless.....

An often quoted Chinese proverb says that one picture is worth a thousand words, because it is so often easier to show than to say. In this silent phase of his work, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is showing us the way to that inner peace, that silence. How can one teach silence, except by being it?

While others were in Bombay or Poona during Bhagwan's "discourse phase," I was involved in one of the previously mentioned activities and therefore, did not come to Sannyas until his silent phase had begun. If one wishes to connect with Bhagwan through his words, they may do so with one of the hundred or so books or tapes now available. But I find that Bhagwan's silence is of a different quality. It is not a dead silence, but a dancing silence - the silence of a song. And it is the same silence I have known on a mountain peak where the snow never melts, or in the vast depths of the blue-watered ocean where sky meets water as far as the eye can see; where no footprints are left. That purity, that silence, is very much alive here and now - it is a song, a dance, a celebration - a sparkling glistening aliveness.

Bhagwan teaches that when you drop language, you become a part of existence. You become a part of the trees, the rocks, the ocean, the sky. What more is the artist searching for in his art, or the poet in her poem, or the musician in his song. It is exactly what the Zen Masters have been teaching their artist/disciples for centuries. A prayer is a listening. He teaches that every moment there is a message and if we are always talking, we may miss the message.

Living with a Master, one who teaches through silence, one who is silence, one who teaches through example; ordinary activities and occurrences become extraordinary. The birds chirping, the sun rising or setting, the trees standing silently, chopping the wood, typing a letter, driving the car - all take on an aliveness or rather, we experience life's celebration in the ordinary things we do. I ask you again: How can one teach silence except by being silent?

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is not only an exceptional artistic human being, but an extraordinary teacher. A rare teacher indeed; one who teaches by example, by actually living what he teaches.

One picture is worth a thousand words.

Sincerely,

Ma Anand Gatyó
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