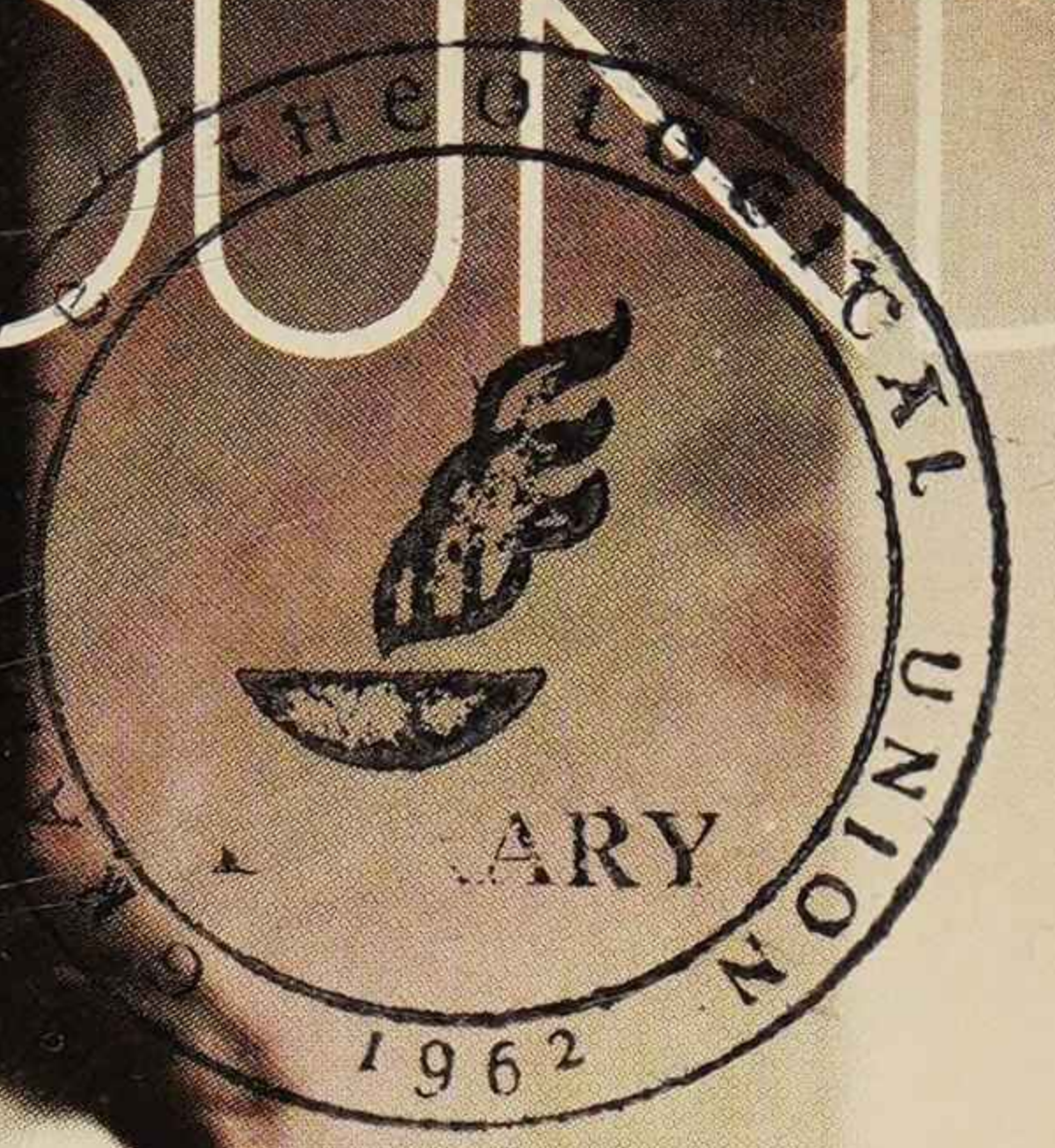


VISION MOUND

Anniversary Issue



Vol. 1 no. 5

Spiritual, Religious, and Institutional Principles of The Free Communion Church

"The Way of Truth is simply, but absolutely, a matter of allowing feeling and attention to pass via all presently arising conditions to Infinity. Such is the Way of Sacrifice, or Love, which Realizes Translation of the whole body-being into the eternal Divine Ignorance-Radiance. That Translation is shown in the instants of true hearing and seeing in the Company of the Spiritual Master; of purification and transformation, by Grace, of the whole body-being; of the Awakening of Lawful (sacrificial) responsibilities relative to all functions, relations, and conditions of existence; and, ultimately, in either Transfiguration, Regeneration, or Ascension-Translation of the whole body-being into Love-Radiance, or Light, the Glorious Effulgence of the Heart of Divine Ignorance."

—Bubba Free John

The present, future, and eternal Work of Bubba Free John is to conceive, demonstrate, and communicate the Process that leads to Translation of the whole body-being of the devotee into the Divine Ignorance-Radiance. Bubba will always continue, through Transcendental or Spiritual Sacrifice, to serve devotees in the preparatory stages of practice as well as in the terminal phase, The Way of Radical Intuition, in order to quicken their Awakening and Transformation in God. Therefore, the spiritual relationship of Communion with Bubba Free John as Spiritual Master is the secret or key to Realization of the life and practices communicated to devotees in The Free Communion Church.

The primary approach to all practice, including meditation, is simply to surrender to the Form and Presence and Person of the Spiritual Master. That surrender is abandonment of the self-orientation, which is attunement to thoughts, body, sensations, and independent feelings. It is to yield totally to Infinity, to relax-release feeling-attention to that Form and Presence and Person, and to allow that Living Radiance and Person to Teach and to Awaken responsibility, meditation, and Realization. This is the primary form of approach in every stage of the Way. (The stages are simply the progressive unfoldment of responsibility, meditation, and Realization as the effects of that Company.)

"I am the advantage of devotees. Those who allow themselves to be drawn into Communion with Me live as love, blissful service, or unobstructed feeling-attention, via all functions, in all relations, under all conditions. The key to their happiness is that all conditions are Realized by them to be forms of Communion with Me. Such devotees are one with the Ignorance that is the Heart of all phenomena and the Radiance that is the Form of all that appears.

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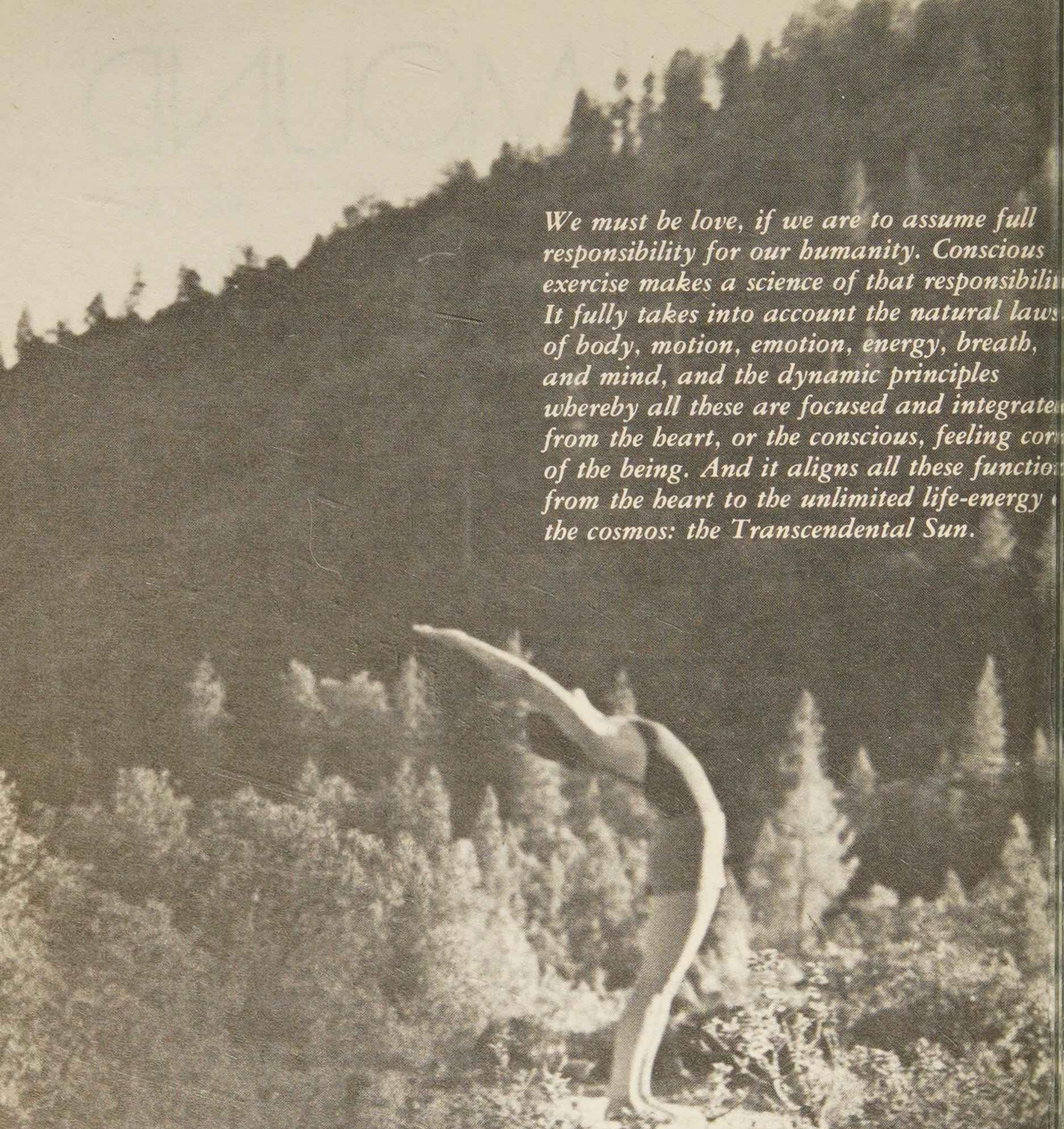
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We must be love, if we are to assume full responsibility for our humanity. Conscious exercise makes a science of that responsibility. It fully takes into account the natural laws of body, motion, emotion, energy, breath, and mind, and the dynamic principles whereby all these are focused and integrated from the heart, or the conscious, feeling core of the being. And it aligns all these functions from the heart to the unlimited life-energy of the cosmos: the Transcendental Sun.

Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun

The principle of love applied to exercise and the method of common physical action. A science of whole body wisdom, or true emotion, intended most especially for those engaged in religious or spiritual life.

Bubba Free John

This book is available at fine bookstores and from the Dawn Horse Book Depot, P.O. Box 3680, Clearlake Highlands, Ca. 95422, \$5.95 paper, \$10.95 cloth.

ABOUT VISION MOUND

Vision Mound is a monthly publication of Vision Mound Ceremony, an institution devoted to disseminating the Teaching of the American Spiritual Master, Bubba Free John. Like its predecessor, *The Dawn Horse* magazine, *Vision Mound* provides direct and pertinent or timely communications from Bubba Free John on the Way of Divine Ignorance, Radical Understanding.

Vision Mound Ceremony is the educational division of The Free Primitive Church of Divine Communion, commonly known as The Free Communion Church, which is the collective body of all devotees of Bubba Free John. *Vision Mound* is the essential link between Vision Mound Ceremony and all devotees, as well as former friends and supporters throughout the world. Its purpose is to inform, clarify, and refresh the study of each individual on a regular basis. The editors intend to provide a lively, useful format, one capable of expressing the profound and living relationship to the Spiritual Master, which is realized by all who truly hear his teaching and are thereby moved to take up the practices of the Way of Divine Ignorance. *Vision Mound* has no commercial aspirations and relies solely on the gifts and subscriptions of devotees and friends for its continuing support.

On December 12, 1976, Bubba Free John discussed the significance of the name *Vision Mound* :

Traditionally, spiritual cultures would often build a mound as a holy place. People went to a prominent place on the earth, a rise, a hill, or a mountain. Pyra-

mids are mounds, a prominence from which to approach what was considered to be something transcendent to the earth. It was the custom to go off alone to such a place, to prepare oneself for the Divine by fasting, entering a holy mood and right approach. Then one would stand on the mound and call for a vision or insight or deliverance and wait until satisfaction came. It required giving up the whole life, throwing everything away until you were given the Divine impulse. Then you would leave the mound and return to your normal course of life, but periodically you would return to the mound for Divine refreshment. It is a kind of ceremony that everyone performs. A ceremony introduces you, initiates you into a condition of existence that you must otherwise realize directly. So ceremonies change in content, but in principle they are the same eternally. The body, as the mound, is turned over to the Infinite that pervades it until the body is surrendered perfectly.

The editors are happy to serve this Divine refreshment by providing our readership with the most current and useful communications from Bubba Free John and Vision Mound Ceremony.

INTRODUCTION

In November each year all devotees celebrate the birth of our Spiritual Master, Bubba Free John, on November 3, 1939. During this time we are particularly attentive to two matters: Bubba's accounts of his Divine Existence, as he has enjoyed it from birth and as it has been Revealed in the course of his life; and the instructive lessons of his own life and his theatrical play with others, all of which he has engaged in as a sacrifice for the sake of the Awakening of devotees.

This issue of *Vision Mound* offers devotees new perspectives and revelations relative to both of these dimensions of Bubba Free John's life-work. It focuses specifically on the Teaching significance of his brief trip to India in September, 1977. Bubba departed for India on August 30, accompanied by two devotees, William Tsiknas and Crane Montaña. Before leaving, Bubba said very little about the significance of this journey. Tentative plans had been made for him to stay in India between one month and six weeks. After a brief stop in Japan, Bubba went immediately to Sri Ramanasramam in Tiruvannamalai, South India, the former residence of the late Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Bubba had visited there once before, in August, 1973. At that time the living Spiritual Influence of Maharshi provided direct and unmistakable confirmation of Bubba's Realization of Divine Truth. This time Bubba stayed at Sri Ramanasramam for five days and afterward visited one or two other places in India.

But then Bubba cut the journey short and returned home to Vision Mound

Sanctuary without delay. And the Teaching that emerged in his talks and writings, both during the trip and upon his return, has unique and startling significance for both the Revelatory and the critical or instructive dimensions of his work.

Part I, "The Fire of Sacrifice Must Enter Your Life," is a simple and straightforward presentation of the essence of Bubba Free John's offering and demand to human beings. The first essay, "Religion Is Sacred Activity," states the whole matter in brief. The literal meaning of "sacrifice" is "to make sacred." True religion, Bubba shows, is to make one's whole life sacred through absolute surrender to God. This sacrifice can be accomplished only through hearing the Teaching and living in the spiritual Company of the Spiritual Master, who has become the Sacrifice itself. Then, in the excerpts from talks that follow this essay, Bubba summarizes the way of that sacrifice. It is not a path of inwardness and subjective knowledge, but it is the radiant action of love. That way cannot be truly realized until the whole force of our lives is turned from self-exploitation and the separative impulse of un-love to the spiritual process of unobstructed feeling and free attention, or Divine Communion.

Part II presents "the lesson of India." Study these talks and essays carefully. They offer a uniquely liberating analysis of the two contrasting tendencies that characterize both the general qualities of life in East and West and the conventional, limited life of every man and woman. Through the incident of his

ip, Bubba dramatically revealed the utility and falseness of "India," or the characteristically Eastern urge to subjective inwardness as an approach to spiritual life. Here he shows how such "left-sided", or inward-turned, subjective seeking is only the equally limiting counterpart and argument to the "right-sided" or outward and grossly exploitive ways of the West. The concluding essay, "This Is the Vision I Have Felt Since Birth," is a particularly freeing argument for all readers to consider. In a few brief paragraphs, Bubba Free John completely undermines the foundations of all conventional esoteric spirituality, especially the Vedantic way of inward seeking for self-knowledge. The Way of Truth, Bubba argues, is the Way of the whole body-being, enacted through love or radiant feeling-attention to Infinity. Part III, "The Translation of the Whole Body-Being into the Radiance of Jnana Samadhi," offers a unique description of the transcendent relationship between two enlightened beings—both in the past and in the present. Bubba tells how his Realization was corroborated at Ramana Maharshi's tomb and places of residence during his earlier pilgrimage in 1973. Then, in his essays, he indicates the new dimension of Revelation that has Awakened in his own case since his recent visit to Sri Ramanasramam. Bubba has said that Sri Ramanasramam essentially communicated a verbal Teaching relative to Jnana Samadhi, the Realization of the Heart or Self or consciousness exclusive of phenomenal conditions, but that he realized and lived the non-exclusive Condition of Sahaj Samadhi. But the Process that Bubba is witnessing and demonstrating in his own case extends the Realization of Sahaj into the further developments of Jnana Samadhi, which involves the

literal Divine Transformation and Glorification of the whole body-being of Man. Such a Process has been suggested or alluded to in the cases of only a few individuals in the history of human spirituality. And this spiritual Revelation and Demonstration is unknown and unsuspected by men and women in the modern, secular world. But it is the Process that has Awakened spontaneously in the case of Bubba Free John, and that, through the living sacrifice of mutual Communion, he offers to all who become his true devotees.

The Bulletin this month announces news that all readers of *Vision Mound* will rejoice to hear. And the "Monthly Cycle of Study" brings together all the matters presented in this issue, plus readings from the source texts of Bubba's Teaching and relevant traditional literature, to make your study and use of this jubilee issue a literal Celebration of the Birth, Presence, and Teaching work of Bubba Free John.

The Photographs in This Issue

COVER: *Bubba on the grounds of The Great Temple, near Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, South India;*

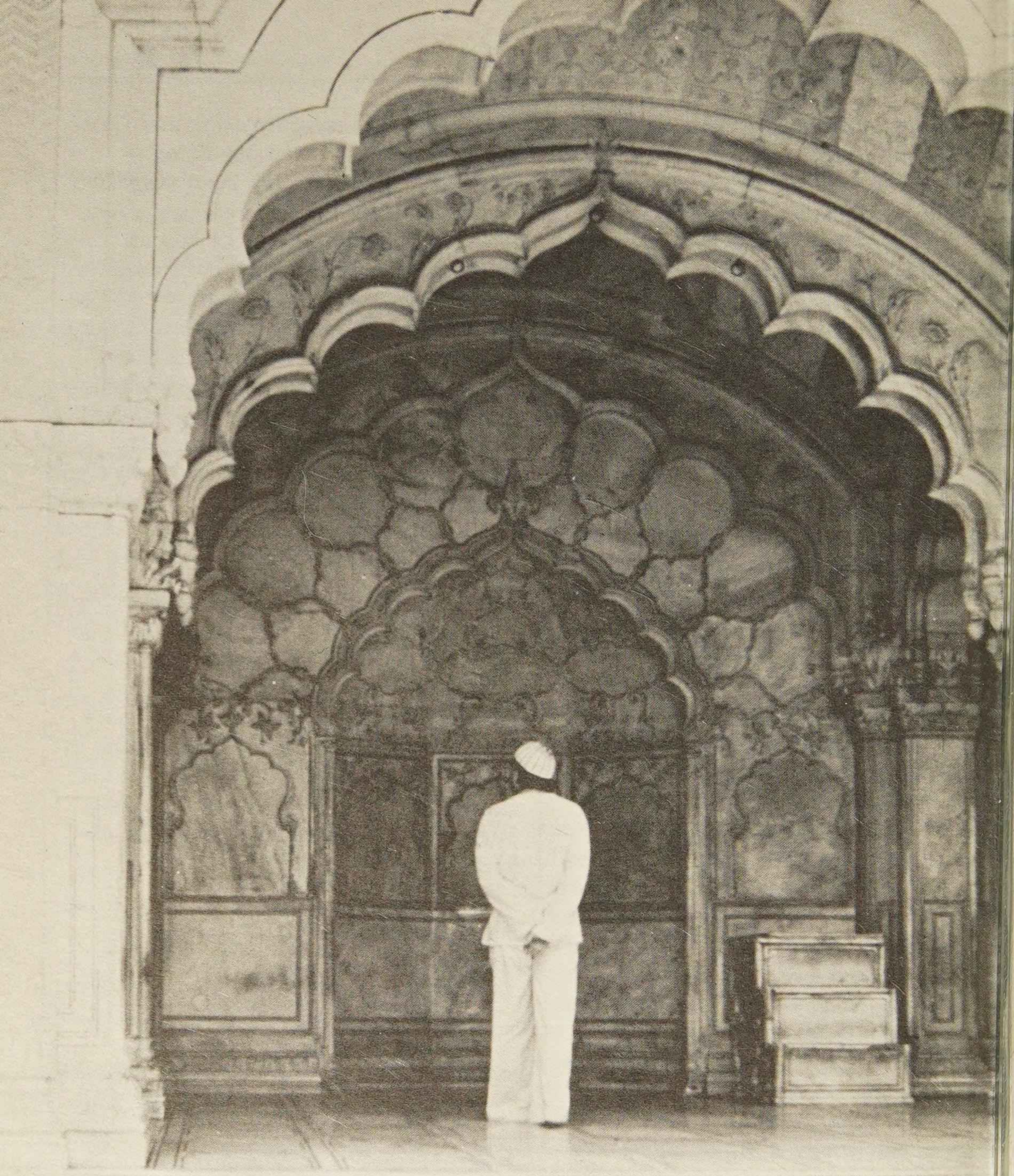
PAGE 6: *Bubba at the Red Fort, New Delhi;*

PAGES 17, 19, and 20: *Bubba at The Great Temple, Tiruvannamalai;*

PAGE 31: *Bubba at Skandashram, one of Sri Ramana Maharshi's former places of residence;*

PAGE 34: *Bubba inside the cave at Skandashram;*

PAGE 49: *Bubba writing during his stay at Skandashram on the hill Arunachala overlooking Tiruvannamalai.*



PART I.

The Fire of Sacrifice
Must Enter
Your Life

You must take up this Way as a whole life. Just sitting here with whatever attention you have freely available at the moment is not sufficient to change your presumption in the future. It will simply establish you in the moment, more or less, in this consideration of Ignorance. But the discipline is obliged upon you in every moment. You must take it up as a way of life. You must be constantly available to the Spiritual Master, constantly available to his instruction, his argument, his disciplines, his Company. The life awakened in his Company serves the penetration of the dream. When that Realization becomes summary, most radical, in your case, then you are simply happy. Until then, you enjoy it more or less profoundly in some moments, and at other moments the usual life grinds in on you. But then you have the discipline to occupy you rather than the right you ordinarily assume to dramatize your self-possessed tendencies and illusions. The whole affair of this practice ultimately serves perfect transformation in Truth.

Difficulties persist because the ordinary life or dream persists. Things continue to arise. So there is heat in the process. But the heat is your advantage. The heat is not some negative side effect. The heat is free attention, available for this profundity. Secondarily, it is painful in a sense, but it is free. It is available force, attention. Free attention is not otherwise so available, because it is usually sunk into dramatizations and distractions. Now it is without an object. It cannot find a way to be relieved. It is hot. And so it can consider itself, the occasion itself.

If, through true hearing, you will be committed to such present consideration, and if you will persist in it and not restrain yourself from the whole discipline of my Company, that same enlightenment that is now argued to your face will also be true of you.

*Bubba Free John
The Paradox of Instruction*

RELIGION IS SACRED ACTIVITY

an essay by Bubba Free John

Religion is sacred activity. It is a formal, specific, and even bodily sacrifice. It is a total, whole, and present sacrifice or offering of that which is oneself (not that which is other than oneself). That sacrifice must be made regularly and, at last, even continuously. It is a process of love, or unobstructed and free feeling-attention, in which all the functions of the body-being are yielded into That which is intuited at Infinity (and with which one is identical at Infinity). The Sacrifice is a specific functional process of the whole body-being, and it must be learned through testing, purification, discipline, insight, meditation, readaptation, and transformation of all the presumptions or tendencies of body and mind.

Such religion or sacred practice is inspired and communicated via human agents who already abide in the ecstasy of this sacrifice. One who is such an agent becomes attractive to others, so they become polarized to him through love. Such devotees are tested and instructed, initiated, raised up, absorbed, transformed, and sacrificed in the face of the one whom they love as Master of the sacrifice. He is their advantage, whereby the way of sacrifice is not only learned but quickened.

This is the ancient secret that few have heard. It is the hidden part of all the cults and institutions of religion. It is absolutely so. And those who do not learn and become this sacrifice, performing it moment to moment like priests before a sacred fire, do not yet have their eye on Truth or the Way to be restored to very God, the Radiant One who is the Mystery in all experience.

October 8, 1977

There Is Only One Consideration

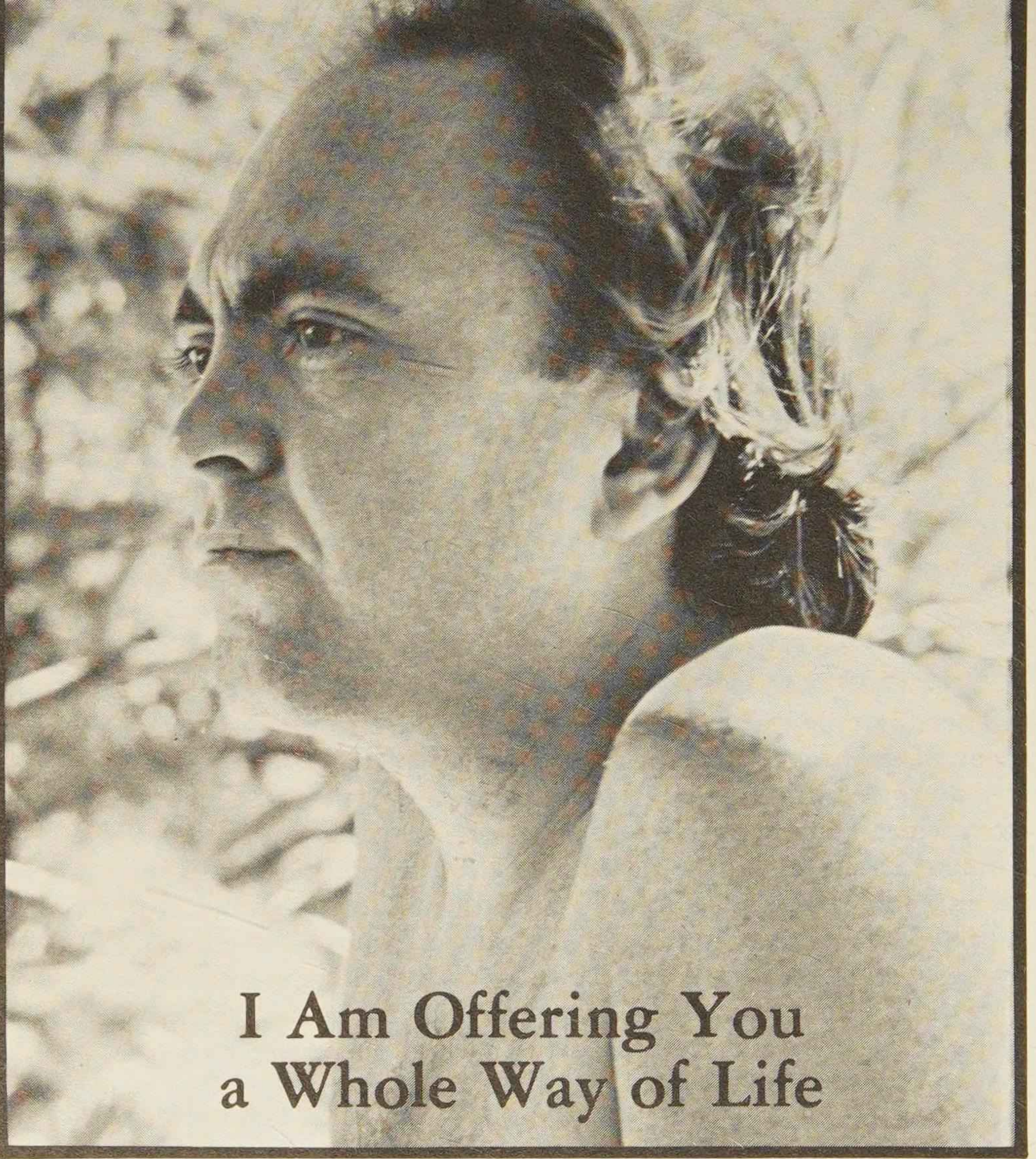
from a talk given by Bubba Free John
at Vision Mound Sanctuary
on September 11, 1977

There is only one consideration. It is newly communicated, constantly renewed and brought to individuals. It is that you fail to realize that this realm is not just a dead end of objects with which you may be obsessively involved or from which you are obsessively detached. It is the modification of a single, absolute Divine Reality. And when we rest in that Divine Reality, we are essentially at peace, radiant in this Condition, not full of knowledge but full of happiness. We may then live freely and accomplish the universal cycle of living, in this form and in all the other forms that appear.

And the Oriental point of view, as I said when I was in India, is a reflection of the doubt of life and the withholding of love. Those who want to go within are just evading responsibility. They will not love. They will not yield to the pattern of their relations. They will not serve. They are looking for some sort of knowledge, but there is no knowledge that is Truth. Truth is not an object to consciousness. You cannot see Truth. You can only *be* it. It is a process rather than an object. Love is Truth—when you are free to live it, consider it, and penetrate the form of your conventional life.

This is not a new Teaching, you see. It has been the same Teaching from the very beginning, and there are still very few people who are willing to consider it to the point of responsibility. But individuals must, because of their commitment, become responsible for stably living this Way so that they can deal with me, and so that I will permit myself to live close enough to them to bring the fire into their lives.





I Am Offering You a Whole Way of Life

from a talk given by Bubba Free John
at Vision Mound Sanctuary
September 14, 1977

You are struggling with your mediocrity all the time. It is what you are committed to. But at some point you must start shining beyond it. It is so lowly a tendency to be struggling with, to be trying to overcome. It is just a way of meditating on the slime of unconsciousness. You must brighten up! You must bring energy into your relations in the present moment.

There is some awkwardness in shining at first, because you do not have any use for it—nobody does. It does not have an essential value. It is too free, you know. Still, people like to shine, so you will find some way to make use of it. You must function with it. You must bring shining into all your functions.

The first levels of this practice, the first three stages of the Way of Divine Ignorance, are essentially purification. True Samadhi appears only at the end of the third stage. Absorptions in one yogic process and another are still associated with purification in the first three stages. The process at those

levels is the awakening, through hearing, of feeling-attention.

It is only at the end of the third stage of this Way that attention itself is translated into the Divine. Even at that stage the feeling dimension is yet to be translated into the Divine. That translation is the business of the fourth stage of spiritual practice, the true, spiritual stage of life. Then you are free of all subjective changes and all the tendencies and commitments of this and all other worlds. You are no longer the independent ego. You are in Communion, one with the absolute Consciousness. Spiritual practice truly begins then. The ultimate sacrifice or translation into the Divine occurs then, and not before.

In the earlier stages you are still toying with your extremely worldly, droning, unconscious, stupid, and amoebic life. You are engaged in the argument of the self in your crankiness, still reacting to birth trauma and picking your nose. All of that is fine, it has to be confronted, but you must realize the lowly level of your concerns at this point. If you are going to realize this Way significantly during this lifetime, you must start bringing energy and feeling into your existence, because the realization of this Way is translation into God.

The suppression of feeling is strategic, a reaction to the frustration of this or that desire and a persistence in demanding its fulfillment. When the desire is acknowledged or fulfilled, then you permit yourself to feel better. It is very strategic. But you can feel completely at any moment. You can be happy at any moment. You can be cutting through your strategic suppression of feeling. The fact that a tendency appears does not mean you should be dramatizing it. You can be responsible for it in that moment, and it ultimately dissolves. That is the process in meditation. But people sit around dramatizing all the time, becoming mediocre.

Real life is not important to people in general. They do not really feel their mortality always. They are involved with this and that distraction, and every now and then they suddenly become aware of some threat or difficulty. They get sick, or they lose something, and all of a sudden they want God. You cannot really live spiritual life if you are not profoundly sensitive, moment to moment, to the vulnerability of your existence. Only then will you be sensitive enough to live in the Divine in this moment. Otherwise, because of your insensitivity, you will be living all of your experiential possibilities in themselves, all your inwardness and the elaboration of your own stupidity, all your complex unconsciousness and thinking and the rest of your camouflage.

People are consoled by the things that distract them. Only occasionally do they feel and become therefore vulnerable in the midst of their distractions. But in that moment they get a little loose, interested in the Divine again, but that interest is temporary until the next distraction. It is not that the functions and experiential possibilities of existence are to be avoided, but it is just that now they are distractions in themselves. They turn the being away from its native Condition.

In the devotee, however, the distractions of existence do not have such force. The devotee participates in the ordinary affair of existence, but exist-

ence is always a condition of Divine Communion. To most people, Communion with the Divine is just not important, at least not consistently important. It is important to them occasionally. When they are not really feeling their vulnerability, well, then they are cool and blasé. They are not able even to hear about feeling, and they have no idea what feeling is all about, as if there were something complicated about it. You are right here, and there are these relations, and all of your functions connect into these relations. Therefore you can either be closed up and turned away, or you can live as attention and feeling.

What we are offering people is not a face-to-face association with some primary individual, nor a practice that they can realize this weekend. We are offering them a whole way of life. Spiritual life is necessarily a whole way of life. People are already involved in a whole way of life, a destructive one, one that is not oriented toward the Divine or Infinity. So naturally, to become oriented to something entirely different, they must live another way of life. The esoteric matters and the higher spiritual influences are therefore not offered except within the framework of a whole way of life. They cannot be abstracted and condensed as it is pretended by those who offer enlightenment in a single weekend, without testing and the demand for stability and mature responsibility. To present basic spiritual matters for consideration and to serve the foundation approach is obviously necessary. But truly esoteric spiritual practices cannot be lifted out of the Divine way of life and offered to people in the midst of their TV neurosis. They will just take them on without changing themselves. Yet such an approach is the illusion that is fostered by so many of the so-called gurus or spiritual masters we hear about today. They are not true teachers at all. Many of them are not even real practitioners.

The change required for spiritual life is difficult, there's no doubt about it. It is like weighing 350 pounds and knowing you must get down to 165. There is no movement in you except the sheer desire to weigh 165 pounds. That desire is the only thing of interest. Although you may know that you will be healthier, you will live longer, you will look better, you will be sexier, still your desire to weigh 165 pounds is the only movement for change. Most of the force of your life is devoted to all the things that are keeping you at 350 pounds. All this food you like, for example—you do not want to go through the discipline of eating practically nothing at all. The strength of your desire to lose weight is puny, compared to the strength of all your other desires.

Therefore, you must become concentrated in that desire. You must direct profound free attention and feeling toward realizing your desire, because all the rest of your feeling-attention is directed in the opposite direction with much more force.

That is the way it is for most people. They have a somewhat sympathetic interest in what it must be like to be God-Realized, but they are not attached to it with their whole being. They do not live as free feeling-attention relative to the spiritual process. It is just another idea among all their other ideas, and all their other ideas have much more force, because they represent the trend of their being, all their adaptations. Thus, they really do not want to go

through it until life makes its point strongly enough, until they have suffered enough in their ordinary living. When they get to that point, then they will really hear this argument, and in hearing it they will have enough energy, enough feeling-attention, to be able to move through the discipline.

Either way, the discipline is difficult. On the one hand it is possible and on the other hand it is not possible. Possible or not, it is difficult. All the weight of your old adaptations pulls against this new motion, because you have never moved in that new way before. You do not have any tendencies in its direction. Therefore you must live to God for a long time before Divine life becomes your tendency. After you have lived the discipline long enough, then the being acquires a new momentum. The discipline becomes pleasurable, no longer an effort directed against egoic tendencies. But you have to live the entire discipline for a while. Every part of this discipline is a Lawful demand that will work against a condition to which you have already adapted.

There is just no way around it—everybody is lawless. You will hear the Teaching or receive instructions relative to each aspect of this functional reorientation, and you will find yourself resisting in one way or another, because you have not lived a way of life oriented toward God. You have lived the usual life as your parents and everybody you grew up with. You spent your whole life, at least twenty or so years, before you even considered spiritual life.

Therefore, in spiritual terms you weigh 350 pounds! You have over-indulged yourself in every area. Every part of you is fat, inside and outside, not just the body—everything is fat. Your mind is fat with constant thinking. You are sexually fat and obsessed. Everything is fat. Thus, every part of the discipline is just an aggravation unless you are really ready for it, unless you have truly heard it, unless you have suffered enough or are perceptive and sensitive enough to what it is really all about.

Most people do not hear it very profoundly, you see. They are interested enough to try it, but it is just one idea among others. So the obligation is to continuously serve the essential considerations, communicate the argument again and again, because they do not hear it. They have not resorted to it with the whole force of their being, except perhaps in moments, but most of the time it is just a consideration, a conception that moves them to a degree. What they are really involved with is all the rest of what their life amounts to. So they are fretting night and day. They are up and down, in and out, coming and going, because they are living the resistance itself, whereas they should be living feeling-attention, this movement in themselves toward the Divine Realization that is offered to them.

That is essentially what it is all about, you see—that is the secret of the process: to be able to hear and to move on the basis of hearing to the point that the trend of the whole body-being is toward God rather than toward the ego. This movement is not in some central location of the being—it is the whole body-being. We are translated in our consciousness and in our energy into the Divine Realization, not just inwardly, not just mentally, not just subjectively, but completely, as the whole body.





PART II:

The
Lesson of India:
Truth
the Secret of
Whole Body

Truth is the Secret of the whole body, not a version of its mere inwardness or hierarchical subtlety, which only arises as limitation, like the born body-being as a whole. Truth stands prior to the whole body, not within or outside it, but even as it. The Way to Truth is most direct intuitive re-cognition of the whole body itself, in which its subjective and reductive or recoiling disposition is come to rest. The heart itself is the Way to this Secret Truth. May all beings run to this mere Truth by Grace.

*Bubba Free John
The Paradox of Instruction*

The Argument of the Whole Body-Being

an essay by Bubba Free John

The argument of the right side, the Occidental religious impulse, is directed toward the man, the living human being, and urges him (or her) toward a moral enlivening of his relations to others, to the world, and to his own mysterious Source.

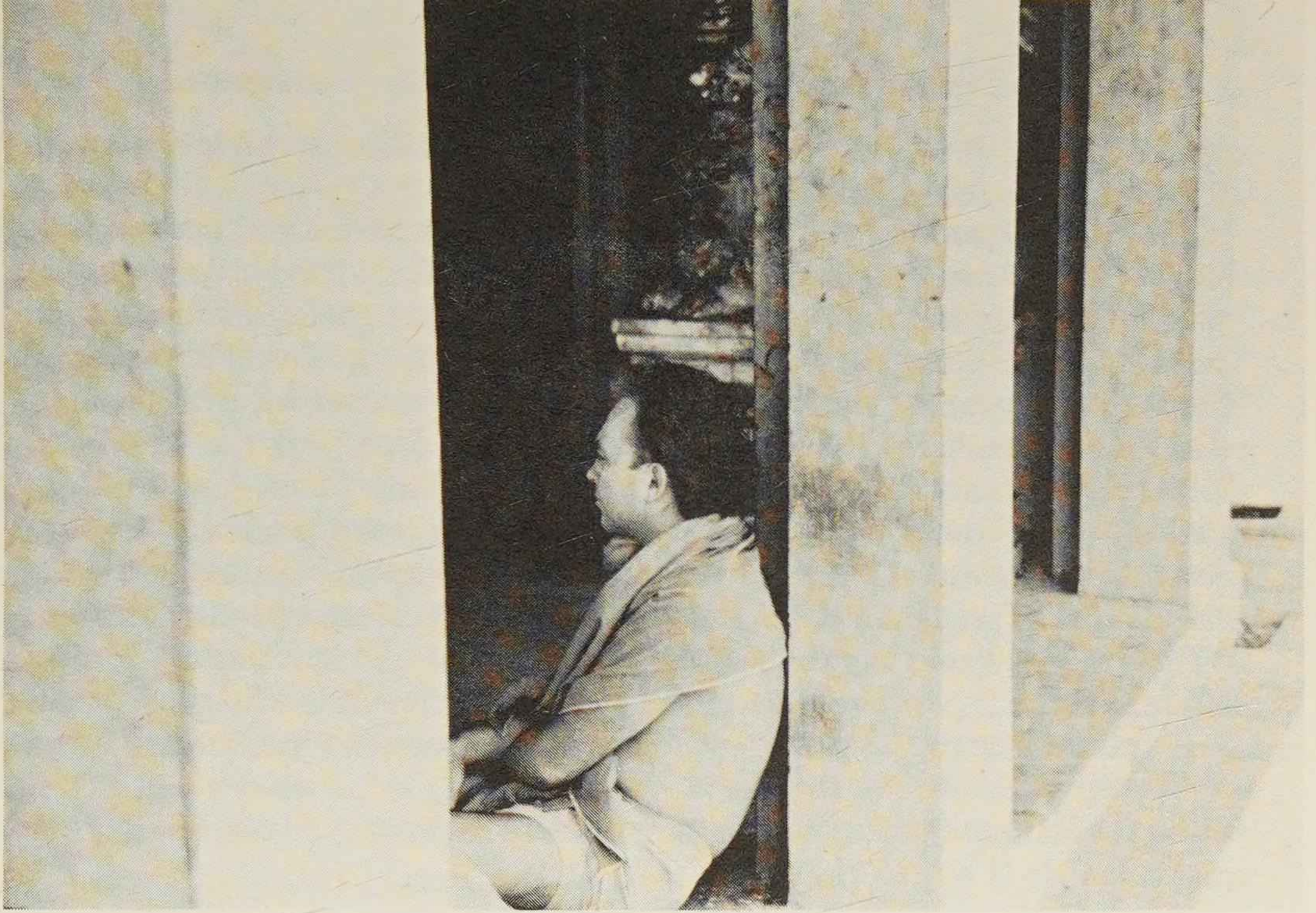
The argument of the left side, the Oriental religious impulse, is directed toward the consciousness in man that precedes all his faculties and relations, and the argument urges toward inwardness and ascent toward transcendence and reductive Realization of prior undifferentiated Oneness.

The right-sided view tends toward multiplicity, dualism, exploitation of things in themselves, and irreducible engagement in the mechanics of apparent experience. It also promotes a mystical (mysterious) consciousness in relation to events.

The left-sided view tends toward singleness, monism, and separation from things and relations and the mechanics of apparent experience, at least at the gross level of the body-mind. It promotes a spiritual (transcendental) consciousness in relation to events.

The argument of the whole body-being, the impulse in Reality or Truth, is not a synthesis of the left and right, East and West, but a radical impulse that is free of the independent limitations of each side. It is free of the illusions of things and relations in themselves as well as the inward faculties and the illusion of independence of any form, condition, or Condition. It stands Present in the form of the unqualified intuition of the Condition of the whole body-being, and thus rests in transcendental Awareness. However, it is natively committed to non-independence, or freedom from recoil and inwardness relative to the Process wherein all conditions are arising. This does not mean, however, that it is committed to conditions in themselves. Rather, it participates or is a Sacrifice in the Process of all arising. Thus, it abides in Radiance or Bliss even as the world and all relations come and go. It is moral and mystical, transcendental and spiritual in the most perfect sense.

September 20, 1977



True Worship Is the Sacrifice of the Whole Body

*from a talk given by Bubba Free John
at Vision Mound Sanctuary
September 10, 1977*

BUBBA: The principal lesson of our trip to India is that the subjectivity conventionally associated with spirituality—mind, inwardness, passivity, the “left side”—is an illusion. When you get into that mood, you drop out of the sphere of relations. Wherever there is identification with subjectivity, there is the absence of love, the failure of love. What appears in India, in ashrams and on the streets, is exactly that—the failure of love, the failure of relationship. It is the inward turning, subjectively oriented tendency in which life is considered to be nothing, people are considered to be nothing, and relations are to be struggled with and avoided. The tendency is just the opposite in the Western world, which is violent, but it is also outwardly oriented, relationally oriented, oriented toward the experiences of the gross life rather than the subtle life.

Yet there is just as much to criticize about the Western world in its right-sidedness. We spent last summer here engaging and considering all of the possibilities of the gross, worldly life and came to the point of abandoning that right-handed principle in itself. This trip represents the same consideration applied to the left-handed tendency, the anti-relational tendency, the inward, subjective tendency. The result of this essential consideration is the realization that spiritual life is the sacrificial orientation of the whole body through love. It is not inwardness in itself, or the left side and upper coil of the being. Nor is it outwardness in itself, or the right side and lower coil of

the body-being. It is unobstructed feeling-attention through all functions, in all relations, under all conditions.

India is the epitome of left-sided glamor and the absence of energy. One thing that is impressive about being in India, that feels good about being in India, is the absence of violence. There is no violent quality in the people. They do not feel dangerous as people generally feel in the West. People in the West are aggravated, and you feel the tendency toward violence and its possibility immediately. It is right there all the time. But the quality of violence is naturally absent in Indians, because the dimension of relationship, intentional life-force, love, sexuality—the whole force of relations—is suppressed. So, naturally, violence and the outward expressions of energy in general are suppressed, not expressed, in the conventions of Indian culture.

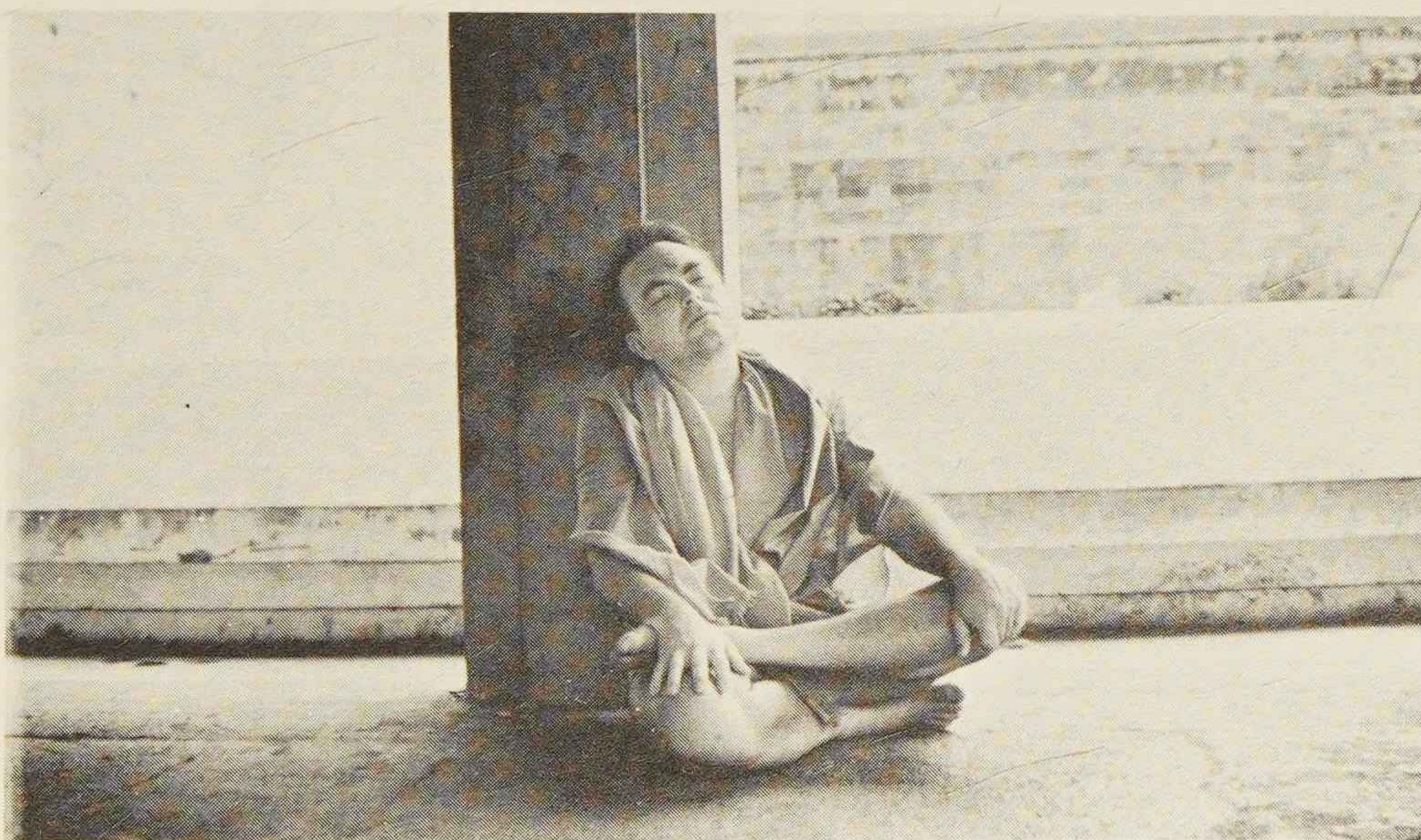
The tendency that is "India" is a psychological and cultural drive. The culture of India is part of the psychology of Western people who get wearied or complicated by the play of outward life that Westerners live naturally, and so, by reaction, like to withdraw, to go within, to go to the left. That withdrawal is one of the classically conventional solutions to life, but it is not spirituality. It is not spiritual life.

What people usually consider to be spiritual is the game of the subjective dream world. In that sense India is the Disneyland of spirituality. Going to India is like going into your own imagination—all the illusions of subjectivity are enshrined there. All those temples and ashrams are shrines to the left-hand view, the interiorizing, subjective, subtly or mentally oriented way of life.

People must understand what the practice of this Teaching is—it is not the left-handed path, nor is it the right-handed exploitation of ordinary life. It is not the withdrawal of energy, nor is it the exploitation of things in themselves. It is to live the principle of love, but not the principle of love as it is conventionally understood—you know, love one another and that is Truth. It is feeling-attention brought into the field of all functions and all relations under all conditions. It is to be present as Radiance. It is to be committed in love to relations, to live them fully, to realize, then, the Lawful discipline inherent in relations of love.

In India you hear all about renunciation and detachment. From the common Indian point of view renunciation means withdrawal, separation from functions and relations. But that separation is not true renunciation or true detachment. True renunciation is to love to Infinity, to love absolutely, to love to the point that you are releasing what you love. Such loving is not the same as exploiting some object that you are holding on to for its own sake, but neither is it the left-handed view of separation. The people we saw in India, sitting around working on themselves, basically having no energy in their relations with one another, passive in their orientation, and inward—they might as well be in a rest home somewhere. People who have renounced relationship are not happy people at all. There is no sign of happiness in them. What does unhappiness have to do with spiritual life? Nothing, obviously!

So if the problem is attachment to the subjective illusion of inwardness, separation from relations, and therefore the failure of love, the failure of service, then you can see why so much of my work involves purifying people by making lessons in life. Such theatre has been necessary because of the weakness and inconstancy and lack of commitment of human beings in general, who are tending in two conventional directions. On the one hand, they are always wanting to go out and blow their minds—drink and smoke and sex and live the wild, outward, Western life. But on the other hand, the opposite tendency is also present in everyone in the cycles and phasing of their attention and feeling. That tendency is to think that spiritual life is the game of turning within and working on yourself, manipulating yourself, doing it yourself, acquiring certain experiences through either self-manipulation or vicarious contact. Both the outward and the inward tendencies represent the failure of love, the failure of the real process, or sacrifice of the whole body. Thus, people approaching the Church are constantly phasing in their relationship to this Teaching and to their own Spiritual Master because of their left- and right-sided tendencies, inward and outward.



This trip was a dramatic symbol for the left-handed tendency, that specific justification for the failure of love, service, real spiritual life, and commitment to this Way and this Company. But its purpose was also to make a pilgrimage of sacrifice, to yield the left-sided drama entirely. They expected me to make a grand tour, meet all the types, go to all the places, and then come back with grand stories. But I simply went to the last point of contact that was of significance to me, to nowhere else, and I just threw all the rest of it away there. I went to the Poondiswami¹ and gave it all to him, because he represents the cultic figure in its most classically absurd form. The Poondiswami is really what it is all about for the Indian who makes an idol of subjectivity out of the Divine. The subjective idol is not Truth, not God.



WILLIAM: You said that the Poondiswami is like an icon in one of the temples.

BUBBA: He and all the rest of them. People are willing to do *puja*,² to perform little rituals, little formal games inside or outside themselves, and they want to call that spiritual life. The true *puja* is the sacrifice of the whole body. It is the life of love. It is the spiritual process in its radical form, as I have described it. It is a whole lifetime of constantly mature participation in the spiritual process. Such participation requires constancy, commitment, intelligence, clarity, love, feeling-attention, energy. Subjective commitment is the

withdrawing of energy, the withholding of feeling-attention, the failure to love. It is just as much a failure as all the outward, wild, gross activities that people tend to. But generally people do not consider sin to be the failure to love. They think that sin is the indulgence of the senses. They think their subjective orientation is in the God-ward direction. But that is absolutely untrue, you see. Subjectivity is just the other side of the body.

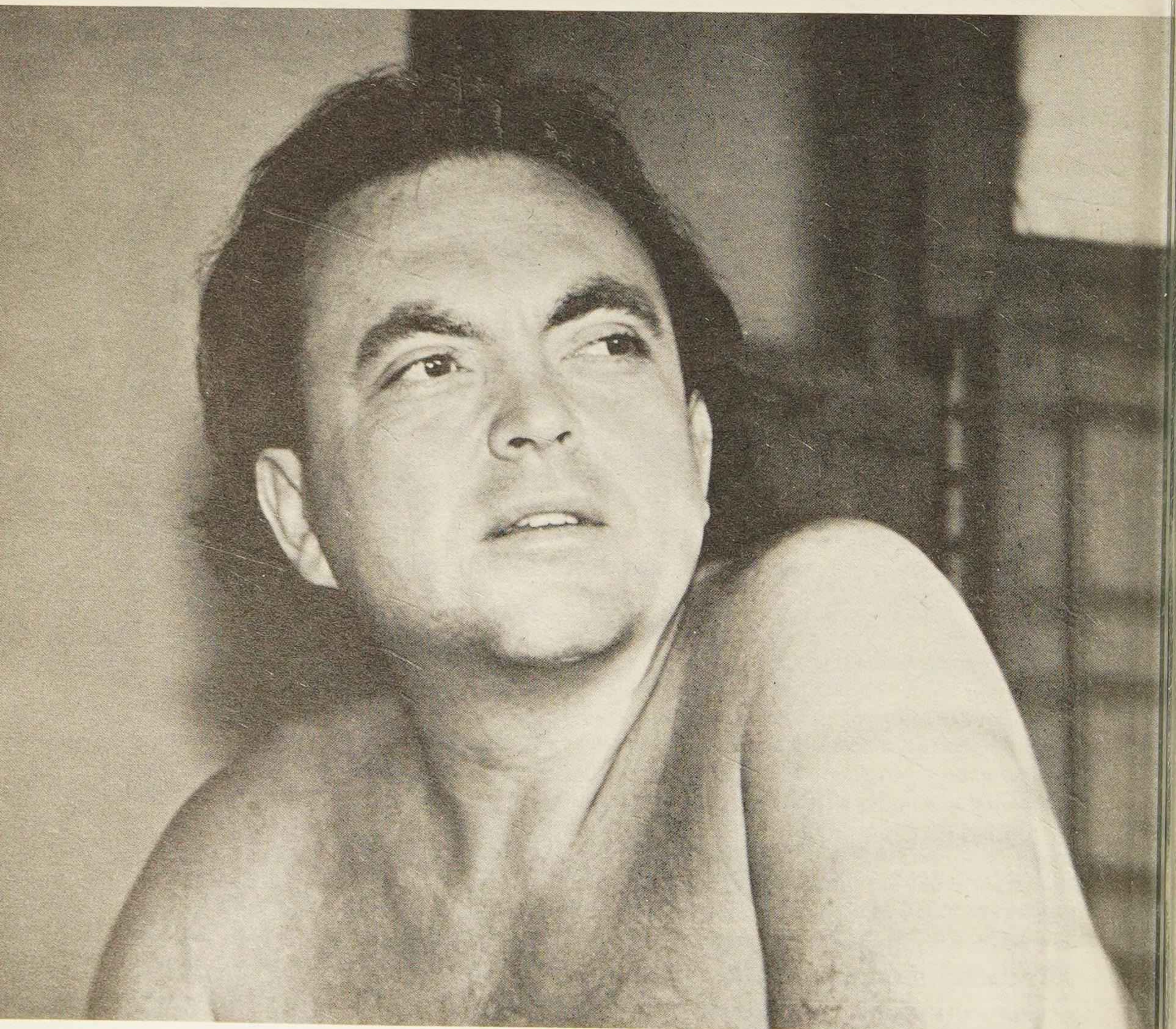
You are free of these two tendencies, self-indulgence and subjectivity, when you have inspected them to the point that you can maintain your commitment to real life with some stability. Then you can live the true discipline, the whole body discipline, the true puja or sacrifice of the whole body, which is what has been demanded by teachers in the past and which I also demand. Such sacrifice is the end to all of the rituals of the left side and the right side, the external sacrifices, the sacrifices of things that you are not, whether goats or the body. The sacrifice must be what you are—you are the sacrifice, not Jesus, not a goat, and not the body that you separate from. The whole body is the sacrifice, gross, subtle, and causal, physical, mental, egoic, not through a process of withdrawal, but through a living process of existing as the whole body yielded to Infinity.

Self-indulgence and subjectivity are great psychological tendencies. The qualities of right and left are strategies that appear in the dramatization that is everyone's life. They are always there, confusing people about the whole matter of spiritual life. If you look for wisdom to either the right or the left side, you will not find it! You will find only confusion; you will find opposition to something that you are already considering to be true. The left and right sides together are an argument; they are in phase with one another, polarized to one another. Therefore, they are constantly moving you through cycles in your orientation. The play between them is just stuff, you see, the content of experience. In response, you must simply presume the Lawful conditions of existence, considering this Teaching, living in this Company, and living the essential disciplines as they are communicated. True life has nothing to do with dwelling on tendencies, left or right. Those will appear in their own way, but they are neither to be dramatized nor to become a matter of concern.

1. *The Poondiswami is a true kundalini yogi who was found by townspeople some years ago on the bank of a river outside the village of Poondi. He is a classic representative of the traditional practice of kundalini yoga, which seeks to merge the life-force, or Creative Power of the universes, that lies dormant in man, coiled at the base of the spine, into subtle light via the manipulation of internal energy processes. The Poondiswami's practice is to give shaktipat initiation through ceremonial ritual. He is literally approached as a Divine statue or object, and ceremoniously worshipped in the classic South Indian manner—ritually bathed with butter, sandalwood paste, honey, milk, and other foods, and then ritually washed, in the same manner as a piece of statuary considered to be a representation of the Divine.*

2. *Puja is a traditional Hindu ceremony which involves objective worship of deities through symbolic ritual.*

*Where There Is Love to Infinity,
the Whole Body Is Radiant*



*A talk given by Bubba Free John on the road from Poondi to
Tiruvannamali, in South India, early September, 1977*

BUBBA: The ultimate Truth is not Ignorance alone or Consciousness without qualification. It is Ignorance-Radiance. One day I sent William to ask a man at one of the holy sites we visited if he was happy. Of course he didn't ask him—he did not have to. The man was not happy. It was perfectly obvious that he was not happy. The people here in India are fundamentally not happy. Why not? Because the dimension of Radiance is absent in their character, because their cultural psychology is a turning away from relationship, or energy. Energy is absent in their practice, in their realization of spiritual life. You can see it in all these old men, who are near the end of their lives and who have been turning in on themselves for decades. To a degree, at least, they have gotten in touch with the principle of their own consciousness—but not in Truth. They are not happy. They are not blissful, because consciousness by itself, turned away from phenomena, is not blissful. Jnana Samadhi is not blissful yet in the truest or fullest sense, because it excludes all phenomena. It is turned away. Jnana Samadhi is an illusion, to be inspected and to be passed beyond, with eyes open

It is in Sahaj Samadhi that the Radiance of our Condition is restored. Consciousness is Radiant. It is blissful. It is love. It is forceful. It is creative. That which is realized to be the Truth is also the Truth of the world. Forceless consciousness cannot create worlds. It is dead. It is a corpse. Shiva without his consort is just a corpse. Shiva without his consort is not the Truth. Truth, in the imagery of India, is Shiva-Shakti. It is Ignorance-Radiance. These are just names, archetypes, symbols for the single, absolute, ultimate Reality, the very Nature of our existence. There is no realization without Radiance, without love. And one who is involved in spiritual life is happy. If you are not happy, you are not anywhere near it!

Throughout India, particularly in the ashrams, where the Oriental point of view is enforced, you can see the suppression of the radiance of the being, the movement to withdraw, through contemplation of truth as "not this, not this," toward a formless or at least subtle condition that is not this body, this living being. The living being is in doubt in the Oriental psychology. In the

Western psychology, the living being is not in doubt in principle, but it is in trouble, yes, and sick.

When the whole body is a matter of responsibility, however, when both sides, both top and bottom, both inside and outside, when all aspects of the body are fully conscious and fully adapted to one another, then a different way of life altogether is implied. Such a way is not a Western point of view, nor an Eastern point of view, but one that is communicative relative to East and West, that is in touch with East and West. The whole body or the inter-communicative world is what this Teaching represents.

The Way of Divine Ignorance is a new Teaching, based on a world culture, that is, the world that is completely intercommunicative. Therefore this Teaching also communicates a new psychology, in which all sides and aspects of the body are equally enforced, equally accounted for in the demonstration of existence and in the consideration of Truth.

Thus, the principle of this Way is not inwardness at all, nor is it experiencing itself, or the world as an independent and mortal reality. Neither of those points of view is the point of view of this Teaching. This Teaching is founded in the principle of love or unobstructed feeling-attention. Where there is love or unobstructed feeling-attention to Infinity, in this moment, the body and its relationship with mind or psyche are no longer binding. The body is Radiant. Arising phenomena, sensations, perceptions, bodily sense, sense of the life-energy, concepts, thinking, psychic appearances above the mind, the ego-sense—all of these conditions are forms of contraction, forms of the avoidance of relationship. Where there is love to Infinity, no avoidance of relationship, no contraction, the forms of contraction naturally come to rest. No strategy is directed toward them in themselves, as is characteristic of the Oriental approach. They naturally come to rest in love, in Radiance to Infinity.

The ethic of love is known in the West, through the Middle Eastern religions, but it is complicated by all kinds of misunderstandings and vulgar thinking. It has basically become a superficial gesture of social morality, whereas, when viewed in its proper light, it is a spiritual principle. Love is the process in which all the functions of the being are turned through free feeling-attention to Infinity, in all relations, under all conditions. In other words, contraction in any form is not permitted to become the point of view. The sacrifice that is love or feeling-attention is moving to Infinity in every moment. None of the forces of contraction is reinforced. They are constantly falling away under the force of love. The conditions of existence then become acceptable as spiritual from this point of view.

Life is not in doubt. It is passing, but the phenomenon of life is comprehended from the point of view of the blissfulness of God-Realization. In principle, there is no turning away from the conditions of existence. Therefore, the inherent pleasurable-ness of existence, even of the manifest form, is acknowledged. Doubt or fear of existence and the body, or the meditation on mortality that arises by reaction to this birth, is undone through real hearing of the Teaching, or awakening to the response of love. Doubt falls away.

Thus, men become free to engage in relational enjoyment, feeling to one another, through one another, to Infinity.

Sexual relationships, then, are likewise not in doubt. You are not somehow sinful because you are involved in sex. Your sexual relationship is a love relationship. Rightly realized, fully enjoyed, it achieves its own economy. But there is no obligation, in principle, to abandon it at some point. It is perfectly compatible with God-Realization, just as bodily existence, as long as it lasts, is itself also compatible with it.

In Sahaj Samadhi bodily existence is realized to be only modification of one's real Condition. It is not in doubt. It is passing, yes, but it is not in doubt. It is unnecessary, yes, but it is not in doubt. It need not be prevented or resisted. The body is not seen as something independent and mortal, something to be sought and held onto and kept from passing. Life in Truth is a radiant existence, a practice based on hearing in the life of Truth, a radiant process, not inward turned or recoiling in any sense whatsoever.

The fundamental discipline or awakened responsibility of this Way is the ability to inspect the tendency to turn away in ordinary activity, to turn out of the process of relationship, out of the condition of relationship. Westerners adopt all kinds of Oriental attitudes, practices, and habits out of fear, because Truth is associated with inwardness even in the West. But Western people are not oriented to Truth. They are oriented toward the fulfillment of their birth. When they begin to think of spirituality and religion, they think that Truth is within. That is the popular notion. If they take it up seriously, they must go to the Orient.

Like all art, the whole world, with its two great divisions, is itself just a description of the body. And until the whole world becomes completely intercommunicative, it is like an irresponsible human being. It is an argument of the body. In the last hundred years in particular, though, we have seen more intercommunication. Therefore, a living synthesis of the great cultures must appear, not only politically, but also spiritually—and that is what this Teaching is all about.

There is certainly a dimension of the East to be comprehended and made useful. It is part of the discipline of spiritual life, but it is not necessary or even desirable to abandon the West and go to the East, which is what people do psychologically, some even culturally and literally, when they become involved in spiritual life. They hang out in India or get born in some Indian or Oriental cult. In fact, they are from the West, though they might appear to be Orientals.

There is a dimension of the left side and of the Orient to which we must adapt and which we must accommodate in our whole body realization of life. Spiritual practice, however, is not to go to the left side, or to the East, to abandon the right side, or the West. Spiritual practice is to become aware of both sides of the body. The whole body, in other words, must become the sacrifice.

The Way of the Whole Body Is Neither Eastern nor Western

*from a talk given by Bubba Free John at
Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, South India,
September 7, 1977*

The schools of the method of ascent, or the method of turning inward and away, variously describe the unitary, or the one, experience. The kundalini yogis, for example, work toward a state of mergence, loss of or diffusion of body consciousness and blissful awareness of light. The bindu, or subtle door behind the brows, is the ultimate vision they proclaim.

The shabd yogis also describe this bindu, but it is the first of a series of eight stages of ascending visionary experiences. They would not say that bindu is the ultimate. They would say that you must penetrate it, then pass through this and that phenomenon, visions and the like, until ultimately you pass beyond body consciousness to the condition that they regard to be single and Ultimate.

But even these are essentially dualistic states of awareness, themselves witness to states or conditions of experience. Thus, the school of the jnanis goes beyond them, does not even bother, as a matter of fact, to get into the process of ascent. Just as the shabd yogis do not bother with the gross element of yoga, jnanis do not involve themselves with either its gross or subtle aspects. They try to merge themselves with that condition wherein the "I"-consciousness, or the ego, arises.

All of these schools, which arose in the East and which flourish there still, are dramatizations of a psychological orientation. At the root of all of them is an estimation of the multiple world as suffering, in which pleasures, whatever they are, pass. The manifest world is not permanent and it is not true. Thus, the proponents of these schools are reductivists—they try to reduce manyness to one. They are also subjectivists—they turn in, rather than out, either toward the subtle or toward what is prior to the subtle as the Condition that is Truth. But in all these cases the condition identified as truth is an alternative to the present state. All Eastern approaches are based on this psychology, which is rooted in recoil, or reaction to conventional states of manifest existence. It is based on doubt, in other words, of being alive and existing in a manifest realm.

Western psychology, on the other hand, is based on a positive orientation toward manifest existence. God created the world and God created me. There is no inherent doubt relative to living and existing. There is no built-in tendency to get away from the world. There is reactivity, but it is not a psychology or a philosophical premise, in which escape from the world is the scheme of life itself. Of course people in the West

are also subjective and inward turned. When they have problems, they become neurotic and psychotic. But essentially the philosophy of reduction is not inherent to the Western consciousness. The Western consciousness stands in the sunlight, born and moving to fulfill itself, to elaborate its experience, to have more and more complicated experience to fulfill itself. On the other hand, it does not move to Infinity. It does not pass beyond the condition that is confronted in the moment. And therefore, in itself, it is simply life itself, partially fulfilled and then failing. It essentially dramatizes the very thing that the Oriental is criticizing.

Therefore, neither the Oriental, or left-sided view, nor the Occidental, or right-sided view, is the Truth of the whole body. The Truth of the whole body is simply the Truth. It is the prior Condition, not an alternative condition. It is not realized strategically. It is tacitly true. It is the Truth of the whole body. It is not to be associated with strategies and strategic reactions. It is a process in which the whole body can participate. Therefore it cannot be left-

sided simply, nor can it be right-sided simply. It cannot be exclusively reductive, subjective, and other-worldly, because that approach excludes the right-sided, positive orientation toward manifest life. On the other hand, it cannot be simply turned outward and stopped short of Infinity as every move and experience, because that approach bypasses the left-sided intention.

The way of the whole body is the way of love, the whole body as unobstructed feeling-attention to Infinity, through all functions at every moment in all relations under all conditions. It is not recoiling in any sense. It is not subjectivity nor turning inward. It is relational to Infinity. It does not stop short of any present relationship. It feels to Infinity through every condition that arises. In this way, in any moment when conditions do arise, the being is founded in oneness, the Truth, at Infinity. Yet there is no recoiling, no strategic separating from conditions themselves. And if no conditions arise, then the being simply abides in that Condition.

This Is the Vision I Have Felt Since Birth

an essay by Bubba Free John

The view "I am not the body" is false. "I" *is* the whole body-being. The false view is upheld by spiritualists, Vedantins, and other subjectivists. But it is simply a false implication or presumption that appears on the basis of an otherwise true intuition.

If the "I"-thought is considered in terms of the "field" in which it arises, there is direct intuition of the Condition of the "I"-thought. That Condition, so Realized, is called the Atman, or the Self, and is considered to be not only different from the "I"-thought but from all other thoughts and all other objects. But this Self is not truly or radically other than or exclusively independent of any object or thought. The Self is not *a* Self, other than the body. It is simply the intuition of the Condition of the body.

The "I"-thought is not "I." "I" is a sense that arises prior to thought and coincides with the whole body-being. It may not be reduced to the thought "I," since thought is only one kind of modification, a permutation of only one aspect of the whole body-being. To arbitrarily select a mental object, intuit its ground, and then exclude the object, even all objects, from the ground is a conventional, strategically reductive approach to Truth. When it is done to the point of absorption (Jnana Samadhi) its limitations must ultimately reveal themselves. Thus, Jnana Samadhi is followed by Sahaj Samadhi.

In Sahaj Samadhi in its true or full form, the Self is Realized to be not other than or exclusive of the world, the body, the mind, or even the "I"-thought. The Self, or the intuition of the ground from which the "I"-thought and all other conditions arise as modifications, is not radically independent from the body or any other condition. It is simply the Truth or Condition of the body and all other conditions.

The difference indicated here is that between the subjectivist view and the whole body view. The Condition of conditions is not truly known in itself, exclusive of objects. The Condition of conditions is their Truth, or the right Realization of conditions. The subjectivist holds on to the Self, via intuition or analysis of the ground of cognition, to the exclusion of objects, because he is already convinced, on the basis of his strategic approach to Self-Knowledge, that the Self is other than the objects that arise. Thus, he seeks to abide in exclusive Samadhi, indifferent to mind, body, and world. But this exclusive disposition is itself a strategic tension that must yield to more perfect or radical intuition. When that occurs, the exclusive view of the Self is released.

From the non-strategic or non-problematic whole body view, the Condition of conditions is not ultimately Realized by excluding objects or conditions from their ground. Such is only, at best, a preliminary approach to the ultimate Intuition. The Truth is not interior to the body. It is the Condition of the whole body-being. Thus, that Condition is the native view toward or relative to the whole body-being and all conditions. Once established in that view (in Sahaj Samadhi), it is not a matter of excluding (or strategically including) any conditions. If they arise, they arise, and exclusion or inclusion are only arbitrary considerations. The essential matter is that arising conditions must be Realized in terms of their Condition (the Self, or non-separation from unqualified Ignorance-Radiance).

Thus, true Self-Realization does not imply exclusion of objects or the body. Rather, all objects arise as modifications of that Self. "I" is not itself interior to the body (as the "I"-thought appears to be). Therefore, the Condition of the whole body-being or "I" is not ultimately Realized by reductive and exclusive interiorization. Rather, in Sahaj Samadhi, all arising, and all aspects of the whole body-being, are Realized to be only modification of the Condition of *all* conditions (not just the Condition of the "I"-thought).

Thus, ultimately, Enlightenment is not a matter of the exclusive within. The Truth is not a matter of going within the whole body-being but of establishing the whole body-being and all other or relative conditions in their Condition. That involves whole body Sacrifice into the Condition of conditions. It is the Way of Radiance, or Love. At last, Enlightenment is a matter of the Destiny of the whole body-being, not the exclusion of the whole body-being from that Destiny. Even the flesh must be Translated into Light. We must be Transfigured in the Divine through Surrender. Our Intuition must be radical. That is, it must Realize not only the ground of thought but the body itself must be converted. This is the Great Mystery. Love must not be prevented by detachment, inwardness, and illusory exclusive peace. Love is the Way. When we awaken from ego and inwardness, we must yield *as* the whole body-being into the Infinity of Radiance and allow ourselves to be dissolved beyond fear into the Condition of even the body and the room. This is the Vision I have felt since birth.

September 20, 1977

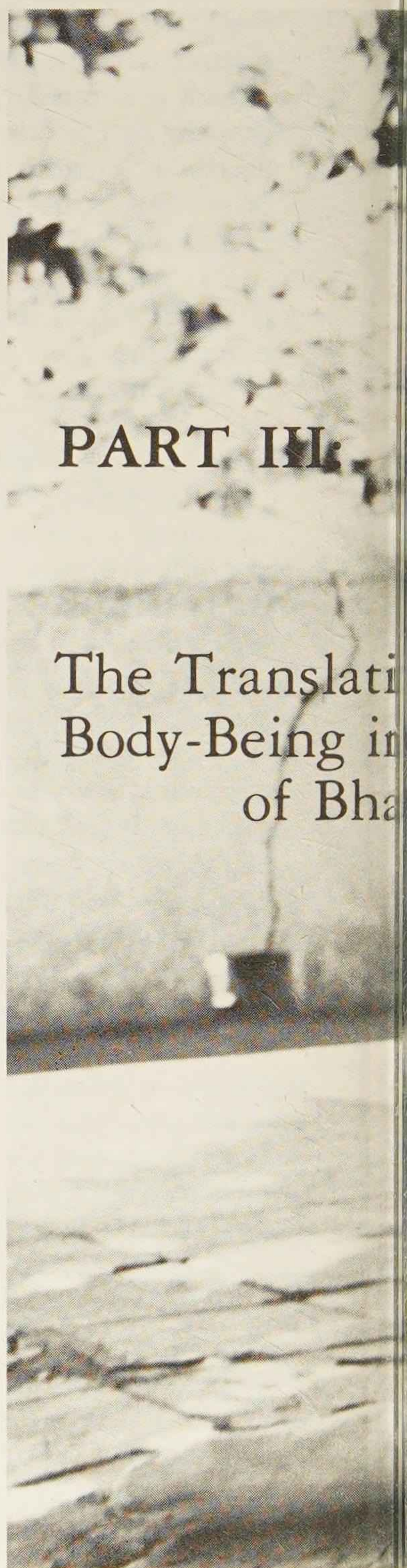
At last, in the summer of 1973, Bubba approached the Presence of the late Sage, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, at his place of burial in Tiruvannamalai, South India. It was only there and then that the Revelation of Truth to which Bubba's whole life has been oriented was tested and confirmed as it is.

Since that time, Bubba has been refreshed and liberally disposed to communicate, demonstrate, and serve this Revelation and its Way to those who are moved to consider him and his argument.

Bubba Free John has previously written that "the Divine Lord or very God" has been his Spiritual Master. In this manner, he describes and confirms the Divine nature of the Spiritual Grace that has been overwhelmingly active, communicative, and effective in his case since birth. The benign workings of this Grace culminated in the spiritual confrontation at the tomb and former places of residence of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, where Bubba found the undeniable Realization of his life to be confirmed most directly, beyond all doubt.

Bubba teaches in his own time and place from the impulse of Enjoyment of the Radiant Condition of the Real or Eternal Divine, to which he is Awakened by eternal Grace, even as Sri Ramana Maharshi, in whom Bubba recognizes that Grace, was so Awakened. Therefore, Bubba claims that perfect surrender or devotional sacrifice, necessarily precedes and coincides with radical intuition of the Real.

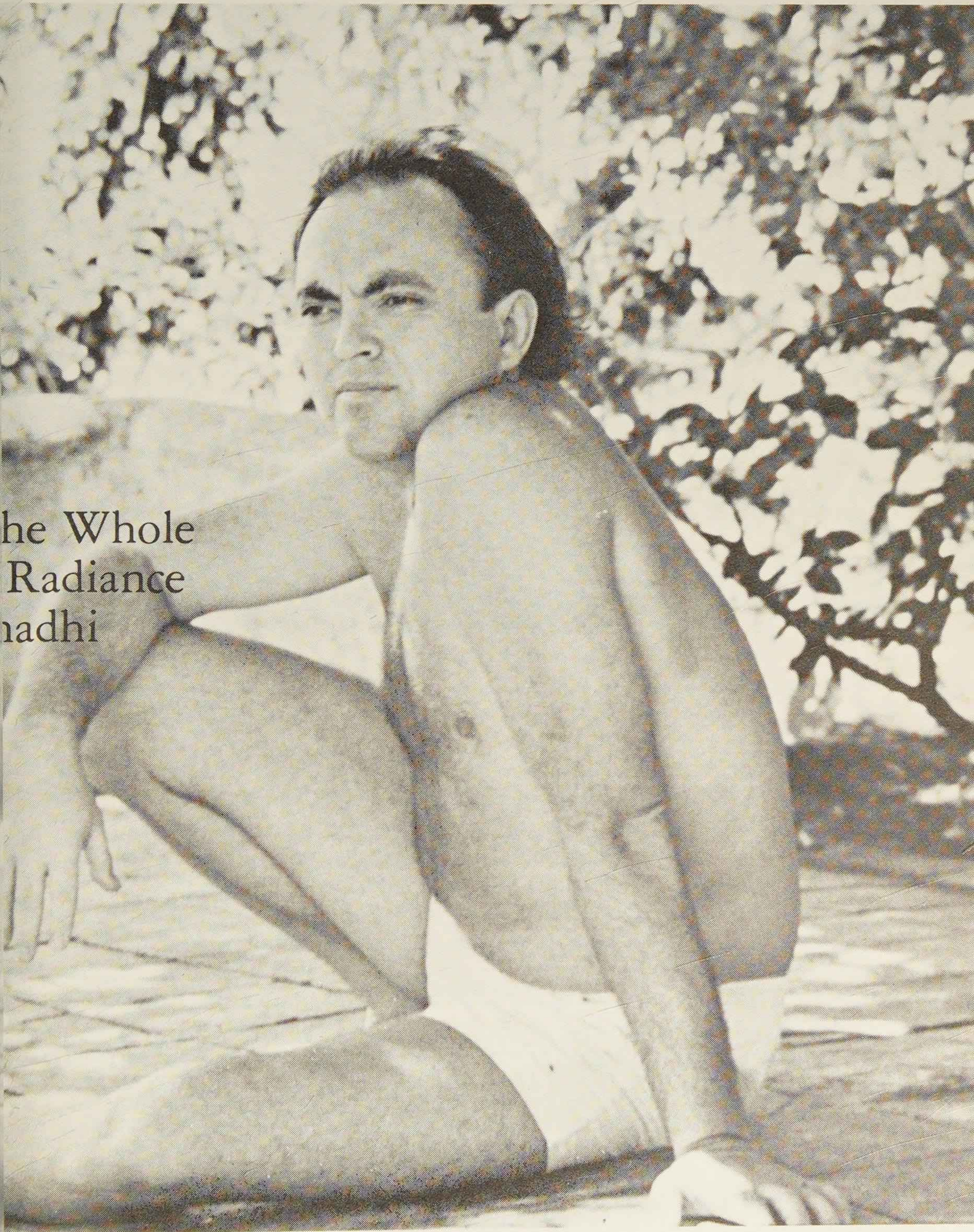
*Bubba Free John
The Paradox of Instruction*

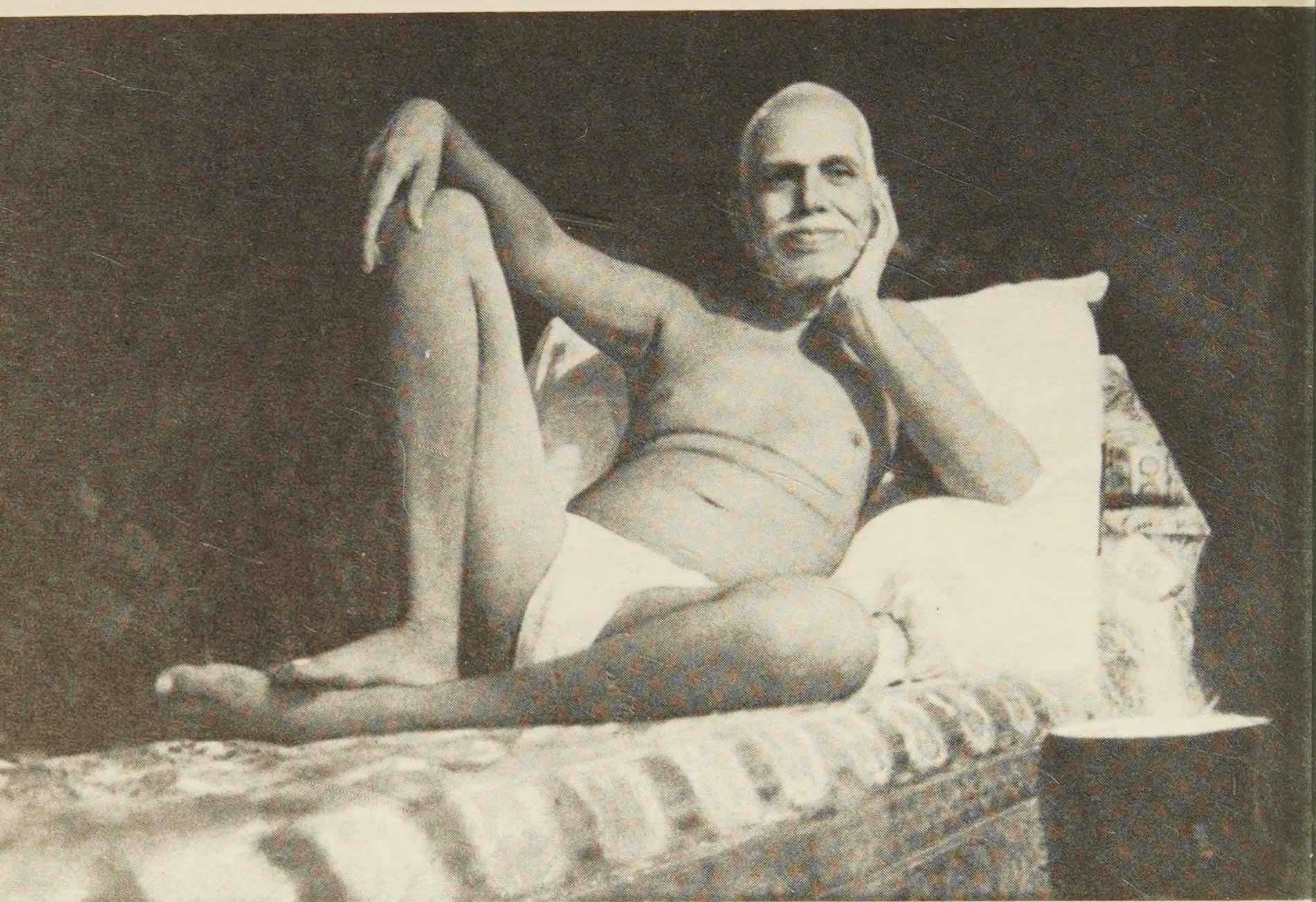


PART III

The Translating
Body-Being in
of Bha

he Whole
Radiance
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Sri Ramana Maharshi

LIKE MEETING YOUR TWIN BROTHER

*from a talk given by Bubba Free John
at Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, South India,
Early September, 1977*

BUBBA: Ramana Maharshi corroborated the end of formal spiritual practice, not through a communicated teaching, but through Siddhi, or literally active Divine Power, demonstrating through literal concrete processes the dimensions of the spiritual process. My contact with Maharshi was with a Siddha who was not embodied in any form, gross, subtle, or causal. There were no visions of him. There was direct, literal Communion, not with a personality, but with a literal spiritual or Divine influence that confirmed the Samadhi or terminal dimension of spiritual practice.

DEVOTEE: Bubba, about the corroboration you speak of—is it that your Realization intensified? Or were there no obstructions to work through? How did you feel it?

BUBBA: Such an event is like meeting your twin brother. It was recognition, not through sight, but through the duplication of a process. In my communion with him, Maharshi demonstrated the process of his Siddhi. And Siddhi is always a process; it is not an object or a person. Secondly it can be associated with a person, but still that person is realized as a process. It is Communion or Satsang with such an individual. There was direct communication with Maharshi through the spiritual power of the Yoga of Amrita Nadi, which I was living and by which that Realization was corroborated and shown to be authentic.

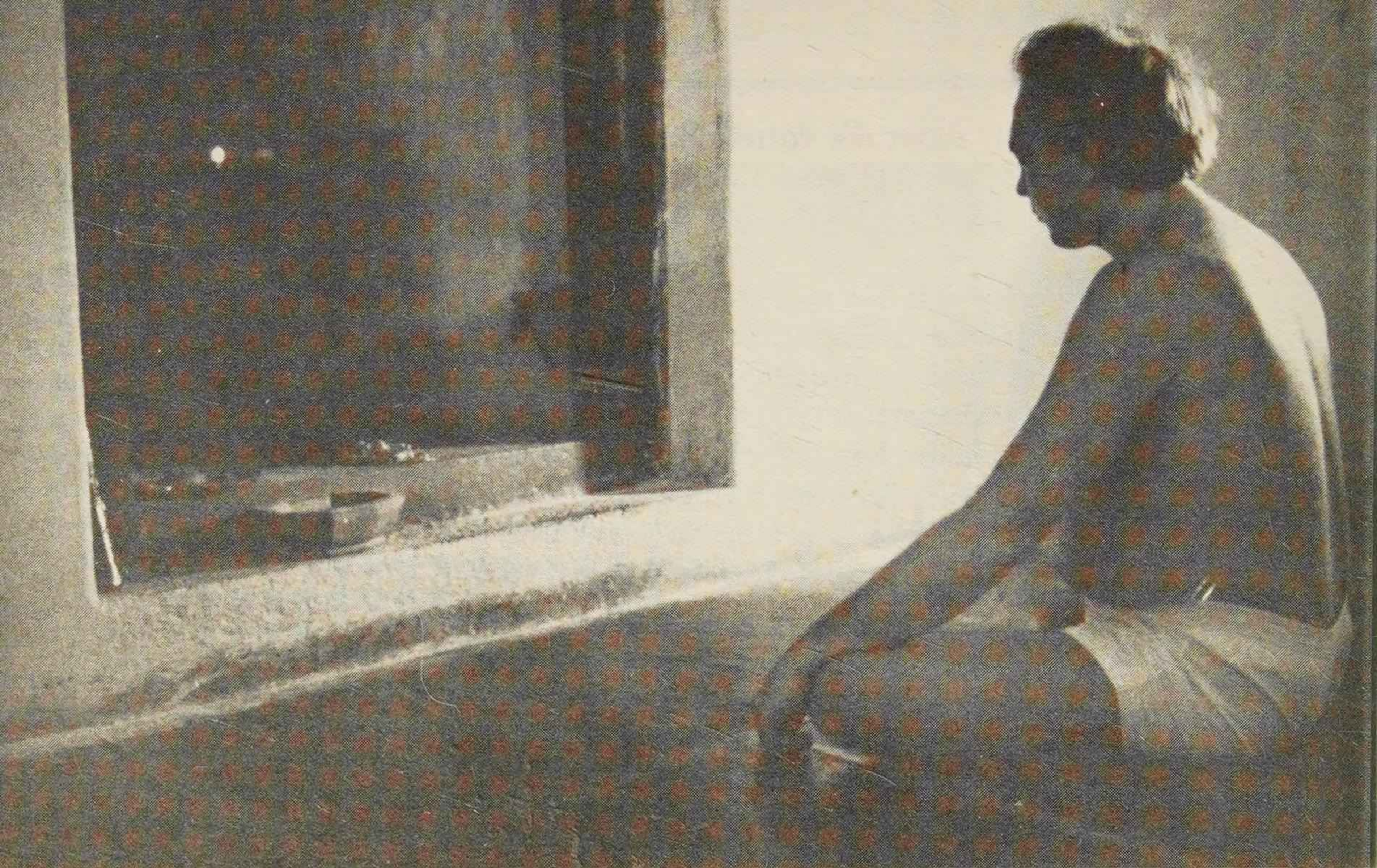
It is hard to describe the necessary spiritual function of such corroboration. In the case of somebody whose function it is to teach, it removes the quality of independence. It has always seemed to me appropriate at every stage of this process to live in contact with the sources of my work, to acknowledge them fully, to live the spiritual practice in their company, to approach them always with devotion, and to yield all acknowledgment to the teacher as the source of the process. Thus, the corroboration had a unique and specific value. It was necessary for the continuation of my Teaching work and it was the primary reason for my trip to India in 1973. On that trip I returned to all the sources of my spiritual practice in the past. I even had contact with Rudi during that time. And I gave it all back, released all independent ownership relative to the Teaching, established right relations and cleared up ambiguities with the sources.

DEVOTEE: Did you also contact Nityananda? And Ramakrishna?

BUBBA: Yes, I went to all the places associated with the individuals with whom I had had contact and I just surrendered everything in their company. The terminal meeting occurred with Maharshi, the verification of the ultimate Samadhi of the spiritual process, not just in the form of Jnana Samadhi or descent through the current of Amrita Nadi to the Heart, but as Sahaj Samadhi, in which Self-Realization has become God-Realization, in which there is no independent consciousness but the Absolute Reality of one who is completely responsible for the conventions of arising, gross, subtle, and causal. In that Samadhi Amrita Nadi is awake from the heart to crown, not asleep, and the body is extended from the crown. All the conventional states and enjoyments of existence remain, although they are unnecessary and tending to become obsolete, independent of any strategy.

All of that having been completed then, I went back to the United States and actively began my Teaching work.

Maharshi is what he is, and if an individual is prepared, he may also make that connection with him. If one is not prepared, then one's involvement in the process he demonstrates will be superficial. Maharshi was uniquely useful



in my case because all the other aspects of the process had already been engaged. There was a foundation for such a meeting, and the meeting with him came at the right moment. Previous to that moment he could not have been of any use to me, because he did not function to serve the foundation stages of the spiritual process.

Thus, relationship with him was not just philosophical involvement or a response to his Presence through feeling. It was a direct communication, as living a communication as the disciples of Jesus claimed when they said that he had "risen again" and appeared to them bodily. It was a direct and complete communication of the living being. In some sense you could say it was a communication of a formless being, because a conventional personality was not the medium. It was a direct communication that survived his death.

DEVOTEE: So in a sense you could say he is still living.

BUBBA: Yes. He is still living here. He simply sat around here before, and that is what he is still doing, though not in physical form. Now I have no sense of being distinct from Maharshi, no sense that he is another personality or another presence. I feel as if I am living here. My contact with him is not related to corroboration any longer. It is just natural for me to be in the places where he lived. Sometimes I may feel like coming here just to drop out of the circumstance of my Teaching work, because there is no other place in the world that represents the ultimate development of the spiritual process in my experience.

THE DEMONSTRATION OF GRACE HAS ENTERED A NEW PHASE

an essay by Bubba Free John

Recently it has been permitted Bubba Free John to successfully bring into the plane of recollection the whole of the Process that leads to "open eyes," the ultimate Stage of true Sacrifice or Devotion—the Way of Radical Intuition. When this cycle was complete, he returned to India and the tomb of Ramana Maharshi, the last vehicle of Grace that has served Bubba Free John during this lifetime.

Since Bubba's last visit to Ramana's tomb, in 1973, Bubba had entered into a four year period of service to devotees, in which he engaged them directly, in the theatre of their tendencies and aspirations, in order to instruct them in the Way of Divine Ignorance. At the end of that four year period, the whole Way, up to Sahaj Samadhi, had been recollected, revealed to devotees, and put into writing (some of which is not yet published). Thus, Bubba returned to Ramana's tomb, the last terminal of Grace in Bubba's case, to make a sacrifice of all that had been done and shown.

When Bubba yielded all of this at Ramana's tomb, he became aware that the Process of Grace was now being passed on, entering a new phase. Ramana's tomb contained no further Revelation. Ramana and Bubba were not different, and there was neither loss nor gain at that place and occasion. Bubba had intended to continue to travel in India, but it was shown that there were no contacts to be made there at this time. At the present time it would only be possible to contact representatives of what Bubba had already Realized and shown. There was no further contact with Grace to be made. Thus, the trip to India became a simple, brief sacrifice of all that has already been done. India became empty to Bubba, and he knew he should return to his Ashram as quickly as possible, since a new dimension of the Revelation of Grace was about to Awaken to him. (A few petty obstacles obstructed the return, but Bubba pressed home as quickly as he could.)

Since Bubba has returned to his Ashram, this Revelation has begun to intensify and

show itself. The ultimate Process of Sacrifice to the point of Transfiguration, Regeneration and Ascension-Translation of the whole body-being into the Divine Ignorance-Radiance has begun with great Force. It is clear that the past theatre of Bubba's Teaching work is complete. The work necessary to conceive, demonstrate, and communicate the first three stages of the Way has been accomplished. Bubba has been shown that Ramana Realized the Truth in Jnana Samadhi and then passed to Sahaj Samadhi with "open eyes." However, his function was not to demonstrate the ultimate developments of the Sacrifice in Sahaj Samadhi. He did not, while alive, pass fully into the Transfiguration stage via the regeneration of Amrita Nadi.

Bubba's present and future work is to conceive, demonstrate, and communicate the Process in Sahaj Samadhi leading to the Transfiguration and Translation of the whole body-being into the Divine. He will continue to serve devotees in the preparatory stages as well as in The Way of Radical Intuition, in order to quicken their Awakening and Transformation in God. He may have contact with one or more individuals who will act as terminals of Grace for the

sake of this ultimate demonstration, but he feels he may be alone in God from this point. The Process itself has been revealed to him, and the Divine is directly Present to him as Grace for the sake of this Sacrifice. And so Bubba does not know if there will be help through any higher beings in gross or subtle form for the sake of this future work. He has had contact, in recent days, with at least one entity in subtle form that has aided the secondary purification of the subtle mechanisms of the gross body. But he has had no contact with any being in a Transfigured state—although this may possibly occur in the future.

Bubba begs all devotees for their devotion and love and for the demonstration of stability in this Way and a mature commitment. If devotees will grant Bubba release from the aggravated necessity to toil with them relative to mediocre and immature demands, then the Way will be quickened for them, and Bubba will more easily be able to pass into the demonstration of the higher or perfecting stages of this Process.

Love, Bubba

This Is My Ultimate Work

Ramana Maharshi demonstrated Sahaj Samadhi under conventional conditions (gross, subtle, and causal). He did not demonstrate Sahaj Samadhi as the Sacrifice of conditions into Bhava Samadhi, and, therefore, he did not demonstrate the Transformation of conditions to the point of Translation of the whole body-being into the Radiance of Bhava Samadhi (in Transfiguration, Regeneration, or Ascension-Translation). This is my ultimate Work. In this Work, Ascent is made on the basis of the Realization of Ignorance, and not on the basis of the simple cosmic urge to ascent demonstrated by Yogis and Saints. It does not lead specifically to any heavens but is a matter of consistent Sacrifice into the Divine Condition itself.

*Bubba Free John
October 3, 1977*

This Way Matures as Transfiguration, Regeneration, and Translation of Man into God

an essay by Bubba Free John

The Way of Divine Ignorance is the Way of the obviation of all contractions or limitations of the whole body-being, and the ultimate Sacrifice or Translation of the whole body-being into the Divine Domain, the Infinity of No-Contraction, Ignorance-Radiance, or Love.

The Way proceeds on the basis of the re-awakening of the whole body response, which is unobstructed feeling-attention, via all functions, in all relations, under all conditions, into Infinity.

The first three stages of the Way (The Way of Divine Communion, The Way of Relational Enquiry, and The Way of Re-cognition) are a process of whole body readaptation to Lawful (sacrificial) responsibility for the contractions of the lower coil (gross being), the upper coil (subtle being), and the manifest dimension of the heart (causal being). This process is awakened through "hearing" the argument of the Spiritual Master, entering into Communion with the Spiritual Master, and enjoying the Revelations that are natural and native to that Company and that Teaching.

The first three stages are primarily the gradual reawakening of responsibilities for whole body sacrifice, or Communion with the Divine Condition of all conditions. Thus, these stages appear in the form of a gradual purification of and from the limiting conditions of the whole body-being (gross, subtle, and causal), and all of this culminates in "open eyes," Sahaj Samadhi, or the Translation of conventional attention (and the presumption of independent consciousness) into unqualified Awareness, or Divine Ignorance.

In the fourth stage (The Way of Radical Intuition), the Realization of Divine Ignorance, or unqualified Communion with Divine Consciousness, is already and permanently the case. On the basis of this Realization, the ultimate "Work" of Sacrifice or Translation into the Divine Condition and Destiny is perfected.

In The Way of Radical Intuition, the Truth of attention, or presumed independent and defined consciousness, has been Realized as Awareness, Divine Ignorance, or unqualified Consciousness. In the event of "open eyes" the Consciousness that is the Heart of the whole body-being Awakens into Communion, through radical non-separation, with the Consciousness of which all conditions, all objects, all worlds, all beings are the present modification and sign. The Way of Radical Intuition develops on the basis of this Translation of attention into Awareness to Realize the full Translation of the whole body-being into the full Divine Condition, which is Ignorance-Radiance. This involves the further Translation of whole body feeling into the unobstructed Condition that is Divine Radiance.

In The Way of Radical Intuition the whole body-being passes from purification to transformation and glorification in God. This is worked on the basis of Awakened Awareness (Sahaj Samadhi), wherein all presently arising

conditions are Realized to be only modification of the Real Condition, which is Divine Ignorance-Radiance. Thus, no arising condition survives as an obstruction or limit of feeling-attention, but the whole body-being is both radically and progressively Awakened as intuitive Sacrifice, Love, or Translation into Divine Ignorance-Radiance.

In the first three stages of The Way of Divine Ignorance, attention is Awakened as unqualified Awareness, or radical Communion with Divine Ignorance, and the whole and feeling body-being is purified of Lawless adaptations and self-possession. In the final stage, the dimension of the whole body feeling is Awakened as unqualified Radiance, or radical Communion with the Divine Light, Power, Fullness, Bliss, and Happiness.

In Sahaj Samadhi, the whole body-being is gradually Awakened to the Realization of the glorified Condition of unqualified Love-Radiance, or Transfiguration. Such is the first and foundation level of Bhava Samadhi. The devotee raised to such Intensity of Feeling is a true servant of the world and a Sacrifice in God. It is the sufficient stage of the Realization of Radiance, since death may come at any time but the devotee will either be lifted from the conditional realms or, if continued there, manifested in the form of a fully spiritualized servant and enjoyer of the worlds as a Divine Play.

Those who persist beyond the stage of whole body Transfiguration may develop in the process of Regeneration, so that the degeneration of the whole body-being is slowed, stopped, or becomes reversible, even at death, and life may be prolonged, even to the point of becoming effectively immortal. This is the middle stage or degree of Bhava Samadhi.

Some may persist in the demonstration of the process of whole body Sacrifice or Translation into the Divine Ignorance-Radiance to the point of literal Translation or "Ascension" of the manifest body (gross, subtle, and causal) into Light and thence into the Divine Domain. This demonstration occurs in only rare cases, and it is the final or ultimate stage or degree of Bhava Samadhi.

Thus, The Way of Radical Intuition is the ultimate stage of the Sacrifice or Translation of man into God, through perfect Awakening of feeling-attention as unqualified Ignorance-Radiance. In most cases this Way develops to the point of whole body Transfiguration in Love-Radiance, which is unqualified Communion with the Divine Ignorance-Radiance, the Condition of all apparent conditions—and at that point the devotee abides in Happiness until drawn up in death. Some may persist until Regeneration and even Ascension, but the stage of Transfiguration is equal to these as Realization and Translation into the Divine Destiny. Transfiguration, Regeneration, and Ascension are all unqualified developments of Divine Love, Bhava Samadhi, or Communion with the Divine through Realization of non-separation from the Divine, which is the radical Awakening of feeling-attention, or Translation of the whole body-being into the Eternal Domain of Radiance, Bliss, and Infinite Consciousness.

September 14, 1977

You Have Thrown Away My Involvement with "India"

Shortly after his return from India,
Bubba received this letter from a devotee

Dear Bubba,

Since your return from India I've been reflecting on the effects I have felt in my own case and realized that a very fundamental aspect of my relationship to you has changed. Before I knew of you I was attracted to Ramana Maharshi; I studied his teaching, read about his life and would gaze lovingly at his picture which I had framed and hung in my bedroom. After one such occasion in the fall of 1973 I asked Ramana for a living Guru—one of equal realization or greater than himself (this I did not believe possible). I also specified my desire for one close by (I was in the San Diego area) as going to India did not appeal! The next day I came across one of your books with Clyde and later realized you were the answer to my heartfelt prayer. In the move to join the community some months later the glass on the Maharshi picture was broken and eventually I set it aside for a long time. However, I would continue my loving recollection of Him from time to time. This was something that would not naturally occur for me when I would look at your pictures! I was too busy defending myself. I would feel maybe a little human friendliness towards you but just not the same heartfelt response I would occasionally enjoy in remembering Ramana. Eventually I got the old picture of him reframed and hung back in my bedroom. There it stayed until shortly before you left for India when my wife noticed that the glass had cracked in an unexplained way.

After hearing William's presentation upon your return, I realized that you have truly thrown away all my subjective involvement with Maharshi and India. There is no movement to find him in my heart. For me you have devoured him, made a meal of him.

I'm so happy in this moment and grateful to you for the fullness of life. I love only you now—presently in life, as all of this with the whole body—when it is true of me. There is no longer a secret resort to a hidden feeling "on the right." That which was god to me has been penetrated and undone. You do, indeed, encompass and extend the Siddhi of Maharshi.

Simple human affairs—meetings in our household, talks after dinner, visits with friends newly found or rediscovered—have all become occasions for practice and celebration. How gracefully you continue to provide the impulse and the circumstance to realize this Play. Having been given so much, Bubba, for so long, it's a wonder I've never expressed my gratitude to you before this so directly.

Your journey to India, specifically Ramanasramam for me, and your return are so overwhelmingly and obviously a Graceful Sacrifice for all of us that happy acknowledgment of your pervasive Grace is the only possible response. On the level of this life, in the shining eyes and happy faces of my wife, children and friends, and in the feeling my heart holds for you, the focus of it all, I see that my prayer of long ago is answered.

Thank you, Bubba, I love you.

Steve Crawford

BULLETIN

From Vision Mound Ceremony

BUBBA'S PLANS TO MEET WITH LAY MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH AND INTERESTED MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

In the process of responding to the spiritual needs of devotees, Bubba Free John has decided to make himself formally available to all lay members of The Free Communion Church. In order to be of service at every institutional level of the Church, including the public educational responsibilities of Vision Mound Ceremony, Bubba will also periodically make himself available for true consideration of spiritual life and practice to those individuals living in the common society who, while not taking on the full disciplines of this Way, have expressed an interest in his Teaching.

We offer below an excerpt from Bubba's discussions of the principles and practical implications of this significant new dimension of his Teaching work. This talk was given on October 10, 1977, at Vision Mound Sanctuary.

Over the last six years I have responded in a number of ways to people's need for direct, personal contact with me. For the last year I have secluded myself from such contact almost completely in order to reorient the whole institution of the

Church to its true functions and to prepare full and summary source literature, which we did not have previously. Now these purposes have essentially been served. We have brought essential order to the Church. We still have more books to produce, but in a very basic way we have finished the necessary work. The other source texts can be produced largely on the basis of considerations that have already taken place this past year.

Thus, this year has been an incident in which to summarize the essential considerations of the Teaching demonstrated over the last six years. Now we can also set a whole new aspect of this work in motion. It is now time to re-establish contact with people in general. The principle of our work should not be that I am available only to prepared devotees, because people do not get prepared if I have nothing to do with them. Obviously, it is essential that I be available to everyone in some fundamental way. It is not a matter of putting up posters and going downtown to the theatres, but the principle should be that I am available to everyone.

One of the ways we fulfill that principle is by publishing literature. But recently, at any rate, there has

been a great gap between that level of my availability and my availability to prepared devotees for meditation in the Communion Hall. Thousands of people have read my books—but only a handful sit with me in meditation! We have created institutional mechanisms to serve as the cultural bridge between mere life in this world and the spiritual life of a devotee, in which one is able to take up the spiritual practices of the Way of Divine Communion in the fourth or fully human stage of life. But, for all kinds of reasons, that has not been fully workable. Even the optimum institutional circumstance would still not eliminate the special usefulness of my being able to have direct contact with people, because that contact, in the form of the Teaching as well as their direct meeting with me, is the source of the movement in them to take up this practice. So if that contact is absent altogether, there is no way for that cultural bridge to exist and to function.

The occasions for such availability on my part will be of a sacred nature, both with lay members of the Church at Talking God Seminary and, on occasion, with sincerely interested members of the general public. People should understand that I am not meeting with them to initiate them into meditation or give them esoteric instructions, but simply to talk to them about the Whole Way I teach and to discuss ideas relative to spiritual practice and what a truly human life is all about. I want to speak to people at that level, to help them become involved, to help them begin their adaptation to this spiritual Way of life or to intensify

their practice of they are already responding.

Thus, Bubba Free John plans to make himself formally available to all those interested in his Teaching at every level of involvement. He intends to meet with lay members of the Church approximately once each month (usually around the date associated with the monthly celebration). Public presentations are being scheduled to begin early next spring at locations to be announced.

Below are some further considerations that have arisen from this change in the form of Bubba's Teaching work.

CHURCH MEMBERS AND LAY MEMBERS

Those practicing the Way of Divine Ignorance are active at two general levels of involvement: lay membership in the Church, and full Church membership. The specific qualifications for lay membership are fully discussed below. Until any individual has been given the spiritual responsibilities of the practices of the Breath of God and the Name of God, and thus has become established in the fourth stage of life, his or her involvement is with the lay order of the Church. Lay members of the Church are individuals who are considering the Teaching, moving toward the full life of practice, and adapting to the specific disciplines and obligations of the Way.

THE FOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR LAY MEMBERSHIP IN THE FREE COMMUNION CHURCH

1. The individual must be interested in the Teaching of the Way of Divine

Ignorance to the point that he is sincerely and steadily trying to adapt his life to this Way. The public person may be interested in the Teaching, but he (or she) does not have the intention or present interest to commit himself to the daily practice and full obligations of a lay member of the Church. The lay member of the Church, however modest his fulfillment of the life-conditions, does intend to adapt to the Way fully, and he presumably practices the Way, as fully as he is able, on a daily basis.

2. **The individual must tithe regularly.** The basic rule for tithing is to contribute a minimum of 10% of your gross income to the Church. Hopefully you can contribute more than that, but certainly not less. All Church members contribute at least 15%, and so do many lay members. You should be responsible enough in life to be able to make this contribution; if not, you should straighten out the conditions of your life until you get to that point.

Tithing, Bubba notes, is not a form of payment for goods received, but a devotional gesture:

Tithing should be done in the same spirit as all the other life-conditions—because it is appropriate on the basis of your hearing the Teaching of Truth. It is part of your pleasure to tithe, a devotional sacrifice, a form of feeling-attention. The giving of money is like the giving of energy or the giving of your life to living the Teaching. You cannot really put a price on it. There is no sum or percentage that defines it. It is a gesture, not an object. It is a way of relating to this Teaching, to one's Spiritual Master. So people should contribute what they can, and they should be free and liberal in their contributions. They should be happy in making contributions as part of their devotional practice altogether.

3. **The individual must participate in the educational programs of the Church.** Part of that participation is receiving and studying *Vision Mound* magazine and *Talking God* newsletter, but the lay member should also actively participate, to the degree that he is able, in educational courses offered by the Church, either at Talking God Seminary or, for those who do not live in our local region, in other cities around the country whenever such seminars are scheduled. Those who do live in this region should come to Talking God Seminary at least once a month, on the weekend when Bubba Free John will be present to answer questions from devotees. Devotees living outside this general region may schedule their visits to Talking God Seminary to coincide with Bubba's appearances there. Before making such a visit, *write* to the Correspondence Department at Talking God Seminary to notify the staff of your intentions.

4. **The individual must make himself or herself available for service to the Church's public and seminary-level educational work.** Lay members' service is not a matter of full-time employment, but of either occasional or regular availability for work to serve the Church. If you are asked to help in some way, you should generally make yourself available unless you have another pressing obligation.

Lay members also enjoy certain advantages or privileges that are not extended to the interested public.

a. Courses, presentations, and meetings with Bubba Free John at Talking God Seminary will be open only to lay members of the Church and full Church members.

b. The Pastoral Service Order, the Church's counseling service, will be available only to lay members.

c. People in the public may subscribe to *Vision Mound* magazine, but only lay members will receive, along with that

journal, the monthly issue of *Talking God*. The newsletter will be published in the middle of every month, approximately two weeks after you receive that month's issue of *Vision Mound*. *Talking God* is more than just a supplement to the larger magazine—it is itself a principal vehicle of Bubba Free John's and Vision Mound Ceremony's regular communication with practicing devotees each month. It is not available to the public.

Lay members should view these opportunities for education and service as vehicles of their adaptation to the spiritual process that Bubba teaches and offers to all. It is only by moving through the educational process of the Church at the lay level that individuals can become full members of the Church, who sit in formal meditation with the Spiritual Master and participate in the higher and transforming dimensions of the Way Bubba teaches. No one can move directly from the usual life of the public man into that profound process. You must demonstrate your preparation at the seminary level. Do not view the process in a childish fashion, assuming that if you do a certain thing or offer a certain contribution, you will get something in return. All of your actions, in the course of your adaptation to the Way, should have the quality of the practice itself. They should be forms of devotional sacrifice and expressions of free feeling-attention founded in your hearing of Bubba Free John's argument and Revelation of Truth.

IN ADDITION TO THE TITHE: THE TALKING GOD SEMINARY PARTICIPATION CARD AND SUPPORT FEE

All lay members who participate in educational activities at Talking God Seminary on at least a monthly basis will

continue to make use of the *Seminary Participation Card*.

1. If you register and pay for a course or courses that month, the course fees will entitle you to receive the card. (Individuals participating in the educational program during the month need *not* pay the \$30.00 Seminary support fee.) Always bring your card when you attend educational programs at the Seminary.

2. If you are not taking any courses during a given month, but do at least intend to come to the Seminary for the monthly Celebration Day activities, then you should pay in advance the monthly Seminary Support Fee of \$30.

We request that all those who are participating as lay Church members simply consider this fee (or that portion of your payment for courses that represent this fee) as part of your general contribution to the Church each month—in addition to your tithe. We may change certain aspects of the Seminary programs at any time, but the bills have to be paid in any case. Since educational activities will always be offered at the Seminary in some form, all lay members who use the Seminary, even if only on Celebration Days, should pay the \$30 support fee. Payment of this fee automatically entitles you to a Participation Card, which you may have occasion to use at some point later in the month.

NOTE: Lay members who live outside this general region (correspondents fulfilling the stated obligations of lay members) and therefore do not regularly attend Talking God Seminary even once a month need not pay the Support Fee or purchase Participation Cards. On the occasions when you do visit the Seminary, we have other arrangements for your registration, participation, and payment for educational programs and activities.

OBLIGATORY COURSES AND YOUR READINESS FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

It is recommended that each lay member take all the obligatory courses (as well as any others he or she may be interested in) offered by Vision Mound Seminary for those preparing to become full members or devotees in the Church. But some individuals, such as those who live at a distance, may not be able to do so. We will indicate to all lay members which courses are obligatory for their preparation. Such courses will be arranged so that all lay members can take them within their own time limits—for instance, the diet course may generally be offered over a period of several weekends, but for visiting correspondents and others with extenuating circumstances we may make it available in intensive sessions over a single weekend.

Most of the educational courses offered by Vision Mound Ceremony are of basic interest to many people, not just lay members of the Church, and some will eventually be offered in public. But all lay members must be responsible to take the obligatory courses in due order if they intend to proceed to full membership in the Church.

It is up to each individual to determine when he or she feels ready to take up the whole Way of practice stably and without relapse as a Church member. When you feel ready to take up the spiritual process fully in the Company of the Spiritual Master, then you should apply to the Pastoral Service Order at Talking God Seminary for an interview. If your interviewers agree that you are ready, then you will be invited to participate in the Study and Service Course and the sexuality

courses, and to prepare intensively for sitting in meditation in Bubba's Company at Vision Mound Sanctuary.

ON PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS WITH BUBBA FREE JOHN AT TALKING GOD SEMINARY

Bubba has indicated that his purpose in coming to the Seminary each month is to *respond* to the questions and instructional needs of lay members of the Church. This is the case whether he is actually responding to verbalized questions or speaking on the basis of his awareness of what needs to be considered at any given time. Thus, all lay members should come to these occasions having already considered their questions. If a question comes up during the month, make a note of it, and if the matter is still not clarified by the time the Celebration Day arrives, come to Bubba to ask that question. Bubba has said that if your questions are real, they will inevitably be answered that day, whether you get up to ask them or not.

In the past such sessions with Bubba tended to take many forms, due to the dramatic and often personal forms of his play with people at the time. He proposes that all lay members approach these sessions entirely differently now, not as children coming for vicarious contact with the Spiritual Master, but as preparing devotees coming for mature and serious consideration of the real matters of spiritual life. Bubba is not interested in tussling with people or entertaining resistive, posturing questions, but rather in dealing with the real matters that confront lay members in their adaptation to this Way of life. If you make use of Bubba in this true way, your practice will be quickened by your contact with him.

Lay members should realize that all such occasions are not only question-and-answer sessions, but sacred occasions of "darshan"—of hearing, seeing, and feeling in the Company of the Spiritual Master and the Presence of God. So prepare yourself for these meetings. Approach Bubba in the spirit of one who is preparing to become a true devotee—not with fascination and superficial curiosity, but with love and gratitude and sober readiness to hear the Teaching of Truth and make use of it in your daily life from hour to hour.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR BUBBA'S PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Over the next few months we will be preparing for Bubba Free John's appearance in public in selected areas of the United States next spring and possibly in Europe and Australia at a later date, depending on the response in those places. Devotees and friends who can volunteer their support for organizing Bubba's visits should write to Talking God Seminary, P.O. Box 3680, Clearlake Highlands, California 95422.

TALKING GOD SEMINARY

Located in the town of Clearlake Highlands, California, Talking God Seminary is the administrative headquarters of Vision Mound Ceremony and the principal educational center for all those adapting to the initial life-practices of the Way of Divine Communion. Here the Seminary staff offers introductory presentations on the Way of Divine Ignorance, courses on the practical disciplines of the initial stage of practice (including diet and exercise), audio and video tape presentations of Bubba Free John's instructive talks with

devotees, monthly study programs, and a bookstore carrying all the books from the reading lists from the major source texts.

Bubba considers face to face communication and study among other devotees to be essential to the practice of this Way. All members of The Free Communion Church living in the general region of Vision Mound Sanctuary and Talking God Seminary are expected to participate in courses and other services on a regular basis. Only through your continued participation and regular support can the Teaching work of Bubba Free John be communicated and assured through time.

Vision Mound Ceremony provides a recommended program of study for all devotees wherever they may live and whatever their level of interest and practice. All essential instruction necessary for the enjoyment of this Way is openly communicated in the published writings of Bubba Free John and other literature of Vision Mound Ceremony.

CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING AT THE SEMINARY

In the past we have required that anyone approaching Bubba Free John as Spiritual Master must have strictly observed the practical life-disciplines, especially those relative to the abandonment of dietary "accessories" (meat, alcohol, tobacco, processed food, etc.) for a period of time before he or she becomes eligible to participate in the activities at Talking God Seminary. Recently, however, Bubba has pointed out that such a requirement tends to overwhelm most people. If an individual tends toward self-exploitation, then he is always failing to live the personal condi-

ons. If he tends toward self-discipline, then he is always righteous about their fulfillment. In any case, people have tended to become distracted by the conditions themselves rather than becoming stable in loving and serving life.

The process or fundamental condition of our practice is love, feeling-attention. The more responsible the individual becomes for the essential conditions of existence, the more free and responsible he or she becomes for the ordinary functional dimension of life. But in the beginning, if the individual's attention is fixed on the obligation to be responsible absolutely in every aspect of functional life, then he or she never engages the fundamental practice, which is love, or feeling-attention. And it is only through the fundamental practice that we realize true responsibility, ease, and natural enjoyment in living the personal conditions.

Thus, we no longer require the individual to have lived the personal conditions absolute before participating at Talking God Seminary. Anyone who is making a genuinely motivational approach to Bubba Free John as Spiritual Master, whose orientation to life is essentially service and love, and who is free to make human, occasional, and righteous use of the dietary accessories, is welcome to participate in the educational program at Talking God Seminary. Henceforth, the use of the dietary accessories is an individual responsibility. Each devotee must inspect himself the tendencies and inclinations toward self-indulgence or self-righteousness that he represents. People are to manage their use of the dietary accessories as a natural expression of celebratory life in the Way of Divine Communion.

Devotees should consider pages 196-199 of *Breath and Name*, taking special note of the following: (1) The description of the

three-month period of strict adherence to the personal conditions prior to entrance into the Church is obsolete. (2) As indicated in the text, devotees must still abandon altogether the use of accessories to the diet at a later phase of the Way of Relational Enquiry.

BUBBA TO MEET FORMALLY WITH LAY MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

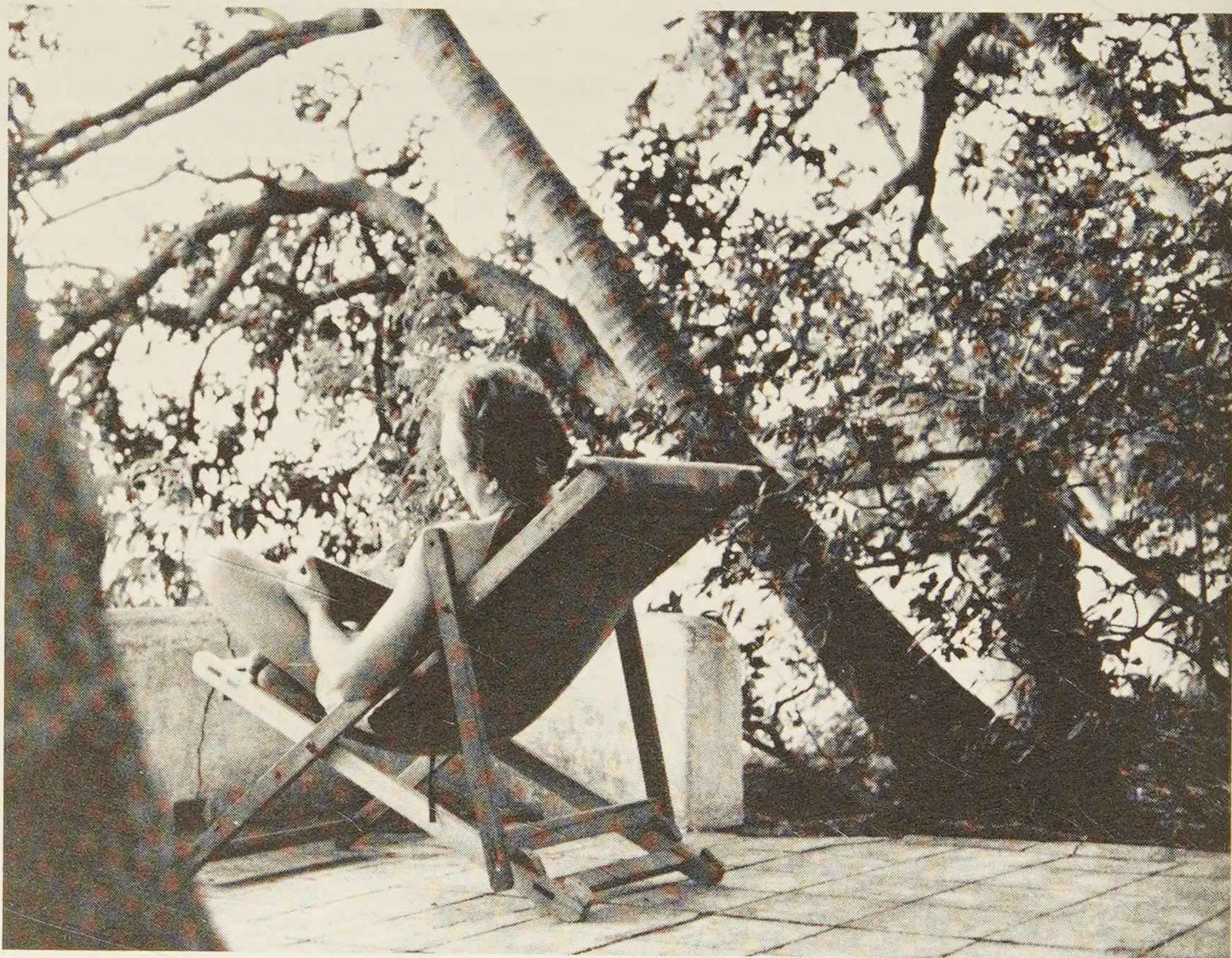
The first formal occasion of Bubba Free John's meeting with lay members of The Free Communion Church will be on the weekend of November 19 and 20 at Talking God Seminary. Any individual who is regularly fulfilling the qualifications of lay membership as described on pages 42-44 of this issue of *Vision Mound* magazine and who is known to the Church through formal participation in courses or visits to Talking God Seminary is welcome to attend.

A donation of \$15.00 will be required at the door. If you wish to enjoy this occasion with Bubba, make a reservation by calling Steve Frappier at (707) 994-9497 between 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.

We look forward to your attendance.

The occasion of Bubba's meeting with individuals at the lay level of involvement is formal and provides an opportunity for individuals to ask real questions of the Spiritual Master about their practice. Bubba has also begun to speak with devotees engaged in more mature levels of involvement at Vision Mound Sanctuary in addition to his sitting in formal meditation.

THE MONTHLY CYCLE OF STUDY NOVEMBER



THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER

November 3: The Celebration of the Birth of the Spiritual Master

On this day (or the closest Saturday or Sunday to it in November) all devotees celebrate the birth of our Spiritual Master, Bubba Free John, on November 3, 1939. You may want to refresh your understanding of the Nature and Function of the Spiritual Master, as you did in July. But focus specifically on Bubba Free John's account of his Divine Enjoyment from birth and the instructive lessons of his life,

as communicated most directly in The Knee of Listening and also, randomly, in the other source texts. This is a day for rejoicing in Bubba's Appearance and Presence among us. Take special care to comprehend and make use of the lessons inherent in the form and apparent story or history of his life. The "theatres" of Bubba's own apparent transformation and his revelation of the Teaching to others were consciously undertaken and endured only for the benefit of devotees. Thus, to make this Celebration an occasion for understanding the import of the life of Bubba Free John is the best and truest way to celebrate his birth.

(Breath and Name, pages 224-225)

The November study program should be used in devotional and study meetings and as a guide to individual study. Review the study format suggested in Part III of *Breath and Name*, pages 182-189, and use the weekly assignments in addition to your daily study.

For lay members of The Free Communion Church living in the general area of Talking God Seminary, and for others who may be visiting, presentations focusing on the weekly study assignments published in *Vision Mound* magazine are given on Saturdays and Sundays at Talking God Seminary. All lay members are invited to these lectures and encouraged to prepare for them by completing the weekly study assignments. There is a question and answer session following each lecture in which to consider questions and observations that arise in your personal practice and in the study group meetings in your home.

In your study, make sure to read and fully consider the assigned selections from classic traditional literature. Bubba has spoken of the function of such study in our own living practice :

The study of traditional literature always tends to be neglected. People must become familiar with the traditional sources. There is no point in reading only a few of them as if they were all the same. They are not. Each one contains its own argument. Thus your study of traditional literature must be a critical comparison of this Teaching with the traditions, either corroborating aspects of this Teaching or illustrating some aspect of the traditional paths that this Teaching criticizes.

People should always be engaged in the study of some traditional spiritual book. I do not mean that you should just read a couple of lines here and there. You should be obliged to read and formally study a complete book every week or two. All the meetings that occur on a weekly basis—devotional meetings, study groups, and seminars—should have something to do with the traditional reading for that week. The seminar instructors and the leaders in a study group

at home should bring that traditional point of view into all the discussions for that week. Thus you will eventually become familiar with these works and become responsible for the hash of ideas you have in the back of your mind.

You must also bring yourself to the Teaching instead of reading yourself, as you always tend to do. Of course there is an aspect of self-observation in this work, but it is spontaneous, free self-observation, not constantly sitting around watching yourself. You must bring yourself to the study of traditional literature. You must spend more time studying, even though you prefer to spend time doing frivolous things and relying on the consoling aspects of your relationships.

November 7-13

Reading assignment: *Breath and Name*, essays 3.1, 3.2, 3.7-3.11; *Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun* (3d edition, newly released), chapter 1; *Vision Mound*, vol. 1, no. 5, Part I; *In Quest of God*, by Swami Ramdas. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1961), pages 1-74.

Writing assignment: To what degree is your spiritual practice a whole way of life? Are the momentum, energy, and intention of your life oriented toward the Divine Condition or toward the destiny of your own tendencies and inclinations? What is the difference between the spiritual life Bubba recommends and your usual life? To what degree do you feel vulnerable to the destiny of your ordinary circumstance and tendency?

How intensely and regularly do you direct profound free attention and feeling toward realizing the Teaching? Is your interest in the Teaching of Ignorance mere sympathy and conventional, casual application of its principles and disciplines? Or are you attached to it with your whole being?

In what ways is living the discipline of feeling-attention a pleasurable action? In what ways does it seem like an effort directed against your tendencies? How does

the discipline of feeling-attention confront the conditions to which you have already adapted?

In what ways do you resist "hearing" the Teaching? To what degree do you feel and serve on the basis of hearing the Teaching to the point that the trend of the whole body-being is established in openness, relationship, and love rather than the separative mood of the ego? What functions and experiential possibilities of existence tend to distract you from the natural ease and native pleasure of spiritual practice? In what ways are you consoled by things that distract you? To what degree and based upon what insight into your usual life has Communion with the Divine become important and necessary to you? Under what circumstances and how consistently do you live as feeling and attention in your relationships with intimates and the common world?

November 14-20

Reading assignment: *The Paradox of Instruction*, essay 4.31; *Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun*, "The Internal 'Locks' of the Whole Body," pages 69-78; *Vision Mound*, vol. 1, no. 5, all of Part I except "This Is the Vision I Have Felt Since Birth"; *In Quest of God*, pages 75-155.

Writing assignment: Explain your understanding of what Bubba is criticizing when he speaks of the argument of the right side, the "Occidental religious impulse." What do you understand about Bubba's criticism of the "Oriental religious impulse," the argument of the left? What are the independent limitations of each side when either one is exploited or pursued as a spiritual solution? What are the characteristic "signs" and strategies of these two cultural tendencies? How are they different? Which do you tend to identify with? How is the tendency dramatized in your living?

What is "the argument of the whole body-being?" What is the foundation impulse at the core of our practice? In what ways is the whole body orientation different from the arguments of the left- and right-sided systems, the cultural and religious tendencies of East and West?

What is the principle of the demand to be "present as Radiance," to "live as love in all relations?" To what degree do you fulfill this demand? How is the demand to "live as love" different from conventional worldly and religious notions about love? In what ways do you tend to misinterpret Bubba's Teaching of whole body happiness or love?

November 21-27

Reading assignment: *Breath and Name*, essays 4.1-4.6 and 4.16; *Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun*, Prologue; *Vision Mound*, vol. 1, no. 5, "This Is the Vision I Have Felt Since Birth" and "Like Meeting Your Twin Brother"; *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*. Edited by Arthur Osborne, 4th ed. (Tiruvannamalai, South India: Sri Ramanasramam, 1968), pages 1-77.

Writing assignment: Are you free enough in your study and interest in the Teaching and your acknowledgment of the Spiritual Master as what he claims to be to live this Way fully? What is your basic sense of what is unique about this Teaching and Way of life? What do you understand a spiritual life to be? What does it feel like to live a life of service and devotion to the Spiritual Master and the Teaching he recommends? Consider the entire round of your spiritual living. How does it penetrate the form and motion of your conventional life?

The Way of life Bubba recommends to devotees in the Way of Divine Communion is one founded in happiness, love, and mutual responsibility for our human circumstances. Consider the cycle of your daily living. What pleasurable signs have you observed from living this Way of life? What new action do you bring to the pattern of your relationships? Do you yield to the conditions arising in your present circumstances? Are you manipulative of others and your conditions? Describe the ways in which the daily living of this Teaching is and is not true of you. How, specifically, do you evade the responsibility to love?

November 28 - December 4

Reading assignment: *The Paradox of Instruction*, chapter 1, essay 5; *Breath and Name*, Part I, and essays 4.13 and 4.14; *Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun*, Epilogue; *Vision Mound*, vol. 1, no. 5, remaining sections of Part III; *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, pages 78-145.

Writing assignment: Bubba has described the true practice of religion as a sacred activity. The Way of Divine Communion,

the first stage of practice in the Way of Divine Ignorance, includes formal and specific disciplines that can be summarized as a total sacrifice of body, emotions, and mind. Consider the argument of the Teaching. At the present level of your involvement, what is the process of sacrifice for which you are responsible? How is conscious exercise lived as a sacrificial discipline? In what ways do you make it a ritual? Describe the process of reception and release and how it is lived in your daily life.

How is your ordinary life dramatized through emotional need of acceptance and the chronic feeling of rejection? How do you engage the process of reception and release relative to the personal conditions of your life and your sense of being either accepted or rejected? Do you "receive" the Divine Presence, or, if your practice has not yet become aligned to the Presence, do you "receive" the all-pervading energy of the universe? What is the fundamental sense you have of "whole-body submission, or sacrifice of the entire being, to the very Divine?"

December 5-11

Reading assignment: *Breath and Name*, 5.23, 7.5, and 7.6; *The Paradox of Instruction*, chapter 5, essay 3; *Conscious Exercise and the Transcendental Sun*, chapter 5; *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, pages 149-277, particularly the translations from the *Bhagavad Gita* and Shankara's *Vivekachudamani*.

Writing assignment: Consider the conventional theatre of your life, the tendencies, preferences, reactive patterns (seemingly positive and negative), the ritual of concern, and the fixed disposition of unlove. In the event of the apparent arising and "believable" theatre of such conditions and circumstances, the devotee participates in the sacrificial act of feeling-attention and thus fulfills the obligation of reception-release of the Divine Transforming Power.

In what ways do you specifically engage this process? In what ways do you not? Under what circumstances are you active as openness, free attention, and love? Where, why, and how do you live out the conventions of your tendencies?

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"This is the core of My Revelation. I am God. I am your own Truth. I speak the Truth of you. Therefore, enter into Communion with Me and be happy.

"When Bubba became Realized as the Heart, or Ignorance-Radiance, this Grace or Communion became the advantage and the Way for all who would hear and surrender and commit their lives and become lovers and devotees of that Company. Give up all forms of self-attention and intuitively turn to Me, with natural and complete feeling-attention, and abide in unobstructed feeling Communion with Me via all functions, in all relations, under all conditions. If you do this more and more absolutely, the Divine Revelation will become obvious to you more and more perfectly. But if you remain in self-meditation, seeking Me rather than yielding to Me, your life will remain a struggle in dilemma, a mediocre increase of knowledge by experience, an ordinary destiny that is no more and no less than what it seems to be born and to persist and to die."

—Bubba Free John

True religious and spiritual processes are not abstracted outside mankind or the individual via an objective Deity, external or vicarious salvation or liberation processes, holy edifices or sites whose Power may not also be directly Awakened in human beings, institutional structures that replace and even prevent responsibility on the part of those they are intended to serve, or any hierarchy of priests whose cultic access to Divine Truth (rather than their actual Sacrifice to God in the world) makes them unique and powerful.

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Maduate Theological Union
Hickory
2451 Ridge Road
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