



In the Beginning...

The fascinating story of the humble beginnings of the Foundation of Human Understanding and its catalyst, Roy Masters.

Taken from the book by William Wolf;
Healers, Gurus and Spiritual Guides

In the Beginning...

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Published by the [Foundation of Human Understanding](#)

Printed in the United States of America

For further information, please contact:

The Foundation of Human Understanding

PO Box 1000, Grants Pass,

Oregon 97528, USA

Call 1-800-877-3227 • Web site:www.fhu.com

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Part 1

Roy Masters' Moment of Truth

“If you are for what is truly right,” Roy Masters was telling me, “then everything else that is wrong—but seems like it is right—is shown up in contrast to it.”

We were sitting in the breakfast nook of his spacious Inglewood, California, home. Ann, his wife, was doing her best to keep their five children relatively quiet and occupied in another part of the ranch-type house while daddy was being interviewed. Roy seemed oblivious to their commotion; while he is talking about truth and principles, the roof could cave in and I'm sure he would continue his explanation without a pause.

Roy Masters is one of Southern California's most compelling and dynamic advocates of meditation. It's a very special kind of meditation he recommends, one that can change a person's life and in some cases “save” it. Roy has made a career of instructing people in the exact techniques of this meditation and has gained a large and loyal following. He stands in sharp contrast to most of the truth teachers, metaphysicians, philosophers, and psychologists I have come in contact with. In fact, he opposes any and all who claim to teach the truth, heal the sick, counsel the troubled, or lead the way to God.

“Anyone who has a remedy, a pill or technique to gain health and sanity,” he emphasized, “—all the problem solvers—will be out of business when my message reaches the general public.”

“Most all of us have problems, Roy,” I shot back, reacting somewhat negatively to what I felt was an unwarranted attack on a multitude of sincere people striving in their own small way to alleviate a few of life's woes. “Would you have us cease our attempt to eliminate them?”

His brown eyes, ablaze and unblinking, stared hard at me. I sus-

pected that he could hardly wait for my last word to begin his rebuttal. “Bill, your problems will give you up,” he said with intensity, “you don’t have to give them up.”

“How?” I demanded.

He smiled and his gaze softened; I had grabbed the bait, and he began to reel me in. “This is accomplished through having the right attitude.”

I found little fault with his statement; but I still wanted to know why he bristled at the people he somewhat contemptuously referred to as professional problem solvers.

“First of all,” he explained, “you don’t need to solve any problems.”

“You don’t?” I asked incredulously.

“When people ‘fall from Truth,’ that is, when they lose their ‘center of equilibrium,’ it is then that they need a solution for the problem that has come into being because of that fall away from reality—they’re blind,” he said forcefully. Even while I listened to him, I marveled at how effectively he is able to utilize speech. He bludgeons forth with a barrage of words that is staggering in its intensity. Syllable after syllable comes stabbing at you, trying to pierce whatever armor you have put up. Finally you either flee in utter confusion, despising this iconoclast, or you stumble away completely bewildered because you have no “cells of recognition” left, or, as many have done and are doing, you stay and listen.

“In their blindness, people grope, and in their groping they blunder, and when they blunder they get sick and create all sorts of problems.” I acknowledged his point. “In other words, Roy, you say that problems are just effects and not the cause, and therefore should not be our primary concern.”

“Yes, that’s one way of saying it, Bill.” His approval, I found to my surprise, pleased me. Before I could amplify, he continued:

“Because of their ‘fall from Truth’ people need doctors, lawyers, ministers, marriage counselors, psychologists—all kinds of problem solvers who should never have come into being in the first place.”

I refused to let that statement go unchallenged. “Wait a minute, Roy. Now, just why shouldn’t these healers and teachers serve the public?”

His answer was quick. “All these people can possibly accomplish is to guide their patients farther and farther away from themselves instead of leading them to themselves—where they have fallen from—so that the healing will take place by the healing of the inner nature.”

This enormously energetic and vocal firebrand philosopher claims that every person who looks for a remedy finds a bigger problem at the end of that remedy. Knowing the general nature of his beliefs, I knew what to expect when I asked, “Roy, what do you think about positive thinking?”

He snapped, “People think that whatever makes them feel good is good, whether that be positive thinking, the church, or any remedy that gives you the idea that you are well when you’re not.”

I myself have seen what appeared to be remarkable examples of healing through positive thinking, and when I presented this observation he retorted: “Various things make you feel good for a while and it does seem to be the remedy. You become dependent on that which gives you the effect. ‘Positive thinkers’ usually die from degenerative diseases. They isolate themselves from the real problem by slapping on sugar-coated ideas or swallowing nice-sounding affirmations.”

“What do you have against feeling good?”

“When people are wrong spiritually (unrepentant), they must feel right because inside they are so wrong,” Masters answered. “Always they fluctuate between good and bad. They can’t stand not feeling anything. They have the need to engage or preoccupy their senses with all sorts of feelings.”

Roy Masters claims he leads people to the Truth. He doesn’t teach them the things they must discover for themselves. “The proper handling of life’s challenges, problems, and stresses provides healthy and natural growth for the individual,” he says. “When one believes he doesn’t have what it takes to meet the challenges of life, he camouflages this inward lack with all sorts of “information.” Actually, most so-called intellectuals use their storehouse of knowledge to justify their ignorance.”

Not too far from the Miracle Mile section of Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, at 624 South Western Avenue, a sign with large letters

proclaims the headquarters of Roy Masters' Foundation of Human Understanding. The building is really just a large store, refurbished to provide comfortable lecture facilities for Roy and his associates. It resembles a Christian Science reading room at first glance, but don't let the establishment's façade deceive you.

For most of the five lectures a week there is standing room only, as the faithful, the curious, and the "professional truth seekers" (that phenomenon so characteristic of Southern California) crowd this haven for the unorthodox to listen to the cultured, articulate voice of Roy Masters hammer home his hard, illusion-shattering message: "Each person has a moment in experience in which an important—the most important—decision of his life is made. He can choose to be above all Creation, looking down at it, desiring to dominate and rule it—to have creation praising and glorifying him—or he can choose to submit to the Power Who made it all."

The moment of truth to which Masters refers comes when you decide to perform a right act—when you do what must be done regardless of the price you must pay. You do this even if it means sacrifice, danger, or financial hardship. As I see it, this doesn't have to be a heroic act such as a soldier might perform on a battlefield. It can be as undramatic as when Ann Masters quietly informed her daughter's grade-school teacher that she was impatient and therefore not as effective a teacher as she should be. Ann did this in front of the entire class.

The young teacher was shocked at first; then she broke into tears. Not in the least perturbed, Ann sat down and waited until the teacher stopped crying before she proceeded to explain her statement. Mrs. Masters could have written the Principal a note complaining about the teacher, or she could have repressed her feelings. Instead, she chose to act from within at the moment it seemed necessary. She didn't fear repercussions, embarrassment, or an unpleasant scene; Ann provided stress for the impatient teacher and also stress for herself that tested her ability to act properly in that particular situation.

The moment of truth for some could be telling a loved one what one has been too frightened to say previously. It could be the way a parent handles a situation with his children or the way a child reacts to his mother or father. "The moment you forfeit the right, in order to attain personal advantage, you forfeit a pattern of growth from the

nature of grace,” Masters insists.

Even though his thesis is pretty much the same in all the lectures, the way he approaches it can be startlingly original and extremely forceful. “Man is only complete when he finds perfection complete within himself—functioning out of Spirit. Man must learn in each moment to live spontaneously from within; otherwise the root of man’s nature will be the world outside.”

Masters’ basic assumption that when man goes beyond the laws of his being he fouls himself up, and then, in trouble or ill, he vainly searches for healers to treat the effects of his transgression rather than to discover the cause.

The function of the Foundation of Human Understanding is to reveal a principle through which people can learn to respond from within (there’s that word again) rather than being manipulated by outside conditions. Roy Masters warns: “There is a hypnotic influence in the world utilized to lead us away from what is right for us. This is why we have fear, impatience, worries, uncertainty, lack of confidence—all this because we pull away from ourselves.”

When asked how one can dehypnotize oneself, Roy’s reply is that one must meditate. As important as he feels his lectures at the Foundation are, not to mention his many pamphlets and books and his radio and television appearances, he is quick to admit that all of this is secondary to the meditation technique. It is the very basis of his work, and he calls it Psychocatalysis.

“Psychocatalysis is a science of diminishing response to persons or objects,” he explains. “By eliminating the response to outer stimulation through self will, one can ‘starve’ the roots of unfounded fears.”

Can this kind of mental calisthenics bring the unconscious mind under the control of the conscious? Roy Masters firmly believes it can. He also believes that the principle he advocates will bring order, peace of mind, and harmony into our lives.

Psychocatalysis, Masters admits, combines some of the concentration techniques of ancient Yoga with the sound logic of Judeo-Christian principles. There are thousands who swear by it, claiming almost miraculous cures, the elimination of cumbersome habits, and an awakening of dynamic inner powers.

The purpose of meditation is to cause the emotions and intellect to respond to the quiet-consciousness. When difficulties arise and conditions become confined—when everyone else is in a panic—the individual practicing Roy Masters’ method will be able to act in a correct manner. Masters claims that an impartial understanding from within is activated to guide and direct the individual, and no jumble of ideas or host of disturbing and destructive emotions obscure his vision.

I have made it my business to interview many people who have tried the meditation technique, and they have made some interesting comments. Not all, by a long shot, agree to its unqualified effectiveness. Many have said they can’t see any particular benefit in the technique after working with it for varying lengths of time. However, others I’ve met are enthusiastic about the immense change it has wrought in their lives.

“Now I can observe the exact nature of my problems and because of this new insight,” a proponent of the method bubbled, “I know how to act correctly. Life has never been better, and in all departments.”

“Before meditating with Mr. Masters’ record,” a middle-aged Los Angeles accountant told me, “I used to react violently to my wife, my children, and even to my clients—everyone and everything ‘turned on me.’”

“O.K., so now you meditate three times a day as Roy Masters prescribes. How are things different?” I questioned.

“Well, now I act rather than react.”

His answer impressed me. It is indeed a wonderful thing to act with patience rather than to react with anger. And if Roy Masters’ Meditation exercise, the principle of which some critics say is similar in certain respects to self-hypnosis, can bring about this transformation in even a few people, it is a very worthwhile addition to the arsenal of human survival techniques.

Make no mistake; in the tumultuous days which are surely ahead, those who fail to discipline their emotional responses to outer hysteria and confusion will have a frantic fight to keep their sanity. If the way some impatient boob in a Cadillac honks his horn a second or so after the traffic light has changed upsets you, how do you think you’ll react to a major crisis?

Do you want to know how you'll fare in real stress? Try observing your reaction the next time your mate or child "crosses" you. See what your mental condition is when some civil rights or war news, or the announcement of higher taxes, or a particularly gruesome crime hits the news. Become conscious of your emotional involvement with the outer world. Aren't you something like a puppet jerked by environmental strings?

You have a choice whether you will react to fear or act in faith. That is, you have the choice if you have recaptured the God-given ability that in most humans has lain dormant and unused for too long. Something occurs in your life; perhaps your financial situation shows an unexpected slump. What do you do? Or rather, how do you think? As soon as you perceive the unwanted sad state of affairs, do you worry, fret, and imagine the worst? Or do you have hope?

I personally believe that hope means action, while worry is a passive reaction to outer conditions. The same may be said of reaction with hate instead of acting with love. Perhaps Roy Masters doesn't spell out his philosophy in exactly that way, but I think this is close to his basic belief.

One sunny morning late in July, my wife and daughter came along with me to spend the day aboard Roy Masters' thirty-foot sampan. It's an interesting, colorful boat with kitchen facilities and it sleeps four. He told me it was a Chinese Junk, but that type of seacraft is somewhere in the neighborhood of ninety feet or so. This—to my wife's dismay—was considerably smaller.

Roy's wife and five children and another male adult were also passengers. Roy had just "discovered" fishing and sailing and gloried in this kind of outdoor activity. He is almost completely a self-taught sailor and handles the rigging like an old sea dog. We three men folk thoroughly enjoyed the encounter with the sea, but the wives and children were a little less enthusiastic about the rolling and pitching. The fishing was poor but the conversation and fresh ocean air were wonderfully invigorating.

I remember our conversation as we pulled into King Harbor after the day's outing. We were in the midst of securing the boat and washing it down when a thought struck me. "Roy," I said, "it seems to me that most of mankind is in a continuous state of reaction because their

entire motivation springs out of a desire for the three ‘P’s’: Prestige, Power, and Profit.”

He smiled and nodded in agreement, then added: “Too bad they turn from the only “P” that really matters—Principle.” The English-born philosopher, writer, lecturer, and world traveler does not guarantee that those who follow in his footsteps will magically acquire great wealth, a position of importance, or a life free of problems. Rather, his teachings lead one toward contentment, true peace of mind, and purpose.

“The road to riches is not the road to real happiness,” writes Roy Masters. “The road to right response in each moment of Truth is that first step to everything.”

But how does one learn to respond rightly, you ask? You start with Masters’ LP record, *How Your Mind Can Keep You Well*. This teaches you how to meditate properly. He has produced three other recordings, but many claim his first is the best. One expert, a man who had spent thirty years practicing and studying Yoga meditation, went on public record as saying that Masters’ technique was superior to all others he had ever encountered. (By the way, you may have noticed that although we have discussed several aspects of Masters’ meditation technique, the exact step-by-step mechanics have not been described. They are, of course, available on Masters’ record, *How Your Mind Can Keep You Well*, and in his book of the same title.)

Every weekday morning at 7:30 on a radio station in the Los Angeles area, Masters speaks for fifteen minutes. Then he comes back at one o’clock for an hour-long telephone call-in program that is by far the most thought-provoking broadcast of its type I have ever heard. Roy admits on the air that his programs are unsponsorable. “No client in his ‘wrong’ mind would dare sponsor me,” he laughingly confesses. However, a couple of brave souls (businessmen who had been helped by Roy’s meditation) did sponsor a part of his air time.

In the summer months he also has a forty-five minute evening call-in program. Once the station offered him an additional early-morning slot between 5 and 6 A.M. He naturally took it, and believe it or not, people called up at that ridiculous hour and spilled out their innermost torments to him. One Beverly Hills grandmother set her

alarm clock by his broadcast. Only once did I manage to arise in time to hear him. Despite the predawn hour, it was an interesting session. I almost called up myself. He also had a weekly TV program that received much favorable comment.

His basic advice, no matter what the problem, is always: get the record and start meditating. And the problems his audience calls him about range from everyday so-called normal heartaches to the most embarrassingly intimate revelations. Even Mr. Anthony in his hayday would have been a little taken aback at some of the calls, but not Roy Masters.

“My husband has a masturbation problem, Mr. Masters. What can I do?”

“Lady!” Roy blasts back, “you’ve done enough. Masturbation isn’t his problem, it’s you.”

“You’re right, she sobs, tell me how I can change the kind of person I am.”

“Get my record.”

A man with broken English phones in. “I’m on community aid, Mr. Masters. I live in a slum where most of us are supported by welfare. I hate this charity business and I want to break out of this kind of life—but how can I?”

“Learn to Meditate by using my record.”

“I can hardly afford to feed my family, let alone buy your record.”

“Give me your name and address and I’ll mail you one free.”

The next call is from a career woman. Her complaint concerns a lady boss who bullies all the girls. “How can we insulate ourselves from her terrible tactics?” she asks.

“There is only one way,” Roy tells her, “and that is by learning how not to respond in an emotional way to her actions. In other words—don’t get upset.”

“Believe me, I’d love not getting upset but how can I learn not to?”

“My record, *How Your Mind Can Keep You Well*, explains how.”

A nurse calls him and confesses that she feels that she is living and working in error. “What can I do?” she wants to know.

“Your reason for choosing nursing as a career was wrong in the first place, wasn’t it?” Intuitively, Masters has summed up the situa-

tion.

“Yes....Yes, you’re right. I can see now that my motives were all wrong and I realize now that I am supporting a process of error. How can I change?”

“Do you have my record?”

“Yes,” comes her hesitating reply.

“Then use it.”

Another lady calling long distance explains: “My husband has two daughters by a previous marriage. His first wife called him last week and demanded that he come and get the girls because she can’t afford to keep them. So he went and got them. They had no clothes except what they wore. He spent a lot of money on new wardrobes and then she comes storming to our house demanding he return the girls to her...

Roy interrupts. “You resent this first wife tremendously, don’t you?”

“Why yes, I do.”

“You have a problem and it’s not the girls, your husband’s first wife, nor how unfair she may act. Your problem is resentment.”

Defensively, the woman retorts, “Why should my resentment be a problem? Isn’t it only natural?”

“Resentment, my dear woman, is most unnatural. It excites you to feel right. But know this, when you are resentful, no matter what the reason, you are most assuredly not right.”

“How can I free myself from this resentment?”

Again comes the answer, “Get and use my record.”

Surprisingly, quite a few young people listen to The Roy Masters Show, perhaps because in his no-nonsense attitude, they sense someone who cuts through sham with the truth. One girl in her early teens called Roy to complain about what sounded like an alcoholic mother and a father who was more than likely a borderline psychotic. Roy gave the girl some advice, and when I followed up on the girl later, I learned that Roy had helped her cope with her difficult home situation without damaging her own feelings.

Roy’s ability to deal with children and young people is a rare gift. Another potential reason for the attraction he holds for them might lie

in his spontaneity and dynamism. These two factors were strong influences on a more or less “instant cure” involving a teen-age girl who revealed on the air that her parents had just committed her to a state mental institution. Roy’s amazement was profound. So was his reaction, and I wish the girl’s parents could have heard what Roy had to say about them, and the situation. No, his outburst and incisive advice didn’t save the day in one blinding flash, but it left the girl with a positive course of action she could understand and follow...if she wished.

Never one to mince words, Roy Masters is a man who says what he feels no matter what the cost. Perhaps that’s why his program remains, in his opinion, unsponsorable. As a youngster growing up in England, his almost painful honesty, his perception, and his relentless questioning of the adult world’s sham standards cast a chilling silence to many a family gathering. Outspoken and guileless, he was called tactless by his elders and it was hoped he would outgrow this annoying trait. He never did.

Roy had a natural leaning toward the healing profession and it was decided that when he came of age he would be sent to medical school. His eldest brother was to become an architect. However, when he was fifteen his father passed away, and this meant that college for Roy was out. The family could only afford a higher education for the older boy.

Roy was sent to the seacoast city of Brighton to learn the diamond-cutting trade in his uncle’s factory. Following his apprenticeship he traveled to South Africa to pursue his profession. It was there that he began to be increasingly interested in the power of suggestion and the way the mind influences bodily functions.

Some years previously, he had attended a vaudeville performance featuring a stage hypnotist. When he had seen how apparently staid and dignified people could be manipulated into doing foolish things, something within had begun to click. He had perceived a principle at work and he was aware that this power could be used in a more constructive way than for entertainment.

In the evening and on weekends he traveled to the outskirts of Johannesburg, where he was able to witness the archaic ceremonies of native witch doctors. He was an astute observer and it due time begin

to understand their secrets. Bits of information were beginning to fall into place, and one day all would jell into a full comprehension of mental processes.

Masters returned to England, but wanderlust seized him once again. In 1949 he emigrated to the United States and soon prospered as an enterprising diamond cutter, lecturer, and gem expert. In a whirlwind courtship lasting a week, he met and married his wife. From Birmingham, Alabama, they moved to Texas, and Roy Masters unknowingly edged closer and closer to the work which would catapult him to front-page notoriety.

The Masters' finally settled in Houston to raise their growing family. Roy's reputation as a diamond authority grew, and he was often invited to participate in radio and TV interviews.

It was known that Roy had some familiarity with the phenomena of hypnosis, and when the Bridey Murphy furor swept the nation some of his friends asked him to explain. He obliged, and his home was soon jammed with people besieging him for demonstrations.

He realized at once that hypnosis was a "duplication of life's errors." Although many people are convinced that through hypnosis they can rid themselves of bad habits and limiting personality traits, Roy is just as certain that no good can ever come of such a practice. So instead of hypnotizing people he un hypnotized them. Of course, most never realized what was taking place.

Finally he decided to sell his diamond-cutting business and become a full-time professional in the field of hypnosis (or rather dehypnosis). And so he founded the Institute of Hypnosis, which was the forerunner of his present Foundation of Human Understanding. From the beginning his new venture flourished.

As many as thirty people a day, one every fifteen minutes, came for consultation. Roy never claimed he could heal anyone. He just explained principles and taught his meditation exercise. But cures started to occur, and this new miracle man by the name of Roy Masters caused quite a stir in medical circles throughout the sprawling Western metropolis.

Then one bleak day, the police arrived at the Institute with a warrant for his arrest. It was to be a test case to determine the legality of

non-medical practice of hypnosis. It was also to be quite a test for the Houston police officials who jailed Roy. They had an unexpected experience in store for them once Roy Masters was put behind bars.

Ever persuasive, Roy couldn't refrain from counseling his fellow inmates. As he explained what motivated their antisocial behavior he caused some profound changes. Soon he had almost half the prison population under his spell. Newspapers got wind of the story and publicized the strange turn of events. People clamored to talk to Roy. Some even attempted to bribe their way in to jail.

Putting Roy into solitary confinement couldn't halt the increasing demand for his services. Finally, after eighteen days, they allowed time off for "good behavior" and released him. He immediately opened the doors of his Institute and continued his career. This went on for two years, and during this time he perfected and finally produced his famous record, *How Your Mind Can Keep You Well*.

Once again the urge to move prompted him to pack his belongings, hatch a house-trailer to his car, and head with his family (now numbering four children) for wherever his inclination took him. So off they drove in eager anticipation of new horizons.

When asked how he came to settle in the Los Angeles area, his frank reply is, "It was the end of the summer and time for my children to attend school. So, wherever we happened to be—that was where we would stay put, at least for a little while."

For the moment, at least, Los Angeles and Roy Masters seem very right for each other. And it's only the present that interests Roy. For he not only teaches but practices the belief that it is the wise man who lives in the present in the presence.

Part 2

Roy Masters' Meditation Stories of Real Help

It started out to be a pleasant enough luncheon at the Paramount motion picture studio commissary. My host, a talented screenwriter—keenly interested in the dynamics of suggestion—was questioning me about something I had said during a lecture concerning the predictability of human behavior. I was finishing my Jerry Lewis salad and was combating the temptation to order the calorie-laden dessert being gulped down by some of the Bonanza cast sitting at the next table (talk about the power of suggestion...), when my friend casually asked, “How’s the new book coming along, Bill?”

“Real fine,” I answered, grateful for the momentary distraction from the ever-beckoning pastry-and-whipped-cream glob that Dan Blocker (garbed in his Hoss Cartwright costume) was shoveling into his smiling satisfied face. “Just this last weekend I completed a chapter on a really interesting fellow.”

“Yeah, who?”

“His name is Roy Masters and...”

Whammo! Unknowingly, I had lit a fuse.

“You’re writing about him? That no good....”

The violent reaction amazed me. What had happened? The good-natured, easy-going companion I was lunching with seemed to have vanished, and in his place was a very angry man. “Why in the hell are you wasting time on somebody like him? You sure must be a fool, Wolff.”

Now I was getting upset. “What has Roy Masters ever done to you?”

“Never you mind about that.”

Much of his turbulence had subsided, but his face was still contorted by anger. Was it a rarely-used mask, this taut, flushed, narrow-

eyed face? Or was this his real-life countenance, the pleasant smile and affability being the disguise?

“Why are you writing about that guy? There must be a hundred...a thousand others more important to put down in print.”

I tried to explain that Roy Masters had a large and loyal following and was apparently helping a considerable number of people. In fact, earlier that week, I had run into Donna Douglas, the shapely, blond ingénue star of the Beverly Hillbillies television series. She had told me, “Mr. Masters is a fine and principled person...one of the few.”

There were many others in the entertainment industry who felt the same way, and I mentioned the names of a few of the celebrities that I knew attended the Foundation of Human Understanding lectures, listened to Roy on the air, and utilized his technique of meditation.

Wise in the ways of show-business folk, the screenwriter was unimpressed. “For Heaven’s sake, Bill,” he said, grabbing my arm and leaning across the table, “actors are like children and not very bright ones at that. They can be taken in by anybody. Look at all the stars who dig that Maharishi character. He’s also pushing this meditation stuff.”

“I know all about the old gent. I had some in-depth conversations with him when he first came over,” I explained. “But believe me, the two men, their approaches and what they teach, are poles apart.” Why, I wondered, was I defending Roy Masters?

“They’re all alike...frauds,” he spat out.

His voice was getting louder, and I glanced over my shoulder a little apprehensively. A couple of movie extras nearby looked our way. “Have you really, and I mean really, checked this guy Masters out? A good reporter goes after all the facts. Just who has he helped...I mean besides actors?”

I countered: “Lots of people, and not only show-business types either. Listen, I did a pretty thorough job on his background, his technique, and his organization.”

My friend (or was it my former friend?) pulled an expensive gold cigarette case from his Sy Devore sports coat, clicked it open, withdrew a filter-tipped “coffin nail” (his own negative concept), and lit up. He took a couple of puffs and seemed to calm down a bit. Something he had just said sparked a thought.

“You know, I think you just gave me a worthwhile idea.”

“Like what?”

“I’m going to interview a lot more people who claim Roy Masters’ meditation helped them. I mean helped them in a big way.”

He was frowning as he reminded me, “I thought you already finished the chapter on him.”

“So, I’ll do another one of him.” I couldn’t help adding, “Like I said, he’s interesting copy.”

He was almost his old self as we drank our coffee. There was a markedly less hostile atmosphere, and I began to probe....subtly, of course. Just why had he reacted the way he had? What was the basis for such an emotional flare-up? Friend or not, I was going to find out. After all, he had only himself to blame (a reporter’s rationalization). By the time we strolled to the parking lot, I knew the reason for his reaction.

It seems that after a year or so of listening to Roy Masters’ radio programs and meditating daily, the screenwriter’s wife had “changed.” And the outraged husband insisted it was all for the bad.

What had actually happened, apparently, was that the lady in question—after many years of marriage—had finally seen through some of her husband’s devious tactics, methods he employed to get his way no matter what anyone else desired. He had ruled his domain like a monarch. But now, something had happened. Emancipation had come. His formerly “obedient” wife was “different.” I wanted to know how she was different. He was vague.

“Between you and me, Bill, it’s really bothering me...the way my wife looks at me. She never....reacts. I don’t mean she never talks. Hell, she talks more than before...and you wouldn’t believe what she tells me. I mean, she’s insultingly honest. And now the kids are starting it. Imagine a twelve-year-old telling his own father that...that I was... ‘a wrong trying to look right’...”

In addition to no longer responding in panic to “Big Daddy’s” mercurial changes of mood, the family—or so they claimed—now knew why he was doing what he was, even though he didn’t quite know himself. They were seeing right through the smoke screen. The throne was wobbly and the Emperor unnerved. The subjects refused to kneel.

“I feel...naked,” he sputtered, “and, damn it, I don’t like what’s happened one bit. Roy Masters is to blame!”

It was only with great effort that I managed not to laugh out loud. He would never have forgiven me. In my car, safely out of earshot, I giggled like an idiot. A king one day, and the court jester the next. It could happen to any of us.

Driving up Melrose toward Gower, I wondered how I would reach a wide selection of people who were meditating by Roy Masters’ method. By the time I pulled into the CBS parking lot, I had an idea kicking around. Inside my office, all thoughts of my book, Masters, and meditation were pushed aside as I tackled a desk full of work. But around seven o’clock that evening, as I rode the elevator down to the lobby and headed toward my car, my thoughts drifted back to the plan. And before reaching my home in Manhattan Beach, I had mentally finalized it.

Later that week, I presented myself a little before air time and told Roy Masters I wanted him to announce that I was interested in hearing from anyone who had personally had some sort of a healing, or solved a serious problem, or had anything special happen as a direct result of the meditation. He was just about to begin his public service broadcast when he got an idea.

“Better than me making an announcement, Bill, why don’t you come on the broadcast and tell the listeners just exactly what you want?”

It seemed logical, so I agreed and appeared on the program. I made my request to his audience.

At least fifty people responded immediately to my request. I’m certain that if I had asked Roy to really push it, three times that many would have volunteered to talk of their healings. Besides the calls, there were numerous letters as a result of my appearance. Since my time was limited, I told Roy not to encourage any more response. Just following through on the people who had already called was going to eat up a great deal of my writing time. It’s silly of me, but occasionally I envy the writer of fiction, who, in my weaker moments, I imagine to be free from the routine of research, just sitting beside his pool, creating.

I mentioned letters. The Foundation of Human Understanding receives a tremendous amount of mail daily and I was allowed free access to the correspondence as it came in. One of the letters struck me as being pretty typical and illustrating why Roy Masters' organization is flourishing:

...Since practicing the meditation and looking to my inward self my life has completely changed in many areas. I was a nurse for ten years and was in charge of an emergency hospital. It gave me up, as you most aptly say time and again. Now I am staying home where I belong with my children and husband a place I should have been five years ago. All the good things that have happened to us as a family are too numerous to mention here, but if we had never heard your radio broadcast we would still be wondering around in the dark.

*Very truly yours,
A Friend in Truth*

Another letter is a perfect example of what happens when Roy and his commandos foray deep into "enemy" territory (the world of Academia), seeking a stray intellectual malcontent who secretly admits that the answer to the whole disgusting, brutish business of existence on this severely troubled planet lies not in sociological, psychological, philosophical, or theological volumes, but in a deeper inner contact with reality.

Dear Mr. Masters:

The members of the Academy of Religion and Mental health want to express appreciation to you and your staff for your participation in the outstanding Workshop held at the University of California, Irvine, and also for providing speakers for two other occasions for our meetings. Thank you also for so generously providing members with your "Meditation-Exercise" record. The members voted to send you the enclosed amount as a token of our gratitude for your efforts, and

regret it has been inadvertently delayed.

The “Meditation-Exercise” approach to attaining mental health has been of great interest to many of our members, and several of the therapists have indicated an interest in trying the method with selected patients, along with other treatment.

You may possibly find some of the comments helpful in enabling you and your staff to present this interesting and effective technique more persuasively. Some members wondered why, in your literature, terms such as “involution” and “evolution” were used with different connotations than those usually employed; some ministers felt that your staff attacked “organized religion” (although others understood you were attempting to present basic Truths of religion in their highest sense); many could not comprehend how such a simple technique could possibly provide the “complete cure” or “panacea” without resorting to other measures.

Perhaps in your future writings and lectures, the mentioning of case histories of people who have studied and employed this technique effectively would help substantiate the profundity of this simple and creative approach to attaining “the peace that passeth understanding.” Spreading the word of such a technique is of course vitally needed by our youth, many of whom are searching for transcendental experiences in other ways that are not ultimately constructive.

We want to wish you and the Foundation of Human Understanding increasing success in spreading the knowledge of this basic and needed technique.

*Sincerely yours,
ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND MENTAL HEALTH
By C. Haninger, Secretary*

From the many meditators that contacted me, I have chosen several case histories as more or less representative of those who suc-

cessfully utilize Roy Masters' methodology. Also, these men and women particularly impressed me with their honesty and sincerity and it's my belief that their personal experiences are very enlightening. I greatly appreciate their willingness to share their stories.

Case History Number 1

This is the case history of Mrs. S. J. In her late twenties, she and her husband were beset by numerous marital difficulties. They tried professional counselors but nothing seemed to help, and it seemed to all concerned that their marriage was doomed to end in the divorce court. Even though she had been listening to Roy Masters' radio programs, she didn't get around to taking his advice about meditating.

She and her husband separated after their marriage had almost completely deteriorated. Plunged deep into gloom, she finally stopped by the Foundation and picked up a record. It was around 11 A.M. when she returned to her apartment with the record. In a few hours she would be meeting with the lawyers handling the divorce to agree upon a property settlement. As anguished as she was about her broken marriage, she felt somewhat relieved that soon all the unpleasantness would be past history and she could start afresh. Having nothing to do until she left for the lawyers' office, she put the record on her phonograph player.

"Mr. Masters is a genius," she told me. "As I listened to what he was saying on the record...something just 'clicked' inside me."

She cancelled the divorce, even though she was the one who initiated it in the first place; it was a complete surprise to her husband. When I asked her the reason, she replied: "The record seemed to awaken great strength and resources within me and I just knew the wisdom needed to make a go of our marriage would come and guide me."

Apparently that's what happened. Now, three years later, she and her husband have resolved most of their major difficulties. Adding to their happiness is the arrival of their first child, a beautiful daughter. Mrs. S. J. admits that they still have some problems, but she says now she can meet the challenges properly.

You are about to embark on the most wonderful experience of your life. I will not explain at this moment how and why it works; I don't have the time. It just does. The secret is not apparent to the casual listener. It reveals itself only to the person who is willing to follow the step-by-step instructions and will follow through with the mental exercise...Don't expect a "miracle" instantly; results often appear immediately but usually because of individual differences of makeup it may vary from three minutes to three days...

*An excerpt from Roy Masters' exercise,
"How Your Mind Can Keep You Well"
Side One, "The Preparation"*

Case History Number 2

Mrs. A. L., fifty years old, was in a continuous state of depression brought on by the death of her elderly parents. Her husband, a successful salesman, tried to reason with his wife, explaining over and over that her mother and father had lived long and productive lives and that, although it was normal for her to be sad, her reaction just didn't seem right. She refused to attend any social functions and stayed at home grieving. Nothing her relatives, friends, or family physician said could remove the cloak of sorrow she had wrapped around herself.

Her twenty-five-year-old son, who had recently returned from college, happened to be watching a television interview show featuring Roy Masters. When the program ended, the young man immediately drove to the Foundation of Human Understanding to purchase a record. He pleaded with his mother to listen to the record and do what it said. Mrs. A. L. promised she would comply with his request.

True to her word, she finally managed to work up enough energy to listen to the record. "My mind was so filled with a million thoughts that I couldn't understand a word...actually, I don't think I heard hardly anything," she admitted. "But I know my boy is very smart, and when he said I should listen, I knew he must be right so I listened to the whole record a second time."

A few things did penetrate; she decided it was important for her to understand everything Mr. Masters was saying on the record. Every day for the next week she listened to it four times a day, determined to understand. And by the second week something had happened.

“I got such a joyous feeling—so light, I felt...like a load had been lifted off my back,” she explained.

I was interested in her family’s reaction and questioned her about it. She replied with all the enthusiasm of a person who had found something extremely valuable: “My husband and sons were so happy with the way I suddenly changed. I was at ease, comfortable, and for the first time in so very long I could gather up my wits. Life is so great; everything is wonderful with me. You know, Mr. Wolff, even my housework goes so easy since I started meditating with Mr. Masters’ record.”

She went on and on. To my amazement, I discovered she was a faster talker than I was. “I wish to God everybody would know about Roy’s record. Would you believe that people actually walk away from me when I try to convince them that they should hear it?”

Don’t discuss this meditation with anyone yet; just think it, feel it secretly, and do it.

*An excerpt from Roy Masters’ excise,
“How Your Mind Can Keep You Well”
Side Two, “Meditation Exercise”*

Case History Number 3

For some, life truly does begin at forty (or fifty or even sixty), and the dawn of each day is an adventure of discovery bringing them closer to the Temple of Truth. There are others who, in middle age, face the twilight hours of their struggle to survive. Hope for them has faded, and as the end approaches their only companions are the bitterness of memory and the ashes of dreams never realized. R. R. is a man whose agonies were extensive; grief was his only inheritance. But wait...that’s not quite true. In his own words:

“I heard you on Roy’s program once when you mentioned some of

your experiences lecturing and teaching at a federal prison. Mr. Wolff, believe me, I have empathy for all who get imprisoned in society's net. Cornered and having little to eat, little by little I too gave up principles just to keep on existing. I wanted to survive in the right way but I didn't know how.

I lost my Mom when I was three; I was the youngest of my twelve brothers and sisters. My father took to drinking and we lost our farm. I was placed in a Lutheran orphanage and it seemed like a jail to me. The oldest minded the youngest and the place reeked with meanness. Those who were weak and not good-looking and that didn't have relatives that cared were treated more cruelly than the others.

"Twice a week we'd line up nude to shower, and if the 'top dog' had it in for us or we looked scared or even just stared at him in the wrong way, we got beaten. When I was seventeen years old they threw me out with seven dollars in my pocket. And until I heard Mr. Masters, I never recovered from that orphanage.

"My wife died four years ago; she was only thirty-seven. No wishing will ever bring her back, but if we had known of the Foundation of Human Understanding five or six years ago, I just know she'd be alive today and happy. I had a terrible case of ulcers and the doctors couldn't do a thing about them. I guess all the hatred that I felt every time I would remember those days in the orphanage tied me tighter to my sickness. Two of the bigger boys would hold my hands and feet and stretch me across a bench while the 'top dog' pounded me with a ball bat. The past haunted me and was killing me just like my wife's past killed her.

"Meditating helped cure my ulcers and showed me how to handle my son properly and be like a real father should. Before, I would only think of myself and what a raw deal I got out of life. I felt so damn sorry for myself and never once thought about how rough it was for my boy. One night, after a particularly tough day at work, I came home and got in an argument with him. My ulcer really started pain-ing me something fierce.

"I guess I expected lots of love from my son...like I did from my wife. I needed their love to comfort me. Anyway, the argument with my boy really hurt. That night...actually it was three in the morning, I was still not asleep because the pain of the ulcers was getting

stronger. My medicine didn't help me one bit and I decided to get to the hospital. Then something happened.

“As I was getting out of bed, I realized how hard it would be for him when he got up to go to school. He'd be all alone and not knowing what would happen to him if I should die or something like that. My God! It dawned on me that I was setting the boy up to be an orphan just like I was. Damn it! It's not fair to him. How selfish I was.

“The strangest thing happened as I sat on the edge of the bed thinking about his welfare and not my own. The pain was gone! And to this day, Mr. Wolff, a year later, I haven't had another attack.

“I guess I was always a set-up for being hurt. There was always this feeling that my love was never being returned from those that I loved. Then my eyes opened to the truth. For the first time, I could see that I wasn't really loving them. There was no true love in me, just some phony kind of selfish ego love. Like Roy sometimes says on the radio, 'A lion has a great love for its dinner.' Boy, that sure is the way it used to be with me.

“No doctor, minister, or teacher, no drug or book or anything could do what Roy Masters did for me. I got my life back again and I'm going to be able to help my son because I know...I mean I really and truly know how to stop hating and start loving in the right way.”

When we cannot give love, we need love.

When we cannot understand, we need understanding,

It's very frustrating because no one has it to give.

*An excerpt from Roy Masters' exercise,
“How Your Mind Can Keep You Well”
Side One, “The Preparation”*

Roy Masters had been accused of always harping on what's wrong with people rather than focusing attention on what is right. His reason for not accentuating the positive can best be summed up in the words of the great American author, William Faulkner, who wrote: “Just to write about the good qualities in my country wouldn't do anything to change the bad ones. I've got to tell the people about the bad ones, so

they'd be angry enough or shamed enough to change it.”

Case History Number 4

Mrs. B. K. is thirty-seven years old and is a soft-spoken, matronly woman, the mother of a bright-eyed, alert fourteen-year-old daughter. They live in a comfortable apartment that reflects the tranquility of its occupants. Things were quite a bit different four years ago. “My husband,” she said, “was an absolute egomaniac.”

She recalled how miserable and hellish life used to be. “I suffered from migraine headaches and I had all sorts of indigestion problems. My hands shook so that I could hardly lift a cup of tea without spilling it. My doctor warned me that I was approaching a nervous breakdown.”

Her husband, outwardly a pleasant person and good provider, managed to keep both wife and daughter in a perpetual state of agitation. Mealtimes were always the most difficult, and heated arguments accompanied breakfast and dinner. Always, he was in the right and they were the wrongdoers. He resorted to physical abuse once, when she pleaded with him to seek psychiatric help. She never brought up the subject again.

Strangely enough, it was her husband who first told her about Roy Masters. Quite by accident, he heard one of the radio programs while driving to work. On that particular day, Roy was blasting away at women-folk and their “cunning ways of tempting the male animal.” At any rate, the man was delighted at what he had heard and strongly urged his wife to listen and learn.

She did tune in. But now Roy was explaining the ways of the ego-centric man-child and the strategy that can defeat his vicious game. Hearing Roy's invitation to any listener with a problem to call him, she immediately sat down and phoned. “I talked to him for less than five minutes and he perfectly described my husband's personality, my past and present reactions, and all sorts of things. For a while, I actually thought Mr. Masters was a psychic or something like that.”

There are many who suspect Roy of being clairvoyant. He laughs off such talk as nonsense. “When you're familiar with principles,” he

asserts, “it’s a simple matter to understand cause and effect.”

It wasn’t long before Mrs. B. K. had purchased a record, and she and her daughter began meditating. “It took me about two years before the migraine headaches completely ceased,” she told me. “But a lot happened before that. My daughter and I learned how not to react to my husband’s mealtime shenanigans. That man tried everything to shake us up, but as we continued to meditate and listen to Roy Masters on the radio, we became calmer and calmer.”

The husband’s reaction to his wife’s and daughter’s new-found serenity was a mixture of confusion, frustration, and unreasoning fear. He cursed himself for ever having mentioned Roy Masters program to them. Ranting and raging, he laid down the law: “Your will not listen to Masters’ program and you will not use his meditation record ever again!”

To enforce his edict, he grabbed up the LP disc, pamphlets, and books his wife had purchased at the Foundation of Human Understanding and threw them in the garbage can. Still his wife and daughter didn’t get upset. They just looked at him, or perhaps it was through him. One idea tormented him. While he was at work his wife could always find some way to listen to the program even if he destroyed all the radios in the house.

The idea so infected his thinking that he refused to leave the house when Roy was on the air. He got another job so he could be home during the daytime hours. Still, Mrs. B. K. did not react; she had already learned the key and could meditate without the use of the record. Also, it wasn’t necessary for her to hear Roy Masters’ program.

Frequently, after an unsuccessful attempt to emotionalize his wife, he would retreat to the bedroom to curl up in a fetal position. Braving his wrath, Mrs. B. K. confronted her husband with the absurdity of his behavior and urged him to get help before it was too late. The man’s relatives were of little help, since his facade of normalcy fooled them. Also, the fact that she readily admitted not only to meditating but to being in complete agreement with Roy Masters made her suspect to them. She was the sick one, they felt, and not the husband.

As each month passed, her husband’s hatred of Roy Masters grew in intensity. All the while, both mother and daughter remained placid. Their eyes revealed no hint of fear or resentment and the brightness of

Truth's gaze caused him to react like a cockroach scurrying to its crack in the wall when the light in a tenement is turned on.

"What finally happened?" I asked.

"In less than a year....he died," she quietly informed me.

"But how? I mean....what caused his death?"

"The doctor said it was a heart attack. But I know that my husband died of hate."

By learning not to be upset, we retain that original sameness that exists in the NOWNESS forever that we call everlasting life. People who are negatively influenced by stress can never change the world they live in. The world they live in changes them.

An excerpt from Roy Masters' tape

"Conquering Daily Problems"

Side One, "Discussion"

Case History Number 5

Miss J. H., thirty-five years old and unmarried, was raised in a spiritual environment and schooled in Theosophic meditation (much like the type Magarishi Mahesh Yogi teaches) when she was very young. It had been a dominant factor in her life for as long as she could remember. She had attained many states of awareness and bliss via the transcendental route; yet some nagging doubts persisted.

Despite all her knowledge, metaphysical training, and devout practice, she finally had to face the fact that her burden of problems and wrong reactions to life situations was no less than those of her intimate friends who followed no spiritual path. "After many years of employing a variety of meditation techniques where I experienced great feelings of uplift, I have come to the conclusion that all were only temporary and Mr. Masters' is permanent."

When questioned on how Roy's teaching differed from the others she had so diligently explored, she answered, "It allowed me to see my hidden resentments rather than to cover them up with pretty words or

distracting mantras. The transcendental techniques that I had held so near and dear were all escape-to-oblivion devices.”

Be sure that you do not do this exercise for the sole purpose of feeling better, or to get something out of it... Do the meditation to BE BETTER rather than to feel better.

*An excerpt from Roy Masters' exercise,
"How Your Mind Can Keep You Well"
Side One, "The Preparation"*

Case History Number 6

Mrs. J. A. is a charming sort. She'd be a hard person not to like. In fact, all her life, family and friends considered her to be the most normal and easy-going gal anyone could ever hope to meet. Everyone described her as being a "nice guy." In any popularity contest, she'd win hands down.

Mrs. J. A. might very well have been a top movie actress had she stayed with it. But when she married, the glamour of the screen was gladly exchanged for the more important role of a housewife and mother, "And after nineteen years of marriage, there are no regrets."

Her husband, a movie actor whose first marriage to and subsequent divorce from a former child super-star made headlines, did not really object when his wife started meditating. He just wondered as everyone else did, why on earth she, of all people, needed to meditate.

"I had tremendous inner turmoil. It seemed to be snowballing. I was getting sicker and sicker and all sorts of negative things were happening to me.

As in so many other cases, it was a friend who told her about Roy Masters. After listening to the enthusiastic recommendation, she decided to attend an evening lecture at the Foundation to hear for herself about this process of stilling the mind.

"Almost from the start, I had good results. Maybe not so earth-shaking as some people, but it changed my life." Then she added, perhaps a little ruefully, "I haven't quit smoking yet, but one of these

days, I'm sure I will."

Maybe meditation hasn't helped her get rid of cigarettes, but it did bring to light some deeply buried resentments that had been eating away at her. "In meditating with the record, hostilities that I had unknowingly harbored all my life just seemed to bubble up to the surface. And as I observed them, they dissolved and I was free...."

Many of the changes, she explained, had been gradual and so delicate that she hardly realized what was happening until long afterwards. "Do you know, Mr. Wolff, I haven't even needed an aspirin for the last year."

Her husband started meditating about six weeks after his wife began, and is as enthusiastic about it as she is. During the summer, their ten-year-old son attended a special series of talks for youngsters given by Bob McQuain, and no doubt will also be greeting each morning by listening to the stillness within.

... You will not feel the need of approval of other people.

*An excerpt from Roy Masters'tape
"Conquering Daily Problems"
Side Two, "Meditation"*

Case History Number 7

Jimmie Smith gave me permission to use his name in this true-life account of a most timely meditation experience. In light of today's tense racial situation, I especially appreciate his allowing the cloak of anonymity to be dropped for this particular case history.

When I first heard the dapper, thirty-year-old lecturer speak, I was favorably impressed by his quiet yet forceful manner of expression. He effectively communicated what were obviously sincere and heartfelt feelings about the meditation technique that had helped to change his life. It was also obvious that several of those sitting with me that afternoon weren't at all sure they liked hearing profound advice from a relatively young man whose skin happened to be a different color than theirs. Of course, Jimmie Smith sensed as much and enjoyed the

challenge. At lecture's end, the entire audience had been won over and many crowded around him asking questions.

It was months later, on a local TV show, that I heard Jimmie confess he had once been an advocate of black militancy. I was frankly surprised. This neatly groomed, purposeful human being looks and sounds like a psychologist or sociologist at times, and it's hard for me to imagine him as a proponent of black power.

Six years ago, Jimmie reacted to life a lot differently. He had been bitter (and perhaps rightly so) about the way "Whitey" was keeping him from making a living in his chosen career. University-educated, Jimmie was keenly sensitive to the discrimination he faced at every turn. It cut deeply. But he didn't intend to take that kind of treatment without fighting back. Joining with other young Afro-Americans, he worked for an organization called the Self-Determination Committee. He toured the country getting signatures on a petition that protested the Emancipation Proclamation. When enough signatures had been gathered, they intended to ask the United Nations to formally charge the United States with genocide. Like his peers, Jimmie was an angry young man.

One evening in a small, ramshackle wooden church in the black section of Birmingham, Alabama, after he had finished delivering a particularly emotional speech, the elderly pastor of the congregation stepped up to him and said, "Son, those were mighty strong words you said from my pulpit. But just remember, you can't go nowhere without God."

Strangely enough, Jimmie did remember. Those words, for some unexplainable reason, kept coming back to him, haunting him, pricking his conscience. Every time he recalled the scene, he'd think, "How can a man really make contact with God and hear Him? How?"

Back in Los Angeles, frustrated and longing for something he couldn't articulate, Jimmie heard about the Foundation of Human Understanding. He had been invited to attend a black rally protesting police brutality that day, but halfway there he turned around and made his way to hear Roy Masters. "At first, I considered what Roy was talking about to be pretty far out. I attended a few more lectures and listened to him on the radio and even sent for the record...but I did not get around to using it. I left L.A. again for a while. Then when I came

back I started meditating with the record.”

Jimmie had studied theatrical makeup at USC, hoping to work in motion pictures as a makeup man. But he could never get into the guild that controlled all such employment. In 1963, he had submitted an application. Five years later, after the riots, he received a notice listing the requirements for eligibility for apprenticeship.

Although he is still interested in the art, a new career has opened up; it's one that may have an important effect on this nation's future. In Jimmie's own words: "There's a desperate need for a rebirth of consciousness, motivation, intent, and response in all people, regardless of color, economic strata, or education. Without it." Jimmie warns "chaos."

Masters' meditation technology, Jimmie told me, has redirected his entire life. Aside from his lecture activity, he is gaining valuable broadcasting experience on a local FM radio station, plus guesting on various TV shows. So now, instead of covering up faces with grease paint, Jimmie Smith is washing away hatred and ignorance from all who will listen to the same Truth that freed him from the burden of reacting wrongly to a world he never made.

Hostility makes us feel right in our wrong, and our sense of rightness stimulates us to be aggressive.

*An excerpt from Roy Masters' book,
"How Your Mind Can Keep You Well"*

Part 3

Why We Are Afraid

The effect of Masters' message is also clear of course in the lives of those closely associated with the Foundation of Human Understanding. One of these men, A. Marcus Jensen, has made a significant contribution to the Foundation; lucky indeed is the organization or cause that attracts this special breed of believer.

A. Marcus Jensen is a man who always puts not only his money but his valuable time and considerable energy into anything he considers worthwhile. He prefers action to words, and at fifty-four years of age his deeds in the construction business have earned for him a tidy fortune and reputation for integrity. Unlike that of the typical high-powered businessman (who has carved out his niche in the commercial world with little assistance from anyone else), Marcus Jensen's prime motivation is not money nor ego-satisfying industrial triumph. All his life, even while making himself known in the competitive marketplace, he has sought out the elusive answers to the questions every true seeker ponders in the quiet moments of the soul.

His parents had him baptized into the Mormon faith but by his sixteenth birthday he had chosen to leave the church. "It just wasn't for me," he says. And so began a search for something that would fill the void. His investigations into one religion after another failed to uncover that special something for which he so desperately longed. Then he discovered metaphysics and before long involved himself deeply with a New Thought church headed by an ex-Catholic priest who preached convincingly on the power of the mind and the efficacy of positive affirmation.

"The guy had me fooled for a little while," Marcus Jensen admits. "But it wasn't too long before I began to realize the fallacy of his philosophy. The clincher came one evening when I invited the good doctor to my home to give a talk to a group of my closest friends. I paid

him cash for his time.

“Well, he came all right. Trouble was...he had been drinking. In fact, he was pretty well looped. Then, when he started making lewd remarks and passes at the teenage girls present, I called a cab and sent him home. I never bothered attending another of his Sunday services after that.”

Marcus Jensen is one of the country’s leading house-moving contractors and also has extensive dealings in the field of land development and financing. He’s on the go a great deal of the time and it was on a busy day, while he was hurrying to look over some very important property for a possible shopping center site, that he happened to hear Roy Masters. Marcus’s alert mind immediately perceived the significance of what he was hearing. A practical man, he was well aware of truth’s value; he isn’t the type to become addicted to rose-colored glasses.

Decisiveness is one of Jensen’s predominant traits, and once he had weighed in his mind the relative importance of action that could lead to a hundred-thousand-dollar deal against the promise being made on the air, that there was a method by which one could remain poised and unruffled even in the midst of the most pressing crisis, his choice was made. Making a U-turn, Marcus Jensen headed his Cadillac toward the Foundation of Human Understanding. He wanted that record and he wanted it without delay.

While picking up the LP, he examined some of the literature on display. It was then that he spotted Roy Masters’*The Secret Language Behind the Power of Suggestion*. Thinking back, Marcus recalled, “That pamphlet nearly put me into orbit. It seemed to have an energy all its own...like it was alive.”

I think I know what he meant. Listening to Roy and reading his work can be like studying the Bible by lightning-flash. Brilliantly potent ideas, the kind that can wrench the mind free from brutal, binding concepts, come rolling out every now and then from his complex, wordy paragraphs; they explode with a thunderous roar and then...painful silence. The natural reaction is to grab out in a vain attempt to retain the fading echo, but it all too quickly dissolves into the ether.

Marcus Jensen informed me that he wasted little time utilizing Masters' meditation record to the fullest. One of the first things he did was to purchase a portable battery-operated phonograph so he could hear the instructions in his car no matter where his work took him. And listen he did; at busy construction sites and desolate suburban areas, beside noisy railroad tracks and on quiet side streets, in the privacy of his office and home, over and over he heard Roy's message until it became his.

"Marcus," I asked, "what was it that most impressed you about what Roy Masters explains on the LP?"

He answered, "After listening to the record, I saw life."

Not fully understanding, I requested clarification.

"Did anything.....special happen to you?"

There was a slight chuckle. "You might say so, Bill."

"Like what?"

"Right after I heard the record, I never smoked another cigarette...and that was five years ago. It's funny, the idea of giving up smoking never even entered my mind when I listened to Roy."

"Did you have much of a cigarette habit?"

"Up 'til then, I smoked about five packs a day."

The more he changed through meditation, the more it seemed to disturb those around him. "Strange, but a lot of my friends and even some of my family were very upset at how I changed. Many employees quit," Marcus told me.

He explained that his new-found truth was too much for them. "I didn't think I was any different. Sure, I was maybe more honest...more outspoken, and they couldn't stand to be around anyone who expressed himself honestly."

Apparently there was more of a change in him than he realized. His wife started divorce proceedings, but eventually decided against the action and dropped it. Jensen remained steadfast in his new attitude; he didn't care if he ended up all alone and lost every penny.

Marcus Jensen, as I have already indicated, shows his gratitude not with words but deeds. As Vice President of the Foundation, he is now in the process of helping acquire a larger building, one capable of seating many more people than the present limited quarters. Someday soon, if all goes well, the Foundation of Human Understanding will be

better able to accommodate the thousands who are also seeking the special something Marcus Jensen seems to have found.

Another meditation enthusiast, Bob McQuain, was a far different type from the house-moving tycoon. When I was first introduced to Bob, I knew that I had seen him someplace before; but where? It wasn't long before the answer popped into my memory. The husky, six-foot-three McQuain had been a television actor on *The Andy Griffith Show*, *Perry Mason*, and the *Gunsmoke* series. He had also starred in a Pasadena Playhouse production with comedienne Zsa Zu Pitts that received excellent press reviews.

As a talented newcomer to Hollywood, he had a bright future; important people were aware that he existed and a mighty TV mogul had taken Bob into his "stable." He had two avenues of entry into the world of film-making. He could stick with acting or he could take his place among the well-paid ranks of the production end of the entertainment industry. As it turned out, he deserted the dream merchants and cast his lot with the "Great Awakener," Roy Masters (for considerably less money), as a full-time associate.

Knowing how desperately thousands of eager Thespians struggle to get even a toe in the door of the Hollywood star-makers, I had to wonder how this fellow McQuain, who had had the door personally opened for him, could slam it shut and walk away. Did he lack stamina? To an actor it's as important as talent and ability. Or did the young performer's urge for self-expression (always abnormal among artists of any persuasion) "normalize" when he saw that his need for audience adulation resulted from fear, the terrible fear of emptiness that plagues all who are separated from Truth?

Bob McQuain hails from West Virginia and was educated in Southern military schools. But it was television and the theater that beckoned him, insofar as a career was concerned. At WTVR-TV in Richmond, he served his apprenticeship as announcer, cameraman, and director. His children's puppet program was a great favorite with moppets and mothers alike. This personable young man, everyone said, would go far. He was strictly network material.

In the summer of 1958, he had an opportunity to gain stage expe-

rience in a well-known outdoor drama, *The Last Colony*, staged in Mantio, North Carolina. Andy Griffith, the rustic comedy star, had also once acted in the pageant and had gone on to be discovered in New York. McQuain prayed lightning would strike twice. In a way, it did.

It didn't take too long for McQuain's stage work to gain favorable notice and be brought to the attention of the spectacularly successful Richard O. Linke, personal manager and career guide for Andy Griffith and Jim "Gomer Pyle" Nabors as well as half-a-dozen other big league show-business personalities. The man who had shepherd-ed Griffith from North Carolina obscurity to a level of popularity which at one time attracted forty million TV viewers every week over a period of several years agreed to signed up McQuain. "He had good potential," the peripatetic Linke was to recall.

He met and married a pretty Texan who worked as a secretary at ABC-TV. May was a great help to Bob. She was always there to lift his spirits when another actor got the TV role he was counting on. And after several days of making the rounds of casting offices and hearing "Sorry, Mr. McQuain. You're not the type we had in mind," May was always waiting at home to soothe away the hurt of rejection, to comfort his bruised ego. Between acting jobs, it was May who reassured him that his luck, all good up to now, would get even better, and the big part (the one that would surely catapult him into stardom) was just around the corner.

During the summer hiatus, when few actors can find work, Bob, who was now the proud father of a baby boy, couldn't afford to be unemployed. It hurt his pride, but he took a night job with the maintenance crew of the bustling Consolidated Film Industries. After all, it was just a temporary thing. In the fall there would be parts opening up for him. He was talented; he had good credits and powerful contacts. He'd make it okay. No sweat.

By the time the new season started, Bob wasn't anxious to quit. Since he worked nights, his days were free to pursue acting parts, and in the meantime he liked a pay check coming in every week. Besides that, the production part of the film business interested him more than he had expected. His rise to a position of responsibility was relatively rapid, and before long he found himself assistant to the manager of

titles, optics, and special effects for Consolidated Film Industries. He worked on some of CBS-TV's biggest series.

However, before his new career really started moving and the decision to forget about acting was made, Bob McQuain was, to put it mildly, confused. Like most males, he took out his frustration on his wife and their marriage suffered. May didn't know what to do; she had never seen her husband act this way before.

Then one day over coffee a friend told May about Roy Masters. It was several weeks later before she remembered about the program and turned it on. She was impressed, but decided not to rush into anything before knowing a lot more about it. Finally, after several months, May was satisfied that perhaps meditation, as it was explained on the air by Roy Masters, could benefit her; she bought the record. What's more, she began to use it faithfully.

All the while, Bob, drinking a little more than he usually did, wondered about the change coming over his wife. At first it was ever so slight, but as each week passed, the difference in her...attitude...became more pronounced. May no longer babied her husband; she made it very clear that her days of being his comforter were over. Bob felt rejected.

May never mentioned Roy Masters' name or the meditation exercise to her troubled spouse. Bob made no bones about it when he readily admitted, "If she would have tried to force meditation on me or even praised it or anything like that, I never would have investigated for myself. Frankly, May handled me marvelously, that's for sure."

As you can imagine, that's not the way Bob felt a couple of years ago. There came a time when he started to take notice of the radio program May had become addicted to and the literature she read with such interest. Initially, he considered it just another kooky California cult. He was somewhat surprised that his ordinarily level-headed wife should fall for such hokum. But eventually, May's transformation began getting to him.

"The hardest part, as I recall, was that no matter what I said or did, May just would not react."

Some of his actions at that time, he told me, were really outlandish. Whenever he observed his wife going to the bedroom with

the record and portable phonograph, he'd come stomping in, slamming the door, opening and shutting the bureau drawers, and doing anything else he could think of to interrupt her meditation. But May was rooted in principle and never obliged her husband.

The more she kept her cool, the more antagonized Bob became. He accused her of not caring for him anymore. When he could take it no longer, he played his trump card. Deciding to show her once and for all who had the upper hand, Bob gave her an ultimatum. "Either you stop all this meditation nonsense, May, or I'm going to pack up all my things and leave you. I mean it!"

She looked at her husband and didn't answer him as she considered his words. At first she was a little frightened. She loved Bob and always would, but this was her moment of truth. With a voice free of any emotion, she told him, "I don't want you to leave, but I will not stop meditating. If I did, our marriage wouldn't last very long anyway; so if you must go...I guess you'll just have to."

Now he was really shook. Bob couldn't believe his ears. Unable to utter a word, he just stared at his wife. "I was...deflated. My energy was gone...depleted."

Following his wife's answer to his demand, an answer that left him stunned, Bob couldn't go to work. He called in sick. For a week he just moped around the house not saying a word. Needless to say, he wasn't about to leave May. She had called his bluff, and he knew it. He also knew that she had something else, something that maybe he should look into.

May didn't make any comments one way or the other when she observed her husband listening to Roy Masters' program with her. It was a little harder to refrain from commenting when he asked whether he could borrow her meditation record: "I...I want to hear it, May. I mean, that is, if it's okay with you."

Of course it was. But May still didn't say anything. She just handed him the record and explained that she had to do some shopping. "I'll be back in an hour or so, Bob." He was alone and he hurried to the phonograph.

The day before, Bob had heard Roy mention on his program that he would be giving a lecture that evening on "What Men Should Know About Women." An angry Bob McQuain was sitting right up

front as Roy spoke. “I was really ridiculous that night. Do you know, Bill, I even refused to look at Roy when he was speaking. I stared at the ceiling, at pictures on the wall, and at my feet. I did some other things, too, in hopes that he’d be disturbed.” Laughing, Bob added, “He wasn’t...but I sure was.”

How did Bob react to Roy’s record? Remembering the incident quite clearly, he recounted: “I thought someone was sticking electrodes into my head as I sat listening to it. It was as if all my life I had walked around stooped over and then all of a sudden I could stand up straight for the first time.”

To his wife’s complete amazement, Bob began attending every lecture at the Foundation that he could. And at every opportunity, he utilized the meditation principle Roy was teaching. “I was starved for it. At first, I must tell you, I meditated for the great feeling or release that it gave me. That was wrong, of course. Later on I started meditating for the right reason and not for any good feeling.”

A year later, Bob McQuain made one of the biggest decisions of his life. As it happened, I was at Consolidated Film Industries one afternoon, supervising the production of a film spot that I had written to be used on CBS-TV, when Bob saw me and came over.

I was a little taken aback. I knew he had just been assigned some top TV shows to work with. In fact, the network had requested him specifically. If he kept on like he had been, Bob would have no trouble getting to the top. He had youth, personality, tremendous experience on both sides of the camera, and a great track record. Any way you look at it, he had a lot going for him.

“Bob, are you sure you know what you’re giving up?” I had to question his decision. I’ve known a lot of people who gave up everything to pursue a metaphysical vocation. And some of them lived to regret their choice.

“I appreciate your concern, Bill. But I thought about this a long time and it’s the right thing to do. Financially, it will be a little difficult, but it’s worth the sacrifice.”

Happiness is most emphatically not a dry martini. I might add, it is also not a warm puppy or losing twenty-five pounds, or being a blonde. It’s not winning the election, making a million, or being pre-

sented and Oscar. It's not even writing a best-seller. Then what is it? If you asked Bob McQuain, he might say that it was finding a true purpose and meaning to life in the service of a cause greater than himself.

And the same might be said by Jerry Olsen, Arlyn Hann and Roberta Maxwell. They, and others too, work for the same big cause at the side of Roy Masters. Perhaps another time, in another volume, we'll be able to delve into the interesting experience of those we haven't been able to cover in this book. In terms of human drama (both inspiring and instructive), there is a vast amount of material in their stories.

On April 18, 1968, at a special Medicine and the Mind seminar held on the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles, I questioned the eminent Daniels D. Hansen, M.D., F.A.C.P., and Assistant Professor in Medicine and Psychiatry at UCLA about meditation.

WOLFF: Dr. Hansen, in your opinion, is there any value to, say, starting the day with fifteen or so minutes of stilling the mind? In other words...meditating?

DR. HANSEN: If I had a quarter hour to spare in the morning, I'd use it to do sitting-up exercises! (Much laughter and applause from other doctors and lay people present.)

Sigmund Freud's concept of the perfect analyst was a man, who, while attending the patient, remained neutral, surgically detached, yet always attentive to everything going on, without preconception or judgment. This, at least to me, means true humility. It is clear to me that this openness is very much lacking in the typical metaphysician who immediately "knows" what is wrong and, with a brain bulging with preconceived notions, theories, and fantasies (mislabeled facts), eagerly makes all sorts of nonsensical judgments as to cause and effect, then proceeds to sell a pet panacea with all the restraint of a used-car salesman. I must add that a good many orthodox psychological counselors, therapists, and others in the league are similarly disposed. And that goes especially for the Freudians, who, as far as I can see, do not approach their patients with anything resembling humility.

As I perceive it, one of the superb features of Roy Masters' approach is that he presents an opportunity for the meditator to create

voluntarily a special “vibratory” atmosphere that allows the “analyst within” to do the kind of work that Freud had hoped his disciples could accomplish, but that they rarely, if ever, do. I am in agreement with Masters and Dr. Thurman Fleet and many others who believe that the individual can and must be educated to accomplish this life-saving task for himself. How can mankind survive without such awareness?

It must be remembered that insight, no matter how rich or significant, is not in itself an end, but merely a step toward the real goal: ceasing to react to life wrongly and starting to live as fully and wisely as we can. It all begins when pride is put aside and the tormented soul sincerely admits to being without solutions or even worthwhile ideas. The true confession cannot (I believe) be made in the presence of some mortal man, even though he may wear a “uniform” that proclaims him one with the power to forgive.

The enlightenment that leads to right action is not something that can be coaxed out of you as you lie on the couch of a doctor whose claim to wisdom hangs framed on his office wall. Likewise, it doesn’t come out of a group therapy situation in which everyone plays the now-popular game of exchanging hang-ups.

The event occurs at the exact moment in time when the meditator, alone and absolutely empty, knows for the first time that he is without direction, that he is floundering helplessly and must eventually be destroyed. Even in the moment of anguish, there is no resentment of an unfair fate; there is no self-pity. There is only the quiet acknowledgment that through egotism and ignorance the inevitable is happening. And in the midst of this deserved pain the meditator quietly and patiently longs for something that will guide him away from the Hell that lies ahead.

A new course is needed, but although the seeker’s hands grip the helm, he doesn’t turn it. He is through being the captain of his soul. He has made a terrible mess of his life because he thought he knew the way to go. Now, bravely and (for the first time) wisely, he awaits orders from the true captain, the only one who knows. And the promise is that with proper meditation the needed direction will be given.

The analyst might refer to this direction as mature reasoning springing from understanding. Fatalists are apt to toss it off with the nonexplanation that “it was all meant to be.” The spiritually inclined

consider it God's Grace. And what about those whose wrecked lives have been salvaged by the use of Roy Masters' meditation technique? Well, they're apt to look upon it as a miracle. And I don't blame them one bit.

Charya Bernard: An Ex-Yogi Tells All

The tall, reddish-haired, amiable master of occultism sitting at his small, crowded desk (one that he shared with other full-time associates of the Foundation of Human Understanding) immediately rose and offered me his hand as I entered the cubicle that served as the organization's business office. Although I had known Charya Bernard for some time, this was to be a formal interview. He had agreed to answer all my questions, and for the record. It was an opportunity that delighted me and I planned to make the most of it.

One day (soon I hope), he'll write his autobiography and I, for one, will be at the bookstore very early to buy the first copy. What he has to say is worth hearing. Few living individuals can reveal from first-hand experience what it's like to embark on the road to being a Yogi, what discipline is required and what unbelievable endurance such a commitment entails the way Charya can; he has been there and back.

A lot of books have glamorized the cabalistic process of becoming an honest-to-goodness, living, breathing Yogi. Outright lies have been put in print, myths have been perpetuated, and as a result an unrealistic concept of these ascetics, whose wisdom is taken for granted, prevails (especially among avid readers of metaphysical and occult literature). Tales of their "miraculous" abilities have been with us a long time. Yeats Brown's *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* and Paul Brunton's *A Search in Secret India* are classics. But that was history; what of today?

The name Charya is derived from the Hindi word *acharya*. Basically, it means "learned." Bernard, like most disciples entering monastic life, took a new first name as a symbolic gesture celebrating his rebirth and showing his devotion to the principles which would now guide his every action. It was a very appropriate name and most

prophetic.

I found it hard to believe that the man facing me, the sleeves of his white shirt rolled up, his pocket full of ballpoint pens, had for over six years allowed his hair to grow down to his waist. Frankly, Charya now looks like a mechanical engineer, maybe a draftsman. I mused on how he must have appeared with his flowing hair framing a gaunt face and his thin body garbed in gleaming white satin robes, his usual lecture clothing when appearing on behalf of the Self-Realization Fellowship.

It was not actually required that he be thus clothed, but out of deep respect for his guru, Parmahansa Yogananda, who affected the customary white robes and long hair, Charya dressed similarly. However, this was a “dress uniform” in which to appear before the public. For the most part, Charya could be seen from sun-up to night walking about the large grounds of the Self-Realization Fellowship’s headquarters in well-worn workman’s coveralls with his hair braided and wrapped in a bandana around his head. To those whose tastes are based on fiction, he would have seemed a rather disappointing Yogi as he performed the carpentry, plumbing, and heavy labor necessary to maintain a large piece of real estate housing many buildings.

For twelve-and-a-half years, Charya Bernard served first as a promising student, then as proven disciple, and finally as trusted right-hand man and heir to the “throne” of the late Parmahansa Yogananda, founder and guiding spirit of the well-known (at least in Southern California) S.R.F. Charya was the celebrated Yogi’s chief public representative up to the time of Yogananda’s death.

Even before his initial introduction to the imposing, dark-eyed avatar, young Bernard was a serious student of Oriental practices and disciplines. He was more than a little familiar with techniques of meditation, introspection, retrospection, and various relaxation exercises. He had also attempted with some success a few of the Yoga postures, and so his appetite had already been whetted when a family friend first introduced him to an authentic Yogi, an obviously mystical man with the ancient, enigmatic traditions of Mother India in his blood.

Here was an individual who possessed valuable information, secrets of the East that could be the key to feats of marvelous self-mastery. Bernard was excited at the availability of a rich source of factu-

al data on a subject that had intrigued him for the past several years. He certainly was not looking for a master to whom he could kneel in obeisance. That was the last thing in his mind.

His life would have been very different, if he had known, at the very beginning of his association with the man who was to become his mentor, what exacting tests he would be forced to face and how enormous (in both physical and psychological terms) the cost of enlightenment would be. There are many who claim to be “called” and a few who actually take the first steps on the difficult path to moksha. But very few are those who survive the rigors of the illusion-shattering life of the novice “holy man.” Charya Bernard, for better or worse, was one of the tiny minorities who did.

One of the singular appeals of Yoga is that it promises the aspirant special knowledge and a definite technique by which he can make himself independent of preceptors, teachers, or gurus. According to Charya, in actual Yoga practice this goal is rarely attained. “The idea of self-mastery or self-control is egocentric by its very nature and simply allows one to gather those talents, skills, and abilities which tend to put one in an assumed position of the Godhead where they can proudly proclaim that I am the master of my fate and the captain of my soul.”

The words were precise and his cultured voice was well-modulated. Charya spoke with an air of authority and there was little doubt as he talked to me that he was definitely opposed to the concept of self-mastery. It was a trap that he had barely managed to escape and, no doubt, he still has scars to remind him of the hidden dangers of such a delusion. “One either relates to the outer world, or one relates to an inner world.” Charya emphasized, “and in either case takes shape from what one relates to.”

I asked, “Chary, since just about every metaphysical seeker and a lot of sincere ‘orthodox’ religionists want to reshape their lives so they can relate to the inner, how do you think it can best be accomplished?”

Without hesitating, he answered: “The inner environment one should relate to is not something one shapes of oneself, but something one submits to.”

It was clear that the submission he referred to was in no way a form of self-mastery, nor did it consist in blindly following the beliefs

of some intermediary between yourself and the Creator. It was a submission to intuition plus a willingness to act on inner guidance when it came. Discipline is required, to be sure. But it is a discipline born of sincere desire for the right and disgust with the meaninglessness of external motivation rather than a discipline springing from the need for power.

Of all the people I have ever talked with about meditation, Yoga, occultism, and the like, Charya Bernard had the most impressive credentials. His knowledge came from actual experience. Not just a reader of books or a lecture-goer, Charya was a doer in the strictest sense of the word.

There were any number of “experts” willing to be interviewed, but their authority was based on secondhand information or, at best, a much more limited participation in Yoga than Charya’s. For instance, Charya long ago mastered the kriya breathing exercise associated with an intense form of meditation. This is a psychic-mental exercise in which the attention is shifted through various parts of the body for specific purpose.

On one memorable day, after practicing steadily for ten and a half hours, Charya had exhausted himself so thoroughly that he could hardly continue breathing. A sense of utter failure overwhelmed him. After doing all he could ever hope to do—physically and mentally unable to do more—Charya tasted a bitter defeat in the realization that after all his years of training he had still not arrived.

At that instant in his moment of greatest despair, as he recognized his personal inadequacy and admitted the fallacy of the presumption that sheer strength and technique could catapult him beyond the confines of self—something of fathomless beauty was imparted to him. Surprisingly, it did not come through his superhuman effort, but rather as a result of his abandonment of effort. One cannot storm the gates of Heaven with long hours of meditation, affirmations, thought-power, intense prayer, or psychedelic drugs. This Charya now knew.

He had become aware of “an interior presence” greater than himself. One can intellectualize about such a possibility for a lifetime, but really to know, to have this presence manifest in one’s own life, is a different matter. Such experiences dramatically redirect the soul toward a more meaningful goal, even though this goal may be, at first,

only dimly perceived.

Some call Charya Bernard's experience illumination, others cosmic consciousness, or samadhi. There are many labels for the experience. I have been surprised to discover that it is not an uncommon happening. I detailed Dr. Thurman Fleet's illumination and the way it changed his life in my book, *Psychic Self-Improvement for the Millions*.

Following the book's publication, I was contacted (and occasionally still am) by many very sincere people who related their own personal entries into the "Fourth Dimension." Among those describing such an experience were a private detective, a Ph.D working in the aerospace industry, and even three inmates of a federal prison at which I conduct a weekly seminar. And there have been others who have told me of this "elevated state of Oneness."

There is a tendency to want very much to recapture the experience, and this often leads one to relive it through memory. Charya considers such action dangerous. I asked him, "Why?"

"The very exercise of memory removes you from the moment of truth at hand," was his answer.

Charya paused for a few seconds trying to gather words to explain to me the essence of a great insight he perceived in its totality and that had provided him with a renewed purpose in life: "Something was given to one...not because of one's effort, but—well, as I said before, because of the abandonment of trying." Then he added, "With the yearning for reality still painfully present."

Charya Bernard was adamant that anyone trying to recapture such a state of awareness is attempting to achieve by an effort of will something that cannot be attained in this manner. I was not thoroughly convinced of his logic, but he deserved and got my full attention.

Sensing my lack of acceptance, he continued, "Reactivating a memory is a substitute for the actual experience, and this then becomes a subtle form of self-hypnosis rather than a communication with reality."

Resorting to memory, he argued, is always a departure from the reality of the actual experience. Six years of full-time effort led to that moment in his life when he was finally forced to "let go." Only then was he at long last able to partake of the reality. And that was to be

only the beginning.

Charya was a junior in high school when he dropped out to devote as much time as possible to the pursuit of esoteric truths. He later went back to complete his studies and get his diploma, but he often remarks that he “had to leave school to receive an education.” There’s little he can’t do and do well, whether it’s with his hands or his mind. He is almost without peer in his knowledge of Oriental mysticism and related subjects.

He avoided classes in public speaking on the premise that if he had something meaningful to say, he’d manage to find the right way to say it. I tend to agree with his observation that many people who enroll in public speaking courses really don’t have anything of importance to say in the first place.

He also thinks very little of “How to Win Friends and Influence People” courses. If you are truly “right on the inside” you won’t need friends, nor will you need to influence anyone. The people that are important for you to meet will come your way at the proper time. This he believes.

Charya’s mother, a gentle woman who followed the teaching of Unity and other “New Age” metaphysical studies, differed from her husband in philosophy. He was uninterested in and not unhostile to some of her basic beliefs. Many a family flare-up resulted from such philosophical differences. Their young son watched and listened and agonized. In the end, the inheritance of his mother’s spiritualism emerged as the dominate trait in his character, inclining him toward his present career. Still, his father’s drive and technical know-how is easily observable in Charya Bernard the adult.

It was in the summer of 1939 that Charya first met Yogananda, and a year later, on the first day of July in 1940, he motored to Encinitas to live, work, and study under the famed guru as a full-time resident of the Hermitage. This was originally to be a vacation employment, an interlude lasting until school began in the Fall. But his plans were unexpectedly changed.

A bright, personable, loyal American was needed to represent Yogananda as a front man. Unfortunately, most of those who came seeking discipleship were really more interested in flirting with the young ladies than in obeying commands without hesitation. The

American personality posed a problem for Yogananda, and he was perplexed by the lack of commitment displayed by Yankee males. I notice that the present public representative of the ARF is not an American but a Swiss.

Many family friends recognized early that young Bernard possessed an exceptionally brilliant mind. His talent for scientific investigation was well known, and many doors were waiting to be opened to this very bright lad. His accomplishments in high school were such that he had gained influential scientific patronage. This guaranteed him entrance into almost any field he desired.

Those first summer months at Yogananda's lush estate forever altered the life of the would-be man of science. Even before the dry, hot Southern California Fall had cast its less-than-comfortable heat on the land, the scientific ranks had lost a promising candidate. The young man reasoned that he had to find knowledge from inside his being before he continued his quest for external facts; otherwise he might never realize his fullest potential.

Since he was still a minor, his parents had to agree to let Parmahansa Yogananda assume legal guardianship over their son. This accomplished, the young man took up permanent residence in the oceanside town where the Indian mystic—with the aid of donations from the faithful—had constructed his first American ashram (academy). Today, disciples of the late Yogi carry on his work in two other locations as well. They have an interesting complex of buildings (including a very popular restaurant) on Sunset Boulevard in the heart of Los Angeles, and also a beautiful retreat (adjacent to a peaceful lake) just over a hill from the pounding surf of the Pacific. This is a “must see” on every tourist guide's list of California sights for visitors.

No brass band announced Charya's arrival in Encinitas, nor did he expect any. However, he did anticipate a personal welcome by his new guardian. Instead, an elderly lady (a devoted servant of Yogananda) who was to be Charya Bernard's immediate superior was on hand to greet him. He was provided with a cot to sleep on, food to eat, and a list of work to be done. It was she who acted as liaison between the venerated Indian and the nineteen-year-old novice.

The public's impression of what awaited the aspirant who became

a member of Yogananda's elite differed greatly from the reality. Before my conversation with Charya, I had visualized (quite inaccurately) fascinating daily instruction in the master's presence and long beneficial hours of solitary meditation. Also part of my unrealistic vision were quiet, contemplative walks in the cool of the evening and an environment free of the restricting work that leaves little time for esoteric pursuits.

"Actually, there never was any personal instruction except coincidental with the work at hand," Charya reminisced. "Work was the order of the day, and personal sacrifice to the extreme was expected from all."

He learned quickly that the individual counted for little; only the tremendous task of promulgating Yogananda's philosophy mattered. This way of life utterly dominated many of Charya's most productive years. The prime of his life was given without question or doubt. Those came much later.

Reflecting on his days as a disciple, Charya said: "One of the ways you control people is through the ingenious process of contradiction. Give them an impossible problem, and if they accept it through reason of their emotional involvement in it, then indeed you have to guide them because they can't guide themselves."

He admitted that a great deal of his life was guided in precisely this fashion. Impossible as it seemed to live with irreconcilable contradiction, he could not break away, because by this time he believed that his guru possessed the only way to reality. "I was thoroughly convinced that the only way I could find God was through the 'divine intermediary.'"

The stakes in this kind of game are very high, and a man will do things in such a situation that he ordinarily wouldn't. There came a time in Charya's life when whatever his master said was right, whether he understood it or not. If he didn't understand it, it was his problem and not Yogananda's. Thus is born the true disciple.

One evening around seven, for example, Charya was called to the dining room. "The master wants to talk to you," he was told. He came at once. One didn't keep Yogananda waiting.

The Yogi acknowledged the arrival of his young follower and said, "I have to talk to you about some important plans. Wait for me, I'll be

right back.” Yogananda then left the room. Charya stood beside his chair and waited.

An hour later the Yogi walked through the room and, as he left by another door, said, “Wait.”

About ten the leader came back to where Charya had been patiently waiting. Spotting him, Yogananda said, “I’ll be with you yet.”

So Charya stood, waiting. Several hours passed and once more the Yogi told Charya, “I want to talk to you, don’t go away.” Then he left again.

By midnight, Charya was fuming. He had been up since early morning and another long day awaited him tomorrow. He hadn’t even meditated yet. By 2:30 A. M., Charya had gone through the whole range of reactions, from being upset, to being resentful, to being furious, and finally to apathy.

Then in came Yogananda, the epitome of innocence. “Charya, are you still here? Go to bed. You need your sleep, my boy.”

Dazed, Charya mumbled good night and groped his way to his cot, thankful for even a few hours of sleep. He would remember this and a thousand similar experiences that one-day would form a complete picture. Then the truth, now obscured, would become clear and freedom from his highly-charged emotional bondage would be possible.

I questioned Charya Bernard about healing in general. He replied: “For a genuine healing to take place, Bill, there must be a form of repentance on the part of the recipient and some cognition as to the cause of his illness. If the root cause is not uncovered, then any healing that takes place becomes a deception.”

I learned that he believes it very easy for some healers to modify the magnetic or etheric fields surrounding a patient’s body and thereby cause important chemical changes. However, this often proves to be not only temporary but also extremely harmful. Illness is warning that one of the laws of life (of body, mind, and soul) is being violated. A “quickie cure” only covers up something that needs to be made fully visible.

Charya knows something about many of the healing arts, whether physical, electronic, or hypnotic. He has seen, he says, mistakes made in all. “Somatic changes or healing may disguise an original fault that remains uncorrected,” he told me. “People tend to solve one problem

with another problem. But unless the process of error is corrected, illness will manifest itself in a variety of ways.”

Needless to say, his prescription for physical, mental, and spiritual health (and, therefore, the elimination of error) is meditation; specifically, the technique described on Roy Masters’ record, *How Your Mind Can Keep You Well*. I must repeat again that Mr. Masters makes no claim on his record, in his books, on radio and TV, or from the platform that his meditation will heal anything. If a healing does occur as a result of his meditation, he takes no “blame” for it. I suspect he’s employing a little reverse psychology, as well as protecting himself from AMA action.

I have gathered from my conversations and personal observation that the first step toward a permanent cure is for the individual to be aware there is something wrong. Those associated with the Foundation of Human Understanding can’t tell a sick person what is right for him personally. But they can and do explain what they sincerely believe to be the exact process by which one gets caught up in the error in the first place.

Charya told me one of the things the records, books, pamphlets, and lectures at the Foundation can do is to redirect a person’s attention so it is no longer absorbed in an emotionally based activity. I share the opinion that hostility and resentment are the two most deadly emotions of mankind. They get their insidious foothold in our psychic fabric when as children we are allowed and often encouraged by parents, teachers, and religious leaders to seek out extreme excitement. All of us need some sort of outside stimulation if we have not found inner reality. But along with the energy value of excitement come hatred, worry, self-condemnation, jealousy, greed, and the rest of the carnal fuel supply.

How can we counter this morbid energy without resorting to debilitating repression? Charya talked at great length about “responding with reason rather than emotion.”

He said, “From reason, emotion may arise in support of that reason.”

I was compelled to ask, “Why any emotion at all? Must we have it?”

His answer was, “We still require the metabolic energies released by emotion to carry out a sustained action.”

Charya nodded, understanding my desire for a simple explanation.

There were a few seconds of silence as he considered how to provide me with a succinct but comprehensive answer. He began, “The body is a condition-response mechanism. It is built to take direction from two sources. It can receive information pressure demanding reaction from the outer world. Potentially, it can also receive guidance from an inner world.”

I mulled this over and asked, “Charya, isn’t guidance from the inner world dependent upon much outside activity? I mean, a person has a problem...hell, say I have a problem—or lots of them—and so I come to the Foundation. I read the literature, listen to the records, and attend the lectures. All this is outer influence, and it certainly seems to me very much needed.”

He gathered his thoughts again and spoke with determination. “The inner impulsive intuition is an interior process, but it is devoid of the need for emotional supports which characteristically are observed as excitement in the hope of fulfillment, or hostility, or fear.....

“Then this intuitional impulse you say is so important is the exact opposite of action that is motivated by another person...like maybe a troublesome neighbor who is always making you mad because he plays his radio with the volume turned up full blast always when you’re trying to get a night’s sleep.”

Charya interrupted me, saying, “Remember, a true intuitional impulse is devoid of fear or excitement. Furthermore, it is a movement in harmony with all life; and most important, it doesn’t require emotional support.”

“O.K., Charya, let’s suppose that I completely understand your frame of reference—and maybe I do—at least to some degree—now let’s tie it up with the meditation technology offered by Roy Masters. How does it all fit in?”

He was smiling, or more accurately grinning at me, and his deep-set eyes were glistening. It was perfectly obvious that I wasn’t going to be able to push him any faster than he wanted to go. Taking his time, he spelled out his theory:

“Proper meditation allows one to respond to an impulse of intuition. The impulse we’re talking about is a non-emotional pressure—but pressure nonetheless, and pressure requiring action.”

Nodding, I said, “At the risk of seeming redundant, Charya, how

specifically does this particular meditation approach aid one in hooking up to intuition?”

He smiled again, and answered: “For every function there must be a supportive mechanism. Even for the intuitive function there is a supportive mechanism. Basically, it’s the pituitary. And that gland, situated almost in the middle of the forehead, is a marriage of the chemical, metabolic system and the nervous system. Here it implies a connection between conscious functions and the subconscious body supports.”

I sensed that he was drawing this explanation from his years of Yoga training and study. Although the particular kind of meditation Charya was discussing is taught by Roy Masters, Roy readily admits he doesn’t know exactly why it works—just that it does. Charya was saying that he understood the how and why of the technique’s efficacy. I listened intently.

“If the attention is directed to the forehead, this does relate indirectly to the pituitary function and stimulates these,” Charya explained carefully. “This then is the modus operandi of intuition. The intuitive impulse, which is an impulse for the extension of a life principle, moves through this master gland....”

I interjected, “Stimulating this prima control center properly then would obviously provide one with much wisdom, wouldn’t it?”

Not the least impatient with my interruption, Charya continued: “Bill, wisdom has no purpose or utility of its own. In fact, there is absolutely no virtue in wisdom by itself.”

“Then what is the purpose of wisdom?”

“To direct and action rightly,” came the answer. “You see, biologically speaking, to be active is to live. Life demands action.”

I interrupted again. “And acting unwisely means not living effectively.”

He beamed, “Most certainly! Unwise living invites physical and mental suffering. Physical debilitation is the result of living a life without wisdom.”

Potent words. It’s obvious to me that a supremely wise and profitable course of action is to live each day without fear or worry and to rise above the fatal weakness of becoming upset. But how?

Charya was claiming that Roy Masters’brand of meditation could

guide a sincere seeker to the summit of man's capacity to recognize Infinite Truth. To exactly the extent one perceives correctly, one will respond to intuitional pressures rather than outer stimuli. And he was telling me that the technique was all available on an LP record.

"Charya, what is this magnificent guiding intuitive quality?"

He sighed and started, "It's just an impulse, a wordless, conceptionless, idealess impulse which has impressed in it an intent for expression."

"Can you describe it?"

"No! Anyone who says they can would be false. However, I can tell you what it is not."

"You can define what it is not but you can't say what it is?"

Bringing the interview back on course, he explained, "A lot of people wonder why we at the Foundation—at least in the initial stage of meditation—emphasize the hand and forehead. The intuitive impulse which is the guidance for action must be communicated to the action system of the body."

"You mean, of course, symbolically, don't you?"

"Not only symbolically, Bill, but in actuality as well. You see, the hands represent the total action system of the body. They epitomize it. Therefore, in coupling an awareness of the center involved in intuitive functions with an awareness of the action mechanism to be guided by that intuitive impulse, we have something coming from a spiritual factor moving now into the flesh...and intent for expression registering in the mechanism that must do—that must act."

"I know what it is you're theorizing, Charya, and I can go along with the symbolic or figurative aspect, but as far as it being a literal statement of...I don't know."

"Look, Bill, information must be allowed to come in to the body to guide it to a right action for the fulfillment of something called a human being."

"But what does the physical forehead really and truly have to do with an intangible such as intuition?"

"Centering the attention on the forehead, as Roy Masters describes it, simply invites a direction from an intelligence greater than our own; something beyond the intellect and beyond our egocentricity. It invites direction and says 'I'm willing to submit to this guidance.'"

Charya's personal beliefs, of course, may or may not be completely accurate. Certainly he has a definite point of view—a frame of reference—dictated by his responses over the years to his training and other experiences. Frankly, I have my own conclusions, and in many vital areas they are at odds with his. But we are both in agreement that the Masters methodology (for whatever reason) can be greatly beneficial.

I asked Charya, “Why the need to meditate?”

He replied, “Since mankind in general has failed to unfold in the direction of wisdom, then how can men govern themselves in a way that will promote good health, right choice, and the kind of living standard conducive to a happy fulfilled life?” Charya's opinion: “They cannot!”

Now comes the message to the entire world.

“Every human being must see the need for this wisdom and the need for a correct guidance and then yearn for that special influence and submit to it.”

Charya, who has not entirely discarded his Yoga training, is fond of recalling ancient Eastern axioms. Now he quoted one that had particular relevance to his basic theme: “We are all females before God.”

A great many “God and I are One” believers fail to recognize that, although “Oneness of all Life” is indeed a fact, man's role is always that of the willing and able executor of God's all-wise will. Despite their lip service to this undeniably wise proposition, they manage to live their lives as though the opposite were the case. They deceive only themselves and only temporarily. Sooner or later the day of reckoning arrives, and with it that one final problem, condition, or situation that these puny imitation gods cannot bend to their will. They have developed many ways of dealing with reality, but when the pendulum swings to the negative, wealth, power, great intellect, skill in self-hypnosis, even knowledge of metaphysical esoterica or the facade of religious devotion fail to aid the egocentrics to avoid the inevitable.

Let me be honest with you, for in this type of endeavor above all there must be honesty between writer and reader. For many years, I too have been manipulated and manipulator, puppet and puppeteer, trapped in the vicious circle but yearning to walk the line of virtue. Slowly, I have awakened to the truth that the usual prizes awaiting the

winner of the rat-race are not what I really want. But what do I really want?

“Charya, how do you think one can get unstuck from the dog-eat-dog world of competition that the average man and working woman have become a part of?”

He nodded understandingly. “That particular question and a thousand others pertaining to the human predicament can be answered with one word. It’s a word you’ve heard Roy Masters say so many, many times. It’s a word glibly tossed from a hundred thousand pulpits every Sunday in the year. And because of such familiarity, its true meaning has been lost and the power of its meaning subverted.”

“Charya, for Heaven’s sake, what’s the word?”

Softly he said, “Repentance.”

I grunted my recognition, and the scowl on my face made it clear that the word had associations for me. Quite frankly, whenever I hear the word, aside from its rather distasteful religious connotation, I always get the image of a magazine cartoon showing a bearded oldster in robes and sandals walking the city street with a sign saying: “Repent! It’s later than your think.” I asked Charya for his definition of repentance.

“It simply means the willingness to see rightly what is wrong so as to find correction for what is wrong so that we can be right.”

I mulled over his answer for a few minutes and then commented, “I guess a lot of us don’t want to make the terrible discovery that we’re wrong. It destroys the image we have going. Reality can be pretty harsh.”

He smiled knowingly. “Bill, the first truth that is available to most of us is the truth about ourselves. And as you said, it can be most painful to our pride. But if we can stand that pain of seeing what is wrong and needs correction, then that same process of true seeing will lead you to those exquisite, mystical truths which are not problem-related.”

“When you see what’s wrong then you go about changing it?”

Charya’s response was immediate, “No! In this process you don’t try to correct yourself. Instead, you submit to a corrective influence which allows you to become a servant of the inner world rather than a slave to the outer.”

“What about total freedom? I mean being neither servant or slave...just on your own?”

He shook his head. “Strictly speaking, there is no such freedom as that.”

I marveled at the way this exceptional person with a remarkable background had happened by “accident” to learn of Roy Masters. I had to wonder how this longtime “pro” must have felt as he sat listening to the relatively young metaphysical firebrand explain the true purpose of meditation. Surely something mystical must have been at work. It’s certainly not a common occurrence for so renowned an authority as Charya Bernard to radically alter many long years of belief and in a matter of months officially ally himself with an organization founded and headed by a man with such a different (so innocent) a way of viewing the mystery of life.

Few boasting his expertise or his years of training and service would or could humble themselves by acknowledging the fact that here was a novice, with little instruction in areas to which Charya had devoted almost three decades of study, who had rediscovered something of immense importance. At the time Charya was a full-fledged Yogi and guru to many thousands, Roy Masters had yet to put his ideas in print or on a record. This man, who would one day be instrumental in reshaping the world of Charya Bernard and of thousands of others, was then just beginning to formulate the best way of concentrating the awareness of the mind to dispel the poisonous accumulation of emotional conflict.

Already, however, Roy Masters saw as few can see the awful hunger of “psychic vampires” and the ways they deviously set up their helpless victims. And even as Roy witnessed what he would someday expose in books and lectures and on radio and television, Charya was being set up as a victim by one to whom he had paid great homage. When Roy speaks of such gruesome machinations there are those who scoff at the very idea. Most never awaken to the horrible reality. Thanks to Roy, Charya did. And there was another who played a perhaps even more significant role.

She is a petite, attractive lady with penetrating brown eyes. Upon meeting her for the first time (at a Thanksgiving dinner at Roy Masters’ home), I categorized her as more a listener than a talker. I

imagine, though, when she really has something to say or do, nothing and nobody had better get in her way. Sarna Bernard, Charya's wife, displays a natural grace of movement and quiet dignity. But beneath that there is strength—the kind some perhaps would describe as hard.

Sarna's life had by no means been a bed of roses. She had had ample opportunity to test her ability to not only survive but to seek the special kind of reward that comes to one who stays on the path to reality. Her journey one day led her to the Self-Realization Fellowship, where other seekers had told her there were answers to be found. Here, she found herself in a class conducted by one of the most eloquent men she had ever heard—an American Yogi known to his students as Brother Charya.

He was certainly wise in a multitude of ways and an almost never-ending fountain of knowledge; nevertheless, there was a marked lack of sophistication in one or two vital areas of his personal life. Sarna knew, almost from the first, that one day she would make contact with Charya. Yogi he might be, but he was a man as well. And this particular male had not had the advantage of a woman's special intuitive perspective on the world; as time went by, she realized that his own perspective was rather one-dimensional.

Never—at least in the last dozen or so years—had Charya been so upset. And the blame was all due to this (he had to admit) extremely attractive Sarna and her outspoken observation on his life at SRF. She had a way of cutting right through the haze of excuses and exposing to Charya's own view the peculiar trait most of us share: his unwillingness to admit (as a part of him knew) that slowly but surely he was being turned into a zombie.

There is a stubborn side to Charya's nature, and he had a strong sense of loyalty in addition to an acute awareness of the responsibility he bore as a spiritual leader. He was also in the grip of an almost overwhelming personality with unusual powers that some swear could and did transcend the grave. Perhaps some chains can never be broken, some burdens never be laid down. Sarna knew Charya could break free. But did Charya know?

Would he dare?

Where would he get the energy for such an escape?

A lot was at stake: his soul.

Was it a truly right or a dreadfully wrong act?

For long months he pondered and meditated, and the inevitable crossroads of decision came into view. He'd have to make up his mind soon, before the point of no return was reached. Did he wonder whether his relationship with Sarna was responsible (at least partly) for his wanting to give up all that he had struggled and endured for? Or was his choice (unconsciously made long ago) the agent that brought her to his side during this time of crisis?

There is a special kind of marital relationship born of mutual need, admiration, and the sharing of deep convictions and important ideals. Today's teenagers would hardly think of Charya and Sarna as having a flaming romance. But few of the young set will ever be party to a more meaningful partnership when they marry and walk away from the past to begin a new life.

It didn't take long for the new "civilian," his hair cut short, to find employment. Charya adjusted as best he could in those first days and assumed the strange new role of family breadwinner. His daily schedule was arduous; the hours were long and the work was demanding. And maybe it was for the best. There was little time left for thinking of life as it had been. The unfamiliar grossness of the business world, with all its pressures and personality conflicts, was at least a distraction. It's not easy for any man to block out haunting memories of the past, especially knowing that many thousands look down upon him as a "spoiled priest."

Transferred to Santa Barbara, California, he advanced rapidly through the ranks of his company. When a more responsible position opened up back in Los Angeles, Charya was chosen even though there were others, boasting impressive technical degrees and long years of seniority, vying for the job.

They had just moved into a new apartment and were hoping that their furniture would arrive the next day. Aside from their clothes and some other small items, the only thing they had was a small portable radio. That night the hard floor was their bed. Early the next morning, before the moving van's scheduled arrival, Charya left for work.

In the joggle of moving the radio from home to car and from car to apartment, the dial had been turned to a station Sarna never chose. She didn't know KTYM even existed. Her preference would have

been a station for music or news. It was a little past 1 P.M. when she switched the radio on. In a few minutes she became aware that the voice on the radio wasn't the usual announcer hawking soap-suds, or a newscaster, or one of the usual telephone call-in programs.

She stopped her housework, overcame the temptation to complete the straightening-up job she had started hours before when the furniture arrived, and sat listening intently to the English-accented words. And what words they were; Sarna had never thought she'd hear such profound truth on an afternoon telephone call-in radio program. Roy Masters had struck home with her. His message was in resonance with the highest centers of her consciousness.

Before signing off, he announced his schedule of lecture activities at the Foundation of Human Understanding. That evening, when Charya finally arrived from work and sat down to a late supper, Sarna quietly mentioned that she had heard a remarkable radio program.

In between forkfuls of salad, Charya asked, "What's the name of it?"

" 'A Moment of Truth.' I believe the gentleman who conducts it is a Mr. Roy Masters."

"I don't think I've heard of him, dear."

"He gives lectures at his Foundation on Western Avenue near Wilshire. I'd like to hear him."

Charya looked up. He knew how intuitive his wife was and how few "truth teachers" impressed her. If she felt it was important to hear this man, he'd do everything possible to see that she'd have the opportunity. It was no simple task, since Charya's workday started early and ended late. Evening work was the rule rather than the exception. But he'd manage somehow, this he knew.

Glancing at his wristwatch, Charya saw they'd be a little late. At one time, if he couldn't have arrived early or exactly on time for an appointment, lecture, class, or social event, he wouldn't have gone. Now he was thankful to be free of such limitations. A car pulled away from the curb and Charya quickly wheeled into the parking space.

Roy Masters had begun his talk promptly at 8 P.M., and as usual a large audience was in attendance. Still, almost in the first row were two empty seats. Every now and then Charya glanced at Sarna sitting beside him. Their early relationship had been quite stormy. Her out-

spoken observations about his subservience to Yogananda had stood in complete contrast to his own perception of his actions.

Up to the time he met Sarna, he had considered every act of his mentor to be totally justified. The great Yogananda could do no wrong. Whatever he said was absolute law, and anybody not in complete agreement was wrong. But facts have a way of toppling even the thickest walls of idolatry. Charya began to observe the physical decline of his leader. Yogananda was “falling apart,” and so were Charya’s shackles of blind belief in him. “He is taking on the evil Karma of others,” the more ardent disciples rationalized. But by this time it was exceedingly difficult to swallow such dogma, and Charya knew that he must soon vomit up what he had feasted on for so long or....choke.

When I suggested that it was his near-total identification with the holy man that caused Charya to suffer in almost like degree the severe illness that was quickly sapping the life of Parmahansa Yogananda, he disagreed. But he admitted that his own ailment nearly cost him his life. In those desperately trying days he at last was able to see objectively a strange “game” people played. He observed that there were those that blindly, and to all outward appearances devotedly, followed their leader and served him (or her) with rare loyalty. But these followers did so not out of love but out of hate.

Through the years, I have observed (in metaphysical, business, and political situations) that a good many “second bananas” are—as Charya so succinctly put it—captive followers struggling desperately to love somebody they secretly hate. But why?

Could it be that they need the energy derived from resentment? Maybe they lack the courage to admit their mistake in believing in someone who turned out to be a mere mortal rather than a godly being with all the answers. Proudful people—especially those in the upper echelons of organizations—would rather pay almost any price than confess such an error in judgment.

Charya had been pressured into taking the vow of celibacy even though something deep within told him it was not right. But he was young and impressionable and couldn’t go against the traditions of the Self-Realization Fellowship. However, one cannot forever suppress the natural in a search for the sublime. Finally, when Charya knew

what must be done, he gave the SRF a way of saving face if they so chose.

They had the alternative of accepting marriage within their framework—which was altogether possible and for which precedents had already been set—or of dismissing a man who had devoted much of his life to building their organization. They chose to dismiss him. Officially, his marriage was used to explain his departure. Any hint of doctrinal split was nicely hushed up. And so ended over fifteen years of life as a Yogi.

“What was your first impression of Roy Masters?” I asked. “I mean on that very first evening when you and your wife attended a lecture at the Foundation.”

“I knew that Roy was an intuitive man and one of the very few that knew exactly what he was talking about. Frankly, Bill, I didn’t completely understand everything he said, but I was aware that he was most certainly seeing something important.

“He was not a con artist or another spiritual phony, and I sensed no self-deception in anything he was saying. Remember,” Charya smiled ironically, “I studied with some of the greatest manipulators of people to come down the pike in a long time. Roy Masters was not the power-hungry type at all. He completely disarmed himself, which I had never before seen done, and, more amazingly, he perfectly described the process of how one can be made a ‘psychic captive.’”

“What’s the most important discovery you made as a result of hearing Roy Masters?”

“It was that all-important...I guess you’d call it key...that I needed to liberate myself.”

“Key? Please explain, Charya.”

“It’s a key of several parts. One part was the correct meditation and the process by which we get lost and move into error. Also, the importance of...as I mentioned earlier...repentance.”

Yoga and Meditation: Charya Continues

It was a Tuesday evening, the last one in September, and an overflow crowd jammed the Foundation of Human Understanding, where they had come to hear Charya Bernard speak on the topic of “The Secret Nature of Occult (Yoga) Power.” A throng of disappointed latecomers milled around the entrance on Western Avenue, unhappy because there was no standing room inside the hall. Finally, a loud-speaker was set up over the doorway to enable everyone to hear what promised to be a fascinating talk.

It was stifling in the packed hall, but I was delighted to have even a back-row seat. Over three-quarters of the available seating was already occupied when I arrived. Although the specific title of the talk had not been announced that afternoon on the KTYM call-in program Charya shared with Roy Masters, the regular listeners were well aware that it would be something very interesting. And they were correct in their assumption.

It was an unusually warm evening, but it got a lot hotter as more than a few metaphysical balloons were burst by the pinpricks of cold fact. Some long-held beliefs faded away as a result of what was said by a man who had studied and taught in the field of Yoga before leaving public life to solve some personal problems of his own. And now he was back, ready to explain the true picture.

Very few Occidentals have had the unique opportunity for intimate first-hand experience with Yoga and various occult practices Charya Bernard had. Even if one went to India one would hardly achieve such intense exposure. “It’s all very nice,” Charya once explained, a touch of sarcasm creeping into his voice, “to read a book like *At The Feet of the Master* and think how interesting and informative it would be to receive the discipline direct from. . . somebody who knows.”

I admit, I myself had such thoughts after reading many a volume on the subject. But after listening to Charya, it was easy to see that it was better not to be at the master's feet.

He was given the works, and nothing was spared in the course of his six years of "boot camp." He readily admits that it wasn't all bad; he derived valuable benefits from his years of study and work. It is my personal opinion, however, that only a special kind of person—one like Charya, with his superb mental faculty—could make the most out of such a situation. Lesser men and women would be, and have been, swallowed up into the unthinking, accepting, and uncritical atmosphere that surrounds every religious order. No matter what inconsistencies they observed, their powers of discernment—long ago forfeit—could not be brought into play to separate fact, theory, and fantasy. Not so Charya.

"Tonight," Charya began, "I will not talk about personalities, but rather about basic ideas and fundamental principles. But I shall touch on some personal incidents."

The audience seemed to lean forward almost in unison so as not to miss a word. There were more than a few Yoga students in the crowd and I noticed several associate professors from UCLA sitting up front. I thought I saw one of Beverly Hills' more distinguished psychiatrists sitting a few rows ahead of me. There was also a fair number of weirdos and many of the type of people you see at university extension lectures. All in all, it was an extremely attentive audience.

"Much of the appeal and glamour surrounding Yoga revolves around the idea that there is something that you can do to help yourself," Charya said, "that, indeed, you can become a more talented person, a more skilled human being with great powers of concentration."

He mentioned that the lure of better health brings people into the study as well as a belief that one can acquire (or reawaken) ESP abilities. Also, the promise of a life expression that would not be available without knowledge of such techniques is a potent motivating force that draws new devotees to the ancient discipline.

Who can deny the temptation of such glittering bait? And as supposed evidence of the validity of these promises, there are certain

people who are extraordinary: Yogis with clairvoyant powers and other “supernormal” abilities. Many an all-too-average citizen with daydreams of glory—would give much to be able to master mental telepathy. It would make up for so much that he didn’t have.

Charya told the huge gathering, “I remember how very commonplace thought transference became, and after a while I never considered it anything but normal. It was certainly nothing special. In fact, it came as something of a shock to discover that there were those that actually questioned its authenticity.”

Although his subject that evening was Yoga, Charya was really talking about the broad, general field of occultism not necessarily recognized as a part of Yoga.

“Yoga comprises a system or systems of practice intended to produce a state or talent or betterment in the individual,” was Charya’s definition. “It promises to provide good health through certain physical exercises such as special postures and stretching exercises involving a minimum of motion but a maximum of tension and stress.”

I could tell that a good many of those hearing Charya’s words were engaged in daily sessions of advanced Yoga exercises. Just the way some folks sit in a chair can reveal their allegiance. Just as a good police reporter can spot a cop in civilian clothes or a professional crook, I can usually detect the Truth student or occultist. Likewise, I guess they can figure me out pretty quickly. We all go around wearing invisible signs, and there’s always somebody who can read them.

More people than one would suspect believe every word of the enormous folklore that sings the praises of Yoga. I’m not knocking it, but I am reporting what one authority has made public. Actually, he wasn’t condemning Yoga so much as the way some teachers present only one side of the subject. In Yoga (as elsewhere), half a truth can be dangerous.

“If various postures are held for brief periods of time—then, indeed, a mechanism is triggered that is purely genetic. It has nothing to do with the spiritual factor. The muscles do tend to harden but not strengthen.”

Listening to Charya, I lost the guilt I had felt about not continu-

ing with the Yoga exercises Jess Steam had suggested. I made a mental note to clue Jess in on Charya's views, since the best-selling writer was a Hatha Yoga enthusiast and the author of *Yoga, Youth, and Reincarnation*. He'd have some pretty hot counter-arguments.

"What is currently being recognized as isometric contraction—the holding of the muscle in a spastic state for several seconds—does produce a hardness of muscle fiber. It does not necessarily produce a soundness of muscle fiber," Charya asserted. "The end product after a number of years may not at all be desirable."

I believe he was making an important point and not just debunking Yoga exercises. If you feel bad and do something that is supposed to make you feel better, you'll naturally think that you are much improved. Charya's point is that feeling better and being better are not the same. This was a truism Roy Masters had spoken over and over. It had obviously influenced Charya greatly, and maybe it was just such an observation that was the changing point in his life.

As he lectured, I remembered the headache I'd had earlier. I had borrowed a couple of Bufferin tablets from my secretary and gulped them down. The relief made me think I felt perfect, although the real truth was that I just didn't feel quite as bad. Agreed, the difference is subtle, but learning how to differentiate such delicate points is the first step toward freeing the soul.

Often, I had heard Charya and Roy say that most things we take to soothe our hurts and ease our pains don't really give us the desired state of betterment but only a temporary relief of discomfort. One of the examples they used quite frequently concerns uncomfortable shoes: if your shoes pinch so badly that you are forced to take them off, your feet will feel very good as soon as the footwear is removed. But isn't it true that the state of normalcy for feet is not feeling good, but simply feeling like feet? I know that when nothing is negatively affecting my feet there is an absence of any kind of feeling.

Charya was pounding home the argument that too often we get caught up in certain processes (like Yoga or positive thinking) that induce a temporary feeling of goodness or relief, thus hypnotizing us into the belief that we have reached a better state. Fooling ourselves today will bring a dangerous tomorrow. Our minds can create what the world calls miracles, but only when they are centered in fact and

not excited by fantasy.

Charya continued to discuss Hatha Yoga. “If you do one of the postures or breathing exercises—indeed, activity takes place, the result of which may give you a feeling of strength and an increased stimulation to the body process. This makes one feel more active, alert, and generally ever so much better.”

Charya started explaining the shoulder stand. “. . . It is an inverted position in which the body is moved in an upright position and supported by the weight of the shoulders and the base of the neck.” Charya pointed to his throat and then continued. “Now the neck is kinked sharply forward in this. Therefore, the chin presses into the jugular notch, forcibly diverts the flow of blood through the thyroid, which then reactivates the thyroid. Now you feel more alive. You have an additional stimulation that banishes your previous apathy. But the question is: Are you actually better because of this process?”

We all sensed the answer Charya would provide, and it came as no surprise to hear him say, “No! Because a fundamental problem has not been solved.”

Just in case no one had thought to ask himself why the thyroid needed stimulation in the first place, Charya was quick to state: “If it needed stimulation then it was in an over stimulated condition at one time which resulted in a state of exhaustion.”

He offered the analogy of a horse too tired to pull a wagon. “If the owner gets a big enough whip and slaps it across the animal’s flanks, the horse will move and no doubt move pretty fast despite its exhaustion. But soon the horse will be unable to go forward and quite possibly could be permanently injured. The cause of its tiredness in the first place was not eradicated, and forcing the beast on was harmful.”

This didn’t sit too well with some of the audience, who considered the saying of anything derogatory about Hatha Yoga unadulterated blasphemy. Of course, since most of the people present listened regularly to Roy Masters and Charya on the air and had attended other lectures given by Roy himself, they should have been used to this kind of irreverence. A lot of Roy Masters’ fire seemed to have rubbed off on Mr. Bernard.

“There are any number of clever devices by which you can whip

the body and get from it another spurt of energy. . . elicit further activity and fulfill more of your ambitions.

“And you’ll say, ‘this is great. I’ve got so much more energy and I can do what I want to do.’ But the only reason you needed more energy in the first place was because you had already depleted your reserves.”

Charya had—I thought—beautifully illustrated how easily one can deceive oneself. He admitted that there was certainly nothing wrong with stretching the body and perhaps toning up the muscles. But always present is the nagging questions of why one is really exercising. Is it the right thing to do? As a full-time broadcast writer and part-time author, I sit long, long hours at my desk and am deprived of natural activity. For me, proper body movement would be called for. On the other hand, if I tried to use exercise or Hatha Yoga as a corrective—a method of eking out extra strength or making myself look good—then comes Charya’s warning to watch out.

Now we had gotten down to the nitty-gritty of his basic message, or at least one vital part of his philosophic foundation. “You may not be correcting that which really needs correcting,” he said. “Most of our maladies have some emotional overtones. Our resentments, our fears, anxieties, and ambitions put a drain on our metabolic resources, and finally we just don’t have any more reserves to draw upon and can’t do the things we want to do. We get sick and feel miserable. Then we desperately search for something to patch up the old carcass.”

He was obviously calling for an understanding of that inevitable time when the body needs rest and recuperation. And it’s dangerous business to artificially (via drugs or postures) excite it into action. Concept Therapy’s lesson on “The Law of Rhythm” (from the ancient Hermetic teachings) had long ago convinced me of the validity of his plea. The Bible also talks about “a time for rest and a time for work.”

Now came the subject of relaxation. Surely he couldn’t find fault with those Yoga exercises that very nicely promoted a relaxed bodily state—or could he? He did.

“So you learn how to tense a certain way to create a contrast and this teaches you to relax. But what has this done to that which orig-

inally triggered your need to relax?” he questioned. “Relaxing yourself doesn’t change the cause, it just allows you one more device to mask what is really wrong at the root point.”

My fingers were getting cramped from so much note taking, but the pain was forgotten as I realized he was talking about man’s habit of compensating. And frankly, as an old compensator from way back, I was fascinated. How often we think we have corrected a problem when in reality we have only compensated.

I immediately thought of an acquaintance who was an alcoholic. He felt just fine when he was boozed up. But, of course, nothing at all was really fine. It was just the opposite. However, in a state of intoxication he couldn’t see the harsh reality of his error. He had improved nothing by draining the bottle. Temporary escape for him proved costly. It always does. His sober hours grew less and his ability to function as any sort of a real man diminished to the point where he lost his profession, home, and family. It all began and grew out of a temptation to avoid the pain of reality.

“Some of the Yoga meditations are a direct path to oblivion, teaching you to cut yourself off from an awareness of stress. And if you are not aware of stress—you don’t know that the body is being stressed. This type of thing can and does go on for years until finally some degenerative disease wipes you out.”

Charya patiently explained to the assembled throng, “There is a right way in living a life and a wrong way. And what determines whether whatever you’re doing proper or not is your. . . intent.”

One hears the words right intent a great deal from Charya and Roy. In Concept Therapy the words are slightly different, but the phrase basic concept covers the same ground. It’s no easy task always examining why we exercise, study, work hard, are zealous in religious activity, or give so much time to charitable causes. We think it’s because we’re. . . nice. With a little insight comes the discovery that niceness has nothing to do with it.

“Are you exercising because it’s the wise thing to do, or are you exercising to get rid of aches and pains? Do you really think physical means can erase the results of an emotional condition?” Shaking his head, Charya was emphatic as he said, “It can’t be done.”

He admitted that he had made about as many mistakes as one can

make in Yoga and still survive. Others had not been so lucky. He didn't downgrade the many wonderful insights nor the ecstatic experiences that came to him; these he will never forget. He is not really against Yoga, he told me recently. The target of his major criticism is the ignorance and downright spiritual dishonesty of many who profess to be experts in the ancient practice.

One fellow, for instance, a tall, good-looking, magnetic type, is traveling around the country conducting Yoga seminars. He hints, not very subtly, that he has been blessed with Samadhi. The ladies—especially middle-aged ones—dig this curly-haired American guru. As he tells it, Parmahansa Yogananda really let him in on all the big secrets. The true story, I hear, is quite different. Although he had been a part (like Charya) of Yogananda's order, he spent most of his discipleship in Arizona tending goats. His vast knowledge comes from the books he read. He very rarely even got to see the head man. As you can see, his relationship with the Hindu Monk was far different from the one Charya enjoyed.

There is a natural way to gain a greater sensitivity to the spiritual realm, Charya explained. He accused most aspirants of violating that delicate and proper approach, thus creating the wrong kind of sensitivity.

“Most people don't know the difference between animal sensitivity and a spiritual sensitivity. Most of the paranormal phenomenon dubbed ESP is an animal function. There is nothing spiritual about it,” he said.

Murmurs of dissent could be heard following that little rocker. But you won't hear me disagreeing. In my years of research and investigation, I have met far too many possessors of extrasensory perception who—although they pretend otherwise—are more beast than angel. One much-publicized clairvoyant is notorious with young women and has taken many thousands of dollars in fees from people who could not afford to waste their savings. In return for their cash, instead of a look into the future or the location of a missing person or article, they received empty words. Another is an infamous homosexual who has been known to take the platform drunk, unable to prove his ESP to people who had paid good money and traveled great distances to observe his promised demonstration. ESP and true

spirituality are not necessarily linked. Probably the most spiritually advanced individual I know, at least so far, has not one iota of ESP. The past and future hold little interest for this person; such an individual is disinclined to probe into another's subconscious.

Charya Bernard believes that psychic sensitivity is not only different than intuitional sensitivity but lower in the scale of awareness. He insists that most teachers of Yoga and other metaphysical "professionals" are unaware of what they are really doing and of the way they lead their followers up blind alleys.

During the course of his speech, Charya made a startling admission: "Over a period of years, I taught and counseled probably forty thousand people. And not more than a handful really gained anything of lasting value. Not only that—but perhaps thousands were hurt through their Yoga study."

The two ways a person can be harmed by such studies are through wrong intent ("seeking new ways to glorify themselves") and through faulty technique and a highly hypnotic framework of teaching. Charya is adamant about this. He harps on it often.

"Although a majority—if not all—Yoga and 'New Thought' teachers decry the practice of hypnosis, they unknowingly practice it themselves."

What Charya's definition of hypnosis? It's quite different from the one you'd be likely to get from, say, a clinical psychologist. Here's his description:

"Hypnosis consists of the positing of certain stresses to which you respond by compensation. And if you resist those stresses you take shape from those stresses."

I told you it would be different; Roy Masters' influence is evident.

To clarify his definition of hypnosis, Charya offered, "Few people can just sit down and be mad; they need some unsuspecting person's 'cooperation.'" Why do they want to get angry? Unconsciously, we all know that this is one method of getting a quick spurt of energy; so we do something to someone else so they in turn will have to do something back to us which very nicely allows us to get mad."

Whether the game he so accurately described has anything to do

with hypnosis is something I don't know. But it was an accurate analysis of one of the processes people use to get needed energy while still appearing innocent. For instance, my wife, June, shortly after she started meditating on a regular daily basis, made a most interesting self-discovery. She manages to keep our pleasant home spotless and neat, despite the tiring demands of a nursery-school career, many hours of volunteer work at our daughter's school, time spent with the girl scouts, time spent assisting me, and an active social schedule. It finally came to her that she was using negative energy to get enormous amounts of work done. Okay, you might say, what's so wrong with that? According to my wife, there's a lot wrong.

"The more I continued getting mad at the housework as a way of building up energy—unknowingly, of course—the easier it became for me to get upset and fly off the handle at my child or my husband. I wasn't willing to pay that steep a price for energy. Through meditation, I stopped being conditioned to the outer influences. I ceased evolving in an animalistic way," she explained.

"The basic animal way of meeting life is to resist a stress or pressure upon it," Charya went on. "This makes the animal strong. If an animal resists stress successfully long enough, it succeeds in becoming a bigger beast."

Of course, I thought as I listened, if an animal is swift enough, it eludes its natural enemies; the longer it survives, the greater agility it will develop. Suddenly something that Robert Ardrey wrote in his marvelous book, *The Territorial Imperative*, flashed to mind: "A bird does not fly because it has wings; it has wings because it flies."

"Humans take upon themselves certain stresses which they have a reasonable chance of overcoming so they don't fail in the process; failure would be devastating to the ego. So people create these situations of stress themselves so as to be able to overcome them so they can become strong in the process."

There were more than a few vacant expressions on the faces of the listeners. With Charya, almost as much as with Roy, you've got to listen closely or you're going to get lost. Now he shifted gears and turned in a slightly different direction.

"In meditation here at the Foundation we speak of the role of the

pituitary gland deep in the center of the head,” Charya said. “Here is a unique marriage of the chemical system in the body and the nervous system, all in one blend. The anterior and posterior pituitary are the junction of the whole chemical metabolic systems and nervous systems, thus affording us a possible cortical connection with everything that’s happening in the body, the cortex having to do with what we are conscious of.”

As he spoke, I promised myself to question him about this pituitary business. A leading Southern California orthopedic surgeon, the man who first told me about Roy Masters, always winces when Charya and Roy fling around such terminology. He enjoys what they have to say about philosophic and even psychological principles, but he thinks they’re pretty much in the dark when it comes to his area of expertise.

Charya continued with his hypothesis: “A person seeking to glorify himself says, ‘Let me be more conscious of something. Let me exercise control over it.’ And he finds a way to do it. Now there is a right way and a wrong way to do this. And the right way is taught in Roy Masters’ meditation technique.”

I’ve heard Roy say time and again that his is a simple and rudimentary technique that brings attention to the pituitary so as to sensitize that “command center” of the body and to sensitize it within a very definite framework of “right intent.” One must always keep in mind that any technique—including Roy Masters’ Psychocatalysis—can be very bad for a person if the reason for its use is faulty.

It has been said that if one could gain conscious control of the pituitary function one could command enormous physical strength, possess great mental powers, and even develop “magnetic energies” about the body. According to Charya and other reliable sources, there have been some Yogis who had tremendous energy fields at their command and could hypnotize a subject by projecting a special aura.

Charya claimed that he was willing to disarm himself in the hope that such self-exposure would enable people to protect themselves better. I think his willingness to break the long-standing silence concerning the practices of certain spiritual leaders and the way they can enslave their followers was very admirable and courageous.

In Chapter Three, I mentioned a Communist scientist who was able to prove that for “mind control” to work (via hypnosis) one need not even be within earshot of the subject. Visual stimuli, such as eye contact or the various passes stage hypnotists employ suggest that something “magical” is happening, are not needed either. Hindu mystics in particular have developed mind control to a fine (black) art, and it’s believed that a few adepts can actually “move out and encompass a body with a magnetic aura that programs a person.” According to Charya, this was done to him and he in turn did it to others. Furthermore, he declared that there are many right now who are thus programmed but refuse out of pride to believe that certain of their thoughts and ideas come from a source other than themselves, “I think what I want,” is their boast, “and do what I choose. Nobody controls me.”

These people have never heard, perhaps, about the surprising effectiveness of subliminal advertising, nor are they aware that in many states legislative action has been taken to outlaw its use on the public. I was one of the writers invited to a special subliminal advertising workshop given by a professional California broadcasting group. What I saw and heard was quite interesting. Even without exposure to subliminal media, the average American consumer has been and is still being programmed to respond in a predictable manner.

That’s why it’s not too hard for me to accept the idea that many of the faithful—especially those who are suddenly overcome by a desire to serve the “great teacher”—have been “injected” with an idea that they falsely believe sprang from deep within. It’s amazing how easily some people can be thus victimized.

“Unless you’re living from an inward presence,” Charya stated, “there is absolutely no defense against such a force.” Unlike most of today’s authorities on hypnosis, Mr. Bernard believes that you can be hypnotized against your will. Thousands have heard Roy Masters claim that he can hypnotize anyone, with or without his conscious consent, unless he has learned how to meditate properly. If he has, Roy happily confesses he has no power over him, nor does anyone else. Those who are not meditating properly or who are utilizing a meditation technique which is in itself hypnotic are really in danger of “being taken over,” Charya indicated. But what about will power?

Charya's answer left little to the imagination: "The more will power one exercises, the more vulnerable one becomes." A chilling thought.

"You don't know where your thoughts come from," Charya accused. "It's a matter of your pride if suddenly you can feel some noble impulse arising within you. Watch out for that particular unselfish inclination. Possibly, it didn't really arise from you in the first place. Because then you would be serving your Creator and not another human being."

The proper utilization of suggestion as a method of treatment is highly complex. (The development of a logical procedure for such treatment by the Concept Therapy Institute of San Antonio, Texas, will be discussed in the next chapter.) Superficially, a miraculous cure may appear to have taken place when actually the opposite is the case. One such incident in my files concerns a man who suffered severe pains in his side. Not believing in medical men, he consulted instead a well-known magnetic healer who "pulled" out "invisible electrons" of disease. After just one short visit the man was free from pain. Another miracle of mind over matter? A week later the man was rushed to an emergency hospital in the early hours of the morning. His appendix had ruptured. The strangest part of this story is that he reported feeling very little pain, even while he was hemorrhaging. Had he been able to feel natural pain he might have been warned of the impending disaster and have been able to take proper steps.

"Artificial peace of mind cuts you off from reality," Charya continued, "and eventually this deception catches up to you and there will be a price to pay. I know. . . because I had to pay."

There was a pause, and maybe it was only my imagination but I thought his eyes were moist. However, I was pretty far back and, as I said, it was probably my imagination. "There's another kind of peace," he said. "It's the kind that comes by evoking within such inward strength and growth that you can meet the pressures outside without being disturbed or thrown for a loss. That's a far different mechanism than the type many so-called 'truth teachers' pass off as genuine."

The following week, Charya gave another lecture devoted to his

earlier Yoga training and experiences. It, too, drew capacity crowds. I don't believe he spoke on that particular subject matter again. Occasionally, in other lectures, he would mention a personal incident that had occurred in the "old days," but he never carried it further than that. We'll have to wait for his autobiography to hear the complete story.

A later turn of events in the life of Charya Bernard caught me completely by surprise. After an eventful association with the Foundation of Human Understanding, Charya, who had been dispatched to the Hawaiian branch of the fast-growing organization on a temporary basis, suddenly decided to settle there permanently. Nosing around Roy Masters' office in the best journalistic tradition, I began hearing hints about a possible defection by Charya. But how could this be?

Roy summoned Charya back to discuss some of his activities and discover exactly what his associate had in mind. This was a new situation, one that Roy Masters had never before faced. But face it he did, although he felt betrayed, let down by someone he had greatly helped, and he was determined to right the situation as soon as possible.

Charya had resigned and prepared to jet back to the Islands, but first he had to arrange to sell his home. He accepted my invitation to lunch before he left the following week. I asked about his decision.

"I really have no ideological differences with Roy," he asserted. "But I feel that I must teach certain things that Roy insists are not necessary. I think they are."

It took a few minutes for the meaning of his words to sink in. Then I understood. "Are you talking about Yoga? You're not going back to that?"

"Yes, but I'd teach only certain vital principles in the proper framework and without the hypnotic process in any form being present."

I was a little shocked by this disclosure. Another surprise followed. "Bill, what do you think of the name Yogacharya?"

There was a short silence, and then I answered, "Sounds fine if you're going back into the . . . Yogi business."

"I am entitled to it, you know; I mean the title of Yogi."

Getting up the nerve, I finally asked, “Will you be wearing robes and that sort of thing?”

He looked at me a bit strangely. “No, I feel that would hardly be appropriate.”

I signed the check and we walked to where he had parked his car. After a little small talk we shook hands and he drove off. Duncan’s Inn, where we had eaten, was only a short distance from my office so I hadn’t brought my car. As I walked along Sunset Boulevard toward CBS, many questions filled my mind.

Why was Charya really leaving the Foundation of Human Understanding? Was the concept Yogananda had planted years ago just too compelling, too deeply imbedded to be forever ignored? For Yogihood Charya had been trained, and perhaps a Yogi he would be regardless of his conscious wishes. Or perhaps there was another motivating force. There are some who suggest that Sarna had grown to resent Roy’s obvious influence on her husband’s thinking, that as time passed she had encouraged the split.

The fact of the matter is, I don’t know. It’s a reporter’s job to ferret out all pertinent information, but some questions are never answered and some mysteries never solved. Still, much can be gained in the pursuit of the unknown. The law of averages says: You win some and you lose some. So I keep on with my search.

As I close my discussion of Charya Bernard, a final thought or two about this gifted individual occurs to me. Although he has left the Foundation, he is the first to admit the great value of Roy Masters’ ideas. In fact, before exiting Los Angeles, Charya planned to purchase several hundred of Roy’s meditation records and books to use as the basis for his own venture. Apparently he really meant it when he said there was no ideological difference between them.

Thus, Charya Bernard, brilliant scholar of Oriental mysticism, spell-binding orator, intimate of the late Parmahansa Yogananda, symbol and figure-head to thousands, found the missing piece to one of life’s most enigmatic puzzles, not at the feet of some wizened guru squatting in a drafty cave high in the Himalayas, but in the middle of sunny, smoggy Southern California with an ordinary-looking man in a conventional business suit. And now, having found it, he has exchanged the crowds and freeway congestion of the sprawling

megalopolis for the subtropical lushness of Hawaii.

I personally feel he is hoping to discover in Hawaii something that would enable him to reconcile what his years of iron-discipline (which viciously suppressed human feeling) had taught, with something Luther had called for: sensuality governed by the Holy Spirit. Charya needed to come in from the cold.

If that be the case, Los Angeles is the perfect site for such a reconciliation. Where else is there a locality where a dynamically-active spiritual subculture is so unabashedly superimposed on a society that glories in “doing its own thing?”

This kind of environment has just got to produce a few philosophical surprises. I think Charya missed a good bet.

Where I'm Coming From

Written by William Wolff six years after the publication of his book *Healers, Gurus and Spiritual Guides*

I was in the midst of producing a documentary report on meditation when, during a break, the broadcast executive who had given me the assignment—a very knowledgeable man with more than just the average share of healthy journalistic skepticism—came into the studio to check on the progress of my somewhat exotic production.

It was obvious that he was having doubts as to the legitimacy of meditation as a worthwhile subject for an objective news documentary. No matter that *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Psychology Today* and even *The Wall Street Journal* had devoted considerable space to the current interest in meditation. No matter that a popular TV talk-show host had devoted his 90 minute syndicated program (on more than one occasion) to blatantly promoting a specific meditation technique that grew out of the mystical Advaita school of yoga using a Hindu devotional as an initiation ritual. No, the broadcast skeptic did not want even inadvertently to be responsible for influencing anyone in such a way that he may get caught up in cultism of any sort.

After thoughtfully listening to a number of excerpts from the taped interviews of various meditative experts glibly articulating their sometimes contrary opinions on the so-called fourth state of consciousness, this long-time news professional was far from impressed with what he had heard.

Carefully choosing his words, he asked, “Bill, you must have met a couple hundred yogis, psychics and so-called truth teachers who make a pretty good living instructing, sermonizing and advising a hell of a lot of troubled people. True?”

“It’s more like five hundred assorted modern-day mystics that I’ve gotten to know over the past two decades,” I admitted.

“Be honest. How many of them would you trust to tell you what you really need to know instead of giving you a line of mumbo-jumbo to make you feel good so you’d be happy to part with some of your

cash?” And in an equally pointed question he asked, “How many would you trust to send your wife or daughter if they needed counseling?”

A valid question. And, cynicism aside, everyone having any dealings in the metaphysical realm would be wise to emulate this media man’s objectivity, if not his complete lack of trust for anything remotely bordering on the esoteric. The dangers are many, and one is advised to proceed with caution. The traps set for the unwary are numerous and sometimes even fatal.

But, in answer to my friend’s question, of all the “spiritually aware” people I’ve interviewed, taken classes and lectures from, and spent considerable time in deep, deep conversation with, only the fingers on one hand would be required to count those I felt were genuinely endowed with at least a modicum of cosmic consciousness. Just a precious few displayed true wisdom. Of course, that’s my personal opinion, and certainly anyone has the freedom to dispute it.

A half-dozen years have passed since the original hard-cover edition of this book first came out. Hundreds of people have written me, telephoned and made personal contact. It has been a truly gratifying response.

There are those who, after reading Chapters 5 and 6, felt I was biased in favor of Roy Masters and his work. If this be true, then it was unintentional. I admit that in this book - unlike a documentary - I write what I feel as well as what I see. Thoughts, impressions, bits and pieces of my own philosophy, as well as hard facts make up the fabric of any book I have authored to date. So although there was no pre-meditation on my part to sway you one way or another, it is entirely possible that my personal preference did indeed seep through.

But what about right now? After all, everything in the universe is subject to change. In the past six years have I altered my opinion of Roy Masters? It is obvious that an update is in order.

Before addressing myself specifically to that self-imposed query, I must add another element to illustrate the basis for my position.

Much publicity has been given to transcendental meditation—maybe too much. But, be that as it may, many are the famous and near-famous who tout its effectiveness. As Adam Smith put it, it’s the McDonald’s of meditation. Really, never before has a meditation tech-

nique been so slickly packaged, widely publicized and so well distributed —just like a McDonald’s hamburger.

I’m wondering if the proponents of TM have made a deity of the one-time obscure itinerant guru who meditated in seclusion for thirteen years in a Himalayan cave and then came West with his technique. Certainly they hold him in awe and have no doubts as to his sincerity.

All the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is trying to do is save the world, I’m told. How so? Well, the giggle-prone gentleman from India claims that all our global troubles can be solved as soon as just one per cent of the world’s population starts to practice TM.

Does he really believe this? Emphatically, insist his disciples. Out come the pseudoscientific graphs and impressive statistics to “prove” his contention.

OK, if this is true and the Maharishi is so concerned with the world being a better place, then why not give every man, woman and child (who wants it) the complete TM technique free in order to hasten the salvation of the world?

I challenge L. Ron Hubbard and his Scientology crowd, Werner Erhard of “est” fame and all the rest who purport to be in possession of an absolutely invaluable teaching, technique or great secret that will be a boon to mankind to prove their love of humanity and empty their coffers if need be to make the world aware of what they have.

Not practical, you say. It can’t be done.

Roy Masters is doing it.

He’s paying money to go on the radio and reveal his entire meditation technique. No need to buy a book, tape or come to a lecture. He is actually giving it away free.

What? You don’t have to pay \$125 for a secret mantra?

Or \$250 for a weekend seminar?

Or a couple of thousand dollars to become “clear?”

Just like Maharishi, L. Ron Hubbard, Werner Erhard, Thurman Fleet and most all the leaders who apparently believe what they have to offer can be a blessing to one and all, Roy Masters, too, is convinced that he has the ultimate solution for eliminating mankind’s woes. But there is a difference.

Instead of merely offering a few scholarships or cutting the price

tag in half for college students, Masters does what the rest have yet to do. He buys time on a Los Angeles-area radio station and spells out in detail his entire meditation technique. How much freer can he make it?

Perhaps he really believes that Biblical admonition that tells us that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Call him a fanatic. Accuse him of zealotry. Label him an unrealistic visionary. I have, more than once. But know that here is an uncommon man—a rare bird, indeed—willing to put his money where his mouth and heart are.

You can have everything he teaches and writes about just for the asking with no strings attached if you honestly can’t afford it. That’s the way it has been right from the beginning. He operates strictly on the honor system. But really, his books, tapes and records are so nominally priced that they’re easily in the reach of anyone sincerely interested.

It’s a good thing he’s not running a hamburger franchise; he’d go broke. Of course, that’s the whole point. Roy Masters is not merchandising snake oil, pushing an expensive power-of-the-mind course of instruction or enrolling devotees in an Eastern mystical order.

Maybe that’s why I trust the guy.

Epilogue: Charya and Roy parted friends. Wishing him well, Charya went back to Hawaii to live the programming he could not overcome...that of a guru. He died shortly thereafter. —Editor