

This is the transcript of a presentation called "The Path From Exoteric to Esoteric," by Stanton Stevens for the Seattle Theosophical Society on November 11, 2018. Please visit his website, <http://onepurelove.com>, for the video and accompanying handout.

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**Stanton Stevens:** Well, thank you, Mark. I really appreciate this opportunity to talk. It's an honor. It's probably my 12th talk here, and I've gotten to feel very comfortable speaking to this audience in this place. To me, it's a way to trying to give back and be responsible for all the time I've spent picking up the esoteric knowledge and reading. This is a wonderful opportunity that you folks give me to share and give back to you.

This talk is about the path from exoteric to esoteric. We'll talk about what those three words mean in a minute, path, exoteric, esoteric. Just to cut right to the chase, what it all boils down to in the end is the evolution of consciousness. I've mentioned this many times, it is what you'll find if you read Laurency or Bailey, Theosophy. Behind it all, consciousness is what's evolving. That's the spectrum of progress and the nature of the path really.

Let's take a moment to be conscious of consciousness. Each of us is conscious. Be aware of that fact. Have a look at your own awareness for a moment. Turn to look inside at who is looking. It's a much better state of consciousness to be aware of consciousness than to be unconsciously responding to things. I like to point out that this is one of the things that makes us human. Animals can't do this. Once they can, they're human. Self-consciousness is the consciousness breakthrough that helps us cross over from animal to human. That is the recognition that suddenly makes us no longer an animal.

Laurency has an interesting quote about consciousness and attention I want to read. "Attention is one's most precious possession. Without it we could learn nothing, we could not develop. The second most precious possession is the content of our consciousness. Anyone who directs their attention only to those things as afford a knowledge of reality makes a rapid career in the human kingdom and reaches the most quickly that world of ideas which is the gateway to the next higher natural kingdom. It is a good habit to ask oneself before everything one is confronted with, 'Is this worth taking up my attention?' What answer the individual gives to that question depends on their level of development." That always helps me with the talk, if I focus on my consciousness, so thank you for that.

Let's talk about the path. It means from going from A to B. The whole idea that there is a path, that there's something that we're becoming, is maybe a little bit out of favor. A lot of people seem to subscribe to the idea that there's no point to it and we just have to muddle through, and you can't know anything. This seems to be a popular thing in times like these days. I think that the law of cause and effect is going to be the teacher for people who have that approach.

They probably won't get much out of this talk because everything that you do is eventually going to turn into something that teaches you something. I'm really talking to the people who have thought about it and decided that there is an A to B. It's not a linear thing I'm talking about here, it's: we are changing, and we have some control over it and therefore what we're changing into is very important and we'd certainly like to be changing in a particular direction. The direction that I put at the title of the talk is from exoteric to esoteric.

Exoteric knowledge is what you would learn in school, what just about everybody would be expected to know. The nightly newscaster doesn't have to tell you about a lot of things, he makes an assumption that you know this, that and the other thing. Unfortunately, this, that and the other things that aren't even true at all are basic assumptions in common society. Esoteric is getting into a smaller and smaller subset of people who know some things. This particular philosophy, and ultimately, the perfect philosophy, is a description of reality. That's as good as it can get.

Well, the group of people who are really focused on and are functioning with the description of reality in their thinking, that's a relatively small subset. It's a pretty small group of esoteric thinkers thinking about things that are really-- We'll talk later about how hard it is to even talk about the esoteric facts of reality, how they really don't jibe very well with the strange conceptions that people have about reality.

Of course, we'll talk about esoterics and moving from this level of knowledge to another. We're talking about a mental process. But for every effort you make in the direction of mental understanding and becoming a more aware being, it's important, and I'm going to emphasize this again and again, to be on the parallel track of recognizing our unity with everybody which is really what the esoteric teachings are telling us. If we're really getting them, even though we know we're no longer going to be part of the masses of people agreeing with everything that people are saying, we're going to be part of a smaller and smaller set of people. Which might be a bit of a lonely feeling but at the same time, that smaller and smaller set of people, all of us need to become experts at loving the much greater set of everybody and recognizing our unity.

There's really no path in the evolution of consciousness that doesn't include recognition of unity with all. That is the nature of the next kingdom beyond human. The beings of the kingdom beyond human, have told us how this works. I'll tell you what they say. They say that in - Laurency calls it World 46, the Buddhic plane, the Essential World, but basically beyond the mental, the subtler level of consciousness beyond the highest levels of the mental world. When we achieve that level, we know simply by identifying with and sharing in the consciousness of everything we study, every being we come across, we share in the consciousness of that being.

That's a very different approach to reality than this antagonistic approach that humans tend to take with things. The only way we're going to get there is with, not only love, but the purification of the things that keep us from being able to join in consciousness with others in love and in unity. We have plenty of things that make us not very good candidates for joining that unity. We've got to clear those out of our thinking and out of our habits. Ego and "what's in it for me" thinking is the curse of the human kingdom. Of course, we learn from it, but we are going to overcome it to get beyond the human kingdom.

I really encourage you to read Henry Laurency's writing about all these things. In the handout, I can never resist putting lots of quotes in there. There are five pages of quotes. I think he's got the most brilliant presentation. There are wonderful presentations, of course. Theosophy has reintroduced the facts of reality to humanity. Alice A. Bailey has done an amazing job. I consider that a graduate-level material. You really are going to have to get your intuition working to dig into Bailey. Laurency works for somebody like me who wants to straight, clear, factual, logical approach. That's what I need. It works very well, and it's really helped me interpret Bailey better, and Theosophy. It helps put everything together. Everything I say here, you can find it all in Laurency, so read that.

If we're to talk about the path, we're not talking about the bell curve that you see in studies of human beings with the IQ of 100 in the middle and then it trails off down into this little area where, of course, we'd like to be down in that little thin trail off rather than sitting there in the hump in the middle with everybody else. That's an odd spectrum when you think about what is on the spectrum, intelligence. Intelligence is not everything, it's far from everything, and intelligence all by itself is dangerous.

There's still such a thing as a bell curve though, the bulk of people are pretty much functioning at a certain level, and it takes an extra effort to pull away and say, "Well, I guess I'm going to be okay with people not agreeing with me because I'm going to start thinking a different way." That bell curve is-- my point is that it's nothing like what scientists in psychology try to make it out to be. The real dimension of progress is along the lines of recognition of unity, of recognition of reality and functioning in it, not in illusions, and fictions, and half-baked philosophies of life, but actual relationship with what's real. That's the direction of progress that that bell curve ideally is covering.

All right. Well, so much to talk about in talking about these things, so I'm going to give you the briefest of nutshell versions of the esoteric facts. First, we are, each of us, indivisible, indestructible, immortal points of consciousness and life. This is a critical thing. We're not a fuzzy blob of something that can be split into two fuzzy blobs. We're not. We're not something that can be destroyed and simply cease to exist. The most permanent things in this room are us. We'll be around forever, and that makes our relationships permanent. Where everything else comes and goes, our connections with each other will go on and on.

That brings us to the law of rebirth, of course. A key, basic part of the esoteric wisdom says that this consciousness that we are cycles into form and back out. We take a form through which we can interface to the physical world, we learn about the physical world. Pretty soon we've got it figured out. Well, soon- only 20 million years it might take at the fastest, but still, lots of time in the physical world.

This monad, to get to the point where we are human, has taken on these bodies, these abilities, and the connections to the emotional and mental worlds. That's not given for free, we've earned every bit of it. The law of self-realization says that through the cyclic taking on of bodies by our spark of essential consciousness that we are, we've acquired the ability to eat, see, move, perceive in every single way. We've done this by being a monad- that's the name for this indivisible spark of us- by starting in the mineral kingdom.

Who knows how many millions and billions of years a monad takes getting through the mineral kingdom being pounded on by volcanic processes in a very passive sort of consciousness? Hylozoics say consciousness is in everything, every atom, everything, at the core, there is at least latent consciousness, so the mineral kingdom monads are slowly waking up. The highest form in the mineral kingdom is crystal. They participate in organized relationship in that. Then, there's a breakthrough in consciousness between the kingdoms, of course, to the vegetable kingdom where there is subjective awareness.

The plants have subjective awareness of what they're experiencing, and emotional awareness, as well as physical. They reach for the light; they dig their roots in the earth. It's a very passive but subjectively engaged kind of consciousness. We have all had to go through this. Then, the breakthrough from the plant, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom-- Forgive me if I've said this many times in all the talks. It's a really basic but critical stuff. The next breakthrough is into a new kind of consciousness, it is objective consciousness. The animal perceives objectively a world around it and has the freedom to move in it. That's a huge breakthrough from vegetable consciousness.

Gradually, the animal is having experiences and working its way into a kind of individuality. Each of these monads is starting to think for itself, a little bit of mental consciousness gradually starts to shine in an animal and continuing animal incarnations until finally enough mental consciousness takes shape that the realization of, "I am me," self-consciousness, changes the animal into a human. That's the huge breakthrough from the animal to the human kingdom. This goes on, of course, and the next kingdom beyond human is also joined through a big consciousness transformation, and its consciousness that is very different than human.

Here, as humans, we are isolated in so many ways and we're trying to blow air through our windpipes and communicate, and all these strange things we try to do just to find some sort of unity with each other. Well, eventually, we figure it out, we figure out what unity is all about, we start to share in consciousness to the point where we join collective consciousness in the next kingdom. That's the big breakthrough. As you can imagine, that's not a lonely place at all when we can share in the consciousness of all the beings. Like I said, to know anything, we simply know ourselves to be it too.

As great as that might sound, we really need this experience, this tough human experience. We need this to be able to function in this next kingdom. We need to be very distinct, well-experienced, and characterized, and have our own way of doing things, our own skills, our own style, our own contribution to make. We develop all that in the human kingdom, becoming unique individuals, so that when we get into this next kingdom of collective consciousness, we're not just swept away by this sea of consciousness. We remain a point of action and attention, and we can help, and serve, and heal, and all the great things we will want to do since we're in a sea of love.

We don't finish being human until we've become fully developed individuals. The idea that we are annihilated in some kind of nirvana and there's no more individuality in the next kingdom is a very sad and scary thought. It's not true, basically. Our individuality is very important, and it goes right up the scale into cosmic levels. You can see that in the individuality of the planets. Jupiter, Mars, Venus, they're beings, and they're each

of the body for a being, and they're entirely different from each other, they're very individual.

All right. Pythagoras laid this all out long ago. I think, what was it, 2,500 years ago or so? He laid it out as Hylozoics. Hylozoics says that everything is of three primary fundamental constitutional natures, everything is matter, it's in motion, and it has consciousness. He says these things can't be broken apart, these things are not made of something else that you can deduce or prove, there these are the fundamental three aspects of everything. That's what Hylozoics says.

If you look Hylozoics up in a dictionary, it will say that it is the idea that everything is alive, but it's not quite the same as saying everything is conscious, even latent conscious, but conscious somehow. Matter, motion, and consciousness is the basic trinity that Laurency points to again and again. Whenever there are expressions of nature, there's always a trinity of those things in it somehow where motion is the energy aspect, the spirit aspect, consciousness, the soul aspect, and, of course, matter, our bodies. The soul bridging spirit and matter in the consciousness place. You can apply this in lots of different ways.

I think I mentioned there's no free lunch, we've all worked hard, we're going to have to work hard, no one can progress us, there's no master guru somewhere who can just say, "Okay, I'm going to just evolve you," it's going to be work, and we're working on it. The very fact that we are interested in what's true says a lot about us as human beings. That comes towards the end when you care enough about what's true. There's a great quote in the handout from Blaise Pascal. He said, "Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that, unless we love the truth, we cannot know it."

Laurency gives an interesting phrase to this progression through the kingdoms and through the human kingdom as well: identification and liberation. We'll talk more about that later but just to take us in a quick journey through the human kingdom, we start out as physically focused selves. We identify with our physical bodies, "This is me, that's all I am as a physical form." We have experiences and then we see some people have gone beyond us and are having these fantastically dramatic emotional lives and it's really appealing. They're the great highs and tremendous lows and the chewing the scenery of life. They're just having so much fun.

As a physical being, we're jealous of this, we're envious. We start to try to acquire it, and we end up developing our emotional nature and pretty soon we're running around with our hair on fire too with all this emotion. Eventually, we get tired of that, too, and we start to admire the mental selves who are cool, calm, collected. They have a lot more figured out obviously. They're not run around by their emotions. They make plans and achieve them and that starts to be the impressive thing we're after. It's through this process of admiring a quality in somebody that we acquire it for ourselves.

We admire these beings that have just really got it figured out and so gradually we identify in each of these phases, we identify with this higher self. We say, "Well, I'm that kind of being," and try it on. We try to act as if and fake it until we make it. Then finally, we actually take the step, and we are that kind of self. That's the way to get there. When we become that higher self, we are liberated from the limitations of the

self that we have just finished identifying with. This goes on through all the kingdoms beyond human as well according to Laurency.

Identification and liberation. In the handout, I put a link to a chapter that Laurency has on that. It's always two of us in this scheme, and while we're not yet this next self, the mental self gets tired of being a dry and mental self and is admiring the soul, the soul-infused people who actually have one foot in a beautiful, glorious world of love and unity. That identification and liberation is what most of us are after, stepping into something more than what the mind is capable of processing.

There's a level far above and beyond that. Of course, the mind can't see its forest for its trees. It's just like emotion; emotions can't solve other emotions. The emotional nature can't fix itself. The mind has to step in and say, "Well, that's completely irrational," and quash an emotion that is inappropriate.

Same way, you've got to have the higher self, the soul, step in and work with your mind that's just tearing things apart. They say the mind is the slayer of the real, and the mind will happily dissect everything and anything that comes its way into little bits, and not respect the wholeness, really. The higher mind, of course, does in that soul level. That's where we're trying to wake up.

The idea of a state of grace on the path is, I think, when you've got this balance between what you're becoming, what's ahead for you, and where you are right now. You're relatively comfortable in what you are now. You know there's more, you're reaching for it and subjectively, the awareness grows and grows in you of how to be that way and bring that in and fix the things in your life. The soul consciousness is all about the wisdom and love that will apply to everything in your life, is always available.

I can't emphasize this enough. Whatever situation you're in, you are loved by your own soul, a divine being looking for every opportunity to help you have the perfect plan, setting things up with relationships and opportunities and destiny to try to help you wake up. We only block that by refusing to cooperate with it out of our stubbornness or our self-doubt. It's that stuff we have to get out of the way so we can just let this beautiful powerful being that eventually we identify with, consciously objectively function as us. Let that being have more and more power in our lives.

I can't wait, myself, to get there, it's going to be good. To overcome all the limitations of the human world. To overcome the loneliness and isolation. Even while you're still human, at the level of the causal self, the higher mental world, we have a self there that we're trying to wake up as. That's where the next goal for the mental self is to be a causal self. The causal self has new abilities to perceive. It can see the past as if it's the present. That's a wonderful thing. All the causes that have put everything into place where they are right now are visible as well as how they might extend into the future.

It's not a definite prediction of the future but you get a pretty good idea. When you can see why everything's the way it is, you have a pretty good idea where it's going to be soon. That's incredible. Human limitations are all, every single aspect of human limitations including physical, emotional, mental, are overcome in the transition to the next kingdom, but you have to overcome it to that to make that transition. All of us will sooner or later, is up to us.

Let me talk a little bit about why it matters to be one who knows and who is capable of knowing these things. We're a little special, we have got some of these facts. Let's give ourselves some credit, it wasn't easy to get these facts. We went through some painful experiences to get some of these questions answered and find some solid ground in the craziness out there of philosophies of life.

I remember my grandfather when I first read his book and went to see him, I was shaken to the core. I didn't know you could know. It was a big deal to realize that. I'd been going to college, and I was sure my professors didn't know anything important that I thought was important. They knew a lot about Chemistry and Physics and things, but what about the really important things in life? I wasn't getting the answers in college, and I was thinking, "Well, they must not be out there. What am I going to do?" I knew there was something more, and when I read that book, it changed my life in a number of ways.

This is happening all the time, all over the planet. Souls who have learned, who in previous lifetimes have been awake to these things, are reborn, have to fumble around until a certain age when they finally get exposed to it. Hopefully, they have the good karma to be exposed to it. That's another factor. Then when they are, boom, a huge revelation. Everything is amazing and it causes some difficulties, too. Suddenly the world even looks crazier than ever when you've got some facts. When you know it's about love and you see that people don't get that at all, you can see why the world's a big mess.

People that don't understand tolerance or humility or accountability, that's pretty discouraging. People just basically seem more lost than ever when you're trying to work with them. There are downsides to having this information, but you can certainly make better choices if you're working with what's true and real. If your philosophy of life is basically a fantasy, something you picked up from a book about "I work hard and this happens and then there's—" But it's basically somebody's fiction, you're not going to be predicting your future very well and you're not going to be able to help anybody else very well either.

That's a problem. Trying to help other people with their problems when you're living in a fantasy world. It's hard to be of service. Another thing that gets re-evaluated completely when you start to get these facts is God. God is myth understood. My last talk is on God so if you're interested in a whole bunch of thoughts on God, it was a fun talk. I thought it might be a little scary to get into God, but it was fun. All these myths are basically what God is built of. The thought-forms of God, everybody's got their own. All 7 billion gods out there that each of us individually have constructed, it's interesting to try to tie that into reality.

Another advantage of being somebody who knows, is we get to find out that we're getting close to the goal of being free of human limitations. The light at the end of the tunnel in the human kingdom. It seems like it's probably the most tunnel-like kingdom of them all because we're so in the dark about the facts, about each other, about what's going on, and the next kingdom we know exactly what's going on and our role and what we can do and it's so much different. Of course, animals have a pretty good idea

what they're up to too even before being human, but here in the human kingdom, it's confusing.

Once the truth matters to you, you're getting close. I think I said that already, but that's an important point and a particular bit of the truth. I really like to think about how Eckhart Tolle says this, Michael Meade says this. You are the life. We are the life in the body. That is basic esoteric information. We're not the body. Sure, we can identify with our forms, we have to experience things to a degree, but we're basically inhabiting these bodies. We're that spark of consciousness incarnating into these forms. We're the life. We're the consciousness. Michael Meade has a great statement, "You are life itself and life is not afraid to live."

Why be afraid of anything if you're life itself? Michael Meade, I don't know if you're familiar with him, but I think he's a great philosopher.

We've talked about why it's great to know. Let's talk about why it doesn't matter that you know, and that is it's a long thread of evolution through everything. Any two human beings are not so far apart on this tremendous, long-- I'm drawing it linearly though it's not linear, but still, this idea that you're still getting from here to there and just being in the human kingdom together, we're sharing a lot of experiences. We have a lot in common. The fact that we happen to know some true things, that's not enough reason for us to declare ourselves new fantastic superior rulers of earth.

Superiority complexes basically make us-- the pride and all that make us harmful people. Basically, we're hurting people with that. We're cutting ourselves off. We're not going to help people with that and we're setting ourselves up for great big lessons in humility. I don't even know how people get very far with pride because it seems like life conspires to teach me humility immediately, as soon as I start to get a big head about anything.

People with this idea of superiority because of their vast intelligence could learn something from people with Down syndrome who are very loving and very much in harmony with what's good in life and are giving and sharing and are doing much more for everybody than somebody whose pride is ruling the show.

Laurency says, "Very intelligent people who begin studying esoterics find it very easy quickly to be important and superior, and in so doing demonstrate that they are in fact unripe for esoterics. Because esoterics presupposes a realization of one's own limitation and makes criticism of other individuals impossible." Laurency makes very pointed criticisms in his teachings. I suppose it does look like criticizing individuals sometimes, but he does say that that's not what to do. You criticize the philosophies, the ideas, whatever it is that somebody is promoting as truth that's not. That is fair game. Go after that. Don't let people just promote nonsense.

The individuals themselves are doing the best they can. They're trying-- loving understanding is the thing that you can have and does work with everybody. Only the most advanced people out there, the most advanced mental selves, can benefit from actual criticism of their thinking or their behaviors. Few can take it the right way.



Just going back into why it doesn't matter to know more than others, every person has the potential for perfect harmony with their own plan, their own ability, their own opportunities to give, their own soul purpose, and to be living in a state of much greater usefulness and grace than you or I. Everybody has the potential to be doing it really well and that is to say, this person doesn't have the ability to read this particular book and make sense of it, well, so what? There's plenty to do in this world, and having an open heart is much better aligned with progress.

Not everybody has to be an esoterician. That's what I'm saying. I like to get the facts and talk about it mentally, but that's not everybody's job or contribution. I'm not encouraging you all to do that. I want to encourage you to read this stuff, but everybody's got their own way to serve. I'm not out there on the political front lines. I hope somebody else is for my sake because I'm doing this.

Every time we draw a line between ourselves and other people and say, "That person is not-- No, I'm not including that person in my--" Well, that actually cuts us off because as I mentioned before the unity with everybody is critical and the person who has struggled is in everybody. All of us have gone through the early phases of the human kingdom and whether someone is there right now or you're far beyond that, that early phase struggle is in you and there isn't a single person on the planet that you can't commiserate with over having eaten the wrong thing or too much of something.

It doesn't matter who it is. We've all made that mistake. We're all living in these physical bodies doing the physical thing, there's plenty of common ground. There's never a reason to say, "I'm so superior."

We're human. Humans don't get to know everything. As much as we might try to know, we have to stay humble. Only a being from the next kingdom can actually have perfect knowledge of what's going on in this kingdom and can see the whole forest. If somebody claims to you: "I'm no longer human. I've moved beyond," or whatever, well, they're not. Because nobody who has made that achievement is going to make that kind of claim. No master, no disciple testifies to their own level according to Laurency, and that makes perfect sense to me.

Everybody is our teacher in this world. Even the people that irritate you are teachers in one way or another. Humility is a must-have virtue basically and "pride goeth before a fall." Just don't set yourself up for those falls. Just remember that everybody is here doing their best.

Talking about the path again, let's say a few things about potential detours from the path that people make. I present it in a way that makes it sound simple. If you can just be in harmony with your soul and you can stay on your path, then it's going to be relatively easy. Well, there's a lot going on out there. There are a lot of distractions. Laurency says that someone who is a disciple, meaning has been a student of these esoteric teachings in some lifetime and been accepted into that relationship, they never wander off the path for long, but they still do.

Here are a couple of detours from the path. Coming into incarnation and being unhappy with the world and blaming the less evolved or blaming the more evolved who should have set things up better. That's really blaming the zombies or the

vampires. That's the way I look at that. The zombies and their mindless destruction and the sneaky awful blood-sucking vampires who are so much smarter and really shouldn't be doing that. It doesn't get you anywhere. We knew what kind of world we were incarnating into. It wasn't a mystery to us before we came. We chose this world and this time, these people, this whole crazy situation this country is in, we chose this country. Running away doesn't do any good, we're here actually to be part of it. We're intended to be. Let's try to figure out what we're intended to do here if we feel like running away.

If we come here and ignore suffering, then we've forgotten what we're here for. Unity and recognition of us and others has always been part of the plan for everybody. We're part of what humanity is doing. What all of humanity is doing, we're part of that. We share in that; we're doing it too. Let's take our share in whatever good or bad is happening out there.

There's another tempting mistake. It's kind of interesting, you only read about it in esoterics, and that's to fall back on a former self who we've been in a previous lifetime. We came here to be somebody new. This whole idea of reincarnation, rebirth is an opportunity to just start over again, build a new person, make different mistakes. Just not be in the same rut of whatever our last lifetime was, it's important.

Having been somebody else before has a particular appeal and it's a rut that we can fall back into. It's tempting because we were good at whatever that rut was. We knew how to tolerate whatever was going on but, anyway, we're warned about that. That's a very close at hand problem for people. Another way to delay things for yourself is by trying to rush it. This whole evolutionary progress is a natural process. It involves the substance of our bodies being gradually refined. As that happens, all kinds of great things happen to us. New senses open and new abilities to contact each other.

It's happening as part of our very substance. If we try to rush it, things get out of harmony. Trying to do breathing exercises to open the chakras, my grandfather almost killed himself that way. He was introduced as a great teacher, but he almost made a mistake trying to rush things along. He was following techniques he'd read somewhere. He developed a lot of the Rainbow Bridge techniques based on how he got out of the mess he was in. I'm sure it was part of the plan somehow. He opened his chakras wide open all at once and your body, if it's not ready for that, starts burning away all these obstacles to the flow of energy and you end up in a big mess.

There are lots of techniques out there to watch out for, the things that promise you a shortcut. It's going to enlighten you in a hurry. We hear again and again about how meditation is great for staying on the path. A meditation that is simple as just sitting there, getting centered, getting relaxed and doing it at the same time every day. Whether or not you can make some soul contact. If you're doing that every day, your chances go way up. It's like somebody who is praying to win the lottery and finally God said, "You have to buy a ticket."

If you don't sit down and make yourself receptive to some degree and listen and be calm, it's going to be harder to hear and pick up the reflection of the higher nature of yourself. It helps to be trying. Just not hard, just listening. The books talk about three different paths of service that I think are interesting. I don't know, some of you may be

familiar with the Rays, I'll mention them. They come up in Bailey and in Laurency a lot. Laurency calls them departments. The path of service is for people of action. Those people are typically first ray, seventh ray people, people who actually want to make things happen. The best kind of thing a person can do that wants to make things happen is to want to try to help people and alleviate suffering and carry people to a better place. The path of devotion is suitable for lots of people. Since that's the widest path really. Second, fourth and sixth rays, the even-numbered rays, love, wisdom, harmony through conflict, idealism and devotion. The path of devotion, finding a particular teacher that could help you. I think the teachers are fewer and further between, partly because there are so many people that need them now and maybe because the teachers have tougher temptations than ever.

The path of reason is for intellectual and scientific types. The third and fifth ray, that's probably the one I resonate with, but there's no path that's better than the other.

Here I am talking about all these things. Let's talk about talking about it, because if you're getting the facts and the special information, maybe you're just getting it for the first time and it's really exciting. Suddenly, you've realized, I can actually know things. It's true and it's solved this puzzle and fit the pieces in where I didn't know that religion and this and that fit together actually and there's truth behind it all.

Wow, I'm going to send an email to all my friends and relatives and co-workers and tell them, here's the answer! Well, I'd say, you probably want to resist that temptation. Every talk that I give here I'm going to put on YouTube and I'm going to have people think I'm nuts. I've had to accept that. Hopefully I'm such a grounded type that it's harder. It puzzles them that I'm nuts. People will nonetheless conclude that about anybody that thinks these things. It always surprises me when people are really determined and seem to think it's important to convince me I'm nuts.

Why are they defensive about it? I think there's something to examine there. Of course, those people have already turned this YouTube talk off long ago. I can safely tell you more secrets. There's a good teacher. That's a test for me. If I can be compassionate and loving to someone who thinks I'm crazy and thinks I'm completely deluded and wrong, well, that's a good test for me. Obviously, what I'm talking about here is for the people who've already gotten a few of the things and want more. Want to pull some more pieces together and construct more of a mental system out of all this.

If we're talking about sharing this information, we have a responsibility. Every kind of information we have gives us a responsibility. The consequence of not using the information responsibly, either blathering it or never even trying to apply it in your life and tell anybody about it, is that you don't get the opportunity to have it next time. You'll have to earn the opportunity again to get this information. I'm really hoping that for the most part, I haven't made mistakes with this and sharing it, and the next incarnation, somebody will share it with me because I'm really going to want to hear it.

I'll find out. I'm taking a chance. I'm taking a chance on you, that it's a good thing to share this with you. I was at a weekend retreat not too long ago, a month or so ago. It was about self-improvement and learning about yourself. It was great. I got a lot out of it, other people did too. I met a fellow there who was like me. He had a background

in information technology, that's my career. I work on some serious mysteries there. Like, why can I only make my JVM heap 20 gigabytes before the garbage collection routine starts killing my java app? I have to think about stuff like that and they pay me to do it, so it's not so bad. That's dry stuff. There are no people in that equation.

Anyway, I met this fellow who had come from the same background as me. Then he left his IT background and became a counselor. I thought, "What a jump! He's decided he's just going to open up this great big new level of himself to try to help people and connect with them." I thought that was great, so I shared with him my experience of how my most direct re-experiencing of a past life came through counseling, when the counselor was saying, "Okay, we're going to where you experienced this." We went through this process and suddenly I was there in a previous life, re-experiencing, "Oh, okay, then this..."

Oh wow, it all became clear. I explained that to him and he was quiet. He said, "I have to go lie down." That's why in my 30 years in high tech, there are hardly any of my co-workers that I've tried to share this with. People have a particularly concrete mindset on things, they're not going to be too comfortable with some of the-- just reincarnation is a really big one for some people. For me, it's just so much of a fact and without that, how do you make sense out of life without that? I don't know. Who can you share it with and how? That's a tough question. My grandfather used to talk about something he called occult reticence.

I thought that was a great phrase. What he meant by it was, you just hang on to this information until it's clear that someone is actually in the right space for it and it's going to help them. It is frustrating as can be, to look at people trying to understand reality with modern psychology and history and ethics that aren't based on reality, they are just struggling to find the factual underlying layer and it's not there till they get esoterics. I really would like to share with them, and it's a precious thing to give people but only to someone who is not only ready but wants it.

It could impact everything that you say and do and it's irresponsible to put something out there that someone is not ready for. You could harden their reaction to that kind of thing so that when it is the right time, they've got this built-in resistance. It's harder for them to pick it up at the right time. You don't want that to happen. You can tell them where to look, that's not too harmful. Say, "go read Laurency, that's what I'm studying, check it out, you might find something there."

Not only can it be not helpful to a person to try to share with them at the wrong time. A sad thing about this world is that there are people who are basically the enemies of human progress. I talk about this in my talk called "The Great Truths and the Great Lies." Powerful people have their power because they control people who are controllable, who haven't thought for themselves, who are willing to just go along with whatever.

If those people were to wake up and become people who thought for themselves and had some more facts to deal with and realized that their freedom, their ability to choose was an important thing, they shouldn't be surrendering to common, the mass consciousness idiocy. Those powerful people would lose their power. And so, those powerful people who are unenlightened as far as the actual purpose of existence, the

unity and the love part, they are doing everything in their power to keep people from waking up.

There are many ways that they go about this, by promoting all kinds of bad doctrines and completely distorted aspects of religion with threats and all kinds of nonsense. Christianity has been used for that purpose so many times. You've got this threat of hell to whip people into line and this promise of heaven to lure them on and it's all a control mechanism, unfortunately. I have talk on that if you want to watch that, "Esoteric Christianity."

You don't want to put ammunition in the hands of those who are going to misuse what you say. They take the facts they can get from you, turn them around into some weird distortion, maybe for their own ego, power. Egotists would like facts that give them power. If you're really going to tell somebody about this, the best thing you could do is be curious about the person.

Learn about them. Here is a whole list of things it's good to know about somebody and as I'm saying these things, you could ask them about yourself, and I ask them about myself too. They are good things to know about yourself. If you're talking to somebody and you're thinking, "I would really like to tell this person something about all this." A question might be, do they have any kind of spiritual practice like meditation?

Have they taken some steps in a direction like that? That means something in them is actively seeking. Do they overly revere individuals such as gurus and authorities and surrender their personal power to them? Well, they're just going to mess it up if you give them more facts. You really got to let them solve that view of things, how that doesn't ultimately work. You could critique the teachings that they're talking about, but, again, not the individuals. Or overly revering books without understanding that it's the teaching and the ideas that are important. Buddha said there are no sacred books.

What questions are they asking of life? Are you asking, am I asking of life? That's a big one. What mysteries are you trying to solve about life? That tells you a lot about where somebody is at. What they're really trying, they're puzzling over and pondering. Pondering is such a good word, the Tibetan in the Bailey books would say something insightful and then say, "Ponder on this." I like this idea of pondering.

Is this person fixated on a belief system that they haven't seen through yet like materialistic science, like science explains everything. Or distorted Christianity, Marxism, fanaticism of any kind. They'll work their way through it. Give them help if they ask for it, but only help with perspective on what it is that they are believing. Really shine some light on what it is that they are believing.

Skepticism is a good thing to find in people. These days, without it people are really sunk. You've got to have some skepticism, but rejecting everything out of hand, everything beyond what the agreed-upon physical reality shows that someone is not ready, they're hanging out at the top of the bell curve of everybody believes this, so do I. They're not really going to be open to something new.

Atheism is an interesting thing. The atheists I've met are energetic about it. They have an emotional component to it which is really a reaction to religion and because it's a

reaction to something that thing still controls. If your reaction to something is driving you into activity, that thing is still driving you. The overly scientific types, you have to allow them to follow their path there and not jump in with all kinds of stuff that they will dismiss quickly. Scientific types are the quickest to just dismiss whatever it is you want to throw at them.

That's not going to help and like I said, it can harden their minds against things. Those types eventually realize that science is really cold-hearted and scientific types tend to fall for this Darwinian idea that survival of the fittest and who is the strongest should have the power because they are judging by lessons of the animal kingdom instead of human. And not differentiating animals and humans either, scientists don't really do that very well.

Science isn't anywhere near even touching on the soul, on the nature of death, on the purpose of life really, on consciousness. Science will never fully explain consciousness. This essential quality of all of us, science will not dissect and explain. That's the path they're on, that's great, it is tremendous mental exercise, that could be what the whole incarnation is about, great.

Some people find their way to esoterics and to you if you are somebody who might share that information because they've looked and looked, and they have not found it and they must know. That's the kind of person I love because that's me, I had to know, that's why I know because I cared enough about it. That's somebody you can talk to. What are their motives? Egotists like I said, they'd love to have some facts to just beat people over their head with or maybe make themselves superior or whatever.

Is there a basic acceptance of the primary things like reincarnation and karma? If people haven't seen that that is a pretty good thing to live by even if you don't have proof in your own life, then they haven't really thought about things that much and are probably not ready for something that requires a lot more thinking about. As I say all these things, I have to repeat again and again. This does not say this person who is not ready for this is somehow a lesser and that the people who have the information are superior.

There are plenty of people here, I've known beautiful souls doing incredible service work on this planet who had no interest in esoteric information. Didn't have a use for it because they knew exactly what they were doing and how they were helping, they were doing fine. So don't judge anybody by whether they're interested in this information. Something to learn about somebody and to know about yourself, do they face facts about life, about themselves, or live in fantasies, drugs and dreams and soap opera?

It's hard to be of service and help someone in the real world when you're not in it. Common sense is just so vital and precious and honesty and self-discipline and being practical, those things are precious, and they are, I like to think, particularly American qualities. The early American philosophers really put a premium on them and taught about that. I would like to see a resurgence of that here in America.

Self-honesty is the toughest of all. My motto, difficult as it is at times to apply, is "never argue with the truth". It doesn't matter who's giving me the truth and how much I don't

want to hear it from that person, if it's true it's true. Is the person, or you or I, accountable for our choices and actions? Well, all our circumstances are our creation and our responsibility and blaming others is harmful and not helpful and by taking responsibility, being accountable and saying, "Yes, I'm choosing this, I chose that, that's true." That's a very important part of being an adult.

Would this person that you were thinking you might talk to rather teach you about the latest cool thing that they're into? Well, that's great if that's something that got them excited and they're getting something out of it, don't mess with happy, they're happy, they're learning and maybe they can teach you something, don't rule that possibility out. Well, that's quite a laundry list of things and nobody's going to be likely to fit all those criteria as somebody that you can potentially share this information with. If you know all those things about a person, you know them well. It's a nice checklist for how well do I know this person.

We're talking about the path, the times we live in, it's amazing that you could find anybody who's not so skeptical and jaded and disillusioned by what's out there right now that they will listen to any information from anywhere. In an odd way, that protects the information from those who aren't ready for it. It takes an extra effort to get the needle out of the haystack. Laurency is on the internet, all of his stuff is right there, [laurency.com](http://laurency.com), but it's buried like a needle in the haystack, every other possible interpretation of reality is out there.

Unless you've got a particular bit of a compass, something that tells you, "This is true," because deep down you know some of that truth, you're not going to be able to sort out one from the other. To recognize the information, people have to have their own deep need to recognize it basically, but there are sure people looking for a lot of things on the Internet.

I joined a Facebook group called "Esoteric knowledge and occult science", I think it was called. Things you read there, the people saying, "How do I summon a demon and get it to do my bidding? What's a good blood ritual for sex magic?" It's incredible what people are asking. And people have lots of helpful suggestions to answer all these questions, I'm amazed.

Well, not to say that the path to really knowing doesn't lead through some dark places and this world takes us through dark places. A hundred years ago today was the end of World War I, so it's Veterans Day. The path can lead you to the opportunity to give up your life for a cause or a country or an ideal and I suspect that's a very important lifetime. Humanity is just barely civilized is what it amounts to, and I really do salute anybody who's trying to keep from sliding back into chaos because it's so much easier than people imagine, and it's happened many times before. Civilized countries are much closer to chaos than they realize.

Let's talk about steps on the path. If you're thinking about how you're moving along, how you might move along, one of the first things to consider might be: to be the person that you could give the information to like I was talking about, all those considerations.

Are you that kind of person? Are you accountable? What are your motives? Things like that and be teachable. We've all got plenty to learn, we're not making it through the Human Kingdom without some huge realizations and revelations and great breakthroughs and epiphanies, and all that takes a lot of continual effort to try to understand and put ourselves in other people's shoes and all of that doesn't come for free.

One way that you were certainly going to be offered that information though, is if you need it for your serious attempts to help others and do good things in this world. There is a lot available that will be given to those who are trying to do that, including even abilities.

You find doctors that are afraid to confess this but there are plenty of doctors out there who actually have clairvoyance and can look at their patients and see the colors, and get ideas about where diseased tissue is and things like that because they have really wanted to be healers and to be a better healer, their own soul has helped open up that ability for them, and it becomes their permanent possession in future lives as well. Our efforts to do good things are usually what's behind our increased abilities.

This emphasizes the point that service is the path. That's what every one of these books is going to tell you, that the path to the next kingdom, to enlightenment, to greater self-knowledge, to happiness, joy, bliss, exciting life and experience is trying to help, that's how you progress quickly. That's putting your own effort into proving that you know, that you care that everybody else is suffering, that it matters to you. That means unity becomes a very real force in your life. That is a taste of the next kingdom which is basically a kingdom of unlimited love and joy and bliss and unity compared to this one.

I'm sure once you've been in that one long enough, you want the next, you can move on to the next thing. It's good to be steady with your efforts. Those who are the guides of humanity who look on who want to help us and have great plans for helping humanity wake up, look for people who particularly are dependable, that matters a lot. That's probably where I haven't shined at all times but maybe next incarnation.

Back to the thing I talked about earlier, identification and liberation. Look for people you admire, that's how you acquire qualities, by finding that quality in someone else and admiring it. Being jealous of it is the wrong approach. You can admire a good quality in somebody else, then that quality will grow in you. Meditating on equality or virtue or truth or a skill. They talk about meditation having two kinds, meditation without seed and with seed. Without seed is just getting reflective, feeling the soul's consciousness and presence, allowing the energy to pour in. I can tell you when it's working well for me, it charges me up for the whole day and whatever I have to deal with, I'm ready for it.

"With seed" is to take an idea, like a virtue that you would like to have more of, and we have to perfect all the qualities, the virtues. Patience is a good one, for instance, or persistence or compassion, you can go all the way with that virtue. But just meditating on any of those, that's the seed of meditation, that's a good way to move things along. It's interesting that Laurency, in order to help me understand all these things, makes



sure that I don't have a fuzzy conception and points out the material basis for all of this. We are developing within our bodies these abilities to ascertain the truth.

New abilities to objectively see what is only subjective awareness to us now, objective awareness of the etheric world that is around us now. There are beings in that world and all kinds of things that we'll become aware of. Certain yoga practices can open that up, but it will happen naturally, it's not something to try to force. Objective awareness in all the higher worlds is our eventual proof, that's how we prove these things we're talking about here. Because it goes beyond accepting the words of a teacher and accepting on faith, it becomes a direct experience, we see how it is, and we're promised that that is what's ahead of us.

The material basis matters a lot to me, and here's a great quote from Bailey, the Tibetan. It's also on one of the front pages of the *Rainbow Bridge* books. "The mysteries are revealed, not primarily by the reception of information anent them and their processes, but by the action of certain processes carried out within the etheric body of the disciple. These enable him to know that which is hidden." The refinement of the vehicle, the need to develop new skills and abilities as part of our service work, eventually opens up new awarenesses and senses for us.

That's not to say that teachers aren't helpful, all these natural processes through our meditation and everything, teachers are very helpful to-- teachers are everybody, of course, as we mentioned before. We're not going to get beyond human without seeing ourselves in everyone. My grandfather was my teacher for years and he had an interesting way of determining who he would teach.

One of the things he would do is he'd tell you a lot of things and make you aware and maybe see if you'd read the *Rainbow Bridge* book or whatever, then at some point, he would say to you, "I made it all up," especially to the grandkids. If you believed him, that he was done, he had no more to tell you because he knew that you didn't have the knowledge inside to relate to what he was telling you.

The real teacher is only trying to get you to realize what you already know and can't teach you a new thing, new things are from our own experience. What a teacher can do, especially for a young person who's recapitulating past lives, is hit the keynotes of the truths so they're reawakened in consciousness for a person.

If you are a teacher and if you find yourself in that position, don't make promises. Don't promise to enlighten somebody. I'm amazed when I see these teachers out there say, "Well, I can enlighten you and I will guide you to the--" Actually, when you agree to do something like that, you're on the hook in some way. Even though you can't do it, I suppose you have some responsibility to keep helping that person until they get it done somehow.

You're not alone working on these mysteries, even though ignorance and hatred are out there and will find you faster than ever the moment you get on Facebook. By the way, I learned from my morning meditations, don't check Facebook before meditation. That is a big mistake. I know, I did that a few times, I started my meditation just stewing over the stupid thing I had read. But find those who are coming from a place that's real, it doesn't have to be esoteric but just real, coming from their real selves. The

good in other people is real and makes up for all the nonsense and each of us has a loving soul, I just can't emphasize this enough.

Trust it to find out if it's true, give it a try. Try saying "Well, so there's this loving soul, how about if I actually listen and try to feel that love and work with that will." Your soul has only been waiting a million years for you to do that, so get on with it. It's time to say, "Thank you, I want to know, I want to be loved, I want to be part of this."

If you're trying to do everything from a place of wise love, you don't really need to think that much about the path, you are on it, and that is a higher priority than any amount of gathering information and fitting it into your mental system. I'd like to close with this John Lennon song lyric, "What in the world are you doing there, when you're everywhere?" Ponder on that.