



ICR Newsletter

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The Practical Mystic

Part II

By Eileen Holland

"A certain wandering light comes to me which I instantly perceive to be the Cause of Causes. It transcends all proving. It is itself the ground of being; and I see that it is not one & I another, but this is the life of my life."

from the journals of R.W. Emerson - "JMN, V, 337"

In his lecture *The Peace Principle*, Emerson surprised people by seeming to praise war. He spoke of it as an "instinct for self-help, a perpetual struggle to be, to resist opposition, to attain freedom, the right to be a self-defended being". But then Emerson moves on in the same speech to say the war "reflects only the primitive and early parts of human development. The sympathy with war is a juvenile and temporary state." Then he challenges his audience to look on peace as an even more heroic endeavor than war.

Richard Garnett in his 1888 bi-

Eileen Holland is a workshop leader on creative living and a long time member of ICR. In addition to the current article, her many contributions to Kundalini research include essays on the characteristics of mystics and geniuses apparent in Walt Whitman, Victor Hugo and Thomas Jefferson.

ography of Emerson quotes from a letter a shocked Emerson wrote from England regarding the poverty rampant in that industrialized country. "My dearest little Edie (his daughter) costs me a pretty penny. I cannot go up to the street but I shall see some woman in rags with a little creature just of Edie's size and age, but in coarsest, ragged clothes and barefooted, stepping beside her and I look curiously into her Edie's face with some terrors let it should resemble mine and the far-off Edie wins from me the half-penny for this near one."

Emerson's views on slavery and the displacement of indigenous peoples were a reflection of his personal integrity and sense of responsibility. He called the Fugitive Slave Act (1850) a law every man should break. His home was one of the "safe houses" for the Underground Rail-

road. Emerson's open letter to President Martin Van Buren, published in Concord, Washington and other cities contained the outrage of all democratic, socially responsible human beings. He expressed the moral conscience of a nation over the expulsion of the Cherokee nation in 1838. Eighteen thousand Cherokees were driven away from their villages and fields in Georgia and on this "Trail of Tears" they were forced into carts, wagons and boats and dragged over mountains and rivers to a wilderness beyond the Mississippi. In his open letter, Emerson calls it "a dereliction of all faith and virtue, such a denial of justice and such deafness to screams of mercy never heard in times of peace and the dealing of a nation with its own allies, since the world was made." And in a private letter, Emerson takes Van Buren to task..."The soul of man, the justice and

mercy that is the heart's heart in all men, from Maine to Texas, does abhor this business. How could we call this conspiracy...our government, or the land cursed by their parting and dying imprecations our country anymore? You, sir, will bring down that renowned chair in which you sit into infamy if your seal is set to this instrument of perfidy; and the name of this nation, hitherto the sweet omen of religion and liberty, will stink to the world."

In *The Real Nature of Mystical Experience*, Gopi Krishna says, "Our earthly existence, divided into days and nights might be symbolic of our eternal cycle of birth and death" and further on, "Every mystical experience is a testament to our eternal life." There is no doubt that this will lead to a sense of immortality, a loss of fear of death and a humble detachment from the temporal life. Emerson said, "The soul knows no persons." In his journal dated December 21, 1823 when he was just 20 years old he wrote, "I say to the Universe, Mighty One! Thou art not my mother. Return to chaos, if thou wilt, I shall still exist. I live. If I owe my being, it is to a destiny greater than thine. Star by star, world by world, system by system shall be crushed – but I shall live." Later, in an entry dated in 1837, Emerson expanded on his sense of immortality "...as soon as any soul has learned always to take sides with Reason against himself, to transfer his ME from his person, his name, his interest, back upon Truth and Justice, so that when he is disgraced and defeated and fretted and disheartened, and waste by nothings, he bears it well, never one instant relaxing his watchfulness; and as soon as he can get a respite from the insults of the sadness, records all these phenomena, pierces their beauty as phenomena and like a God, oversees himself."

Richard Geldard in his 1993 book

The Esoteric Emerson points out the "Emerson's detachment from the surface of things affirms the material world as illusory. In *Nature* he says that the essential 'ME or self is mind, the subtle substance embodying the laws of spiritual order' – this was his perception of the Divine source and of the life of the mind as an active instrument of that source."

VanWyck Brooks tells the story of Emerson riding to Maine to lecture and listening to the Boston merchants traveling there boasting that they could buy all of Maine and have millions left. "But," said Emerson, "they didn't seem to consider that the values of Boston were artificial values, the values of luxuries, furniture, inflated prices of land and lots and houses, while the values of Maine (the great natural expanses of mountains, rivers, woods) were primary and necessary and therefore permanent under any state of society."

Emerson seemed to live in a practical state of detachment and like the great Krishnamurti had learned to live with "what is as it is". "I have a house," Emerson wrote, "a closet which holds my books, a stable, a garden, a field; are these, any and all, a reason for refusing the angel who beckons me away, as if there were no skylight elsewhere that could reproduce for me as my wants require?" This state of awareness rendered him capable of seeing that everything has its beauty, even a corpse. Weeks after the death of his first wife Ellen, he walked to West Roxbury where she was buried and opened the coffin. Perhaps most thought him mad with grief but it could be that he had begun to live with "what is" on a profound level. "Grief," he wrote in his journal in later years, "will make us idealists. In the death of my son now more that two years ago, I seem to have lost a beautiful estate – no more. I cannot get it nearer to me." "He means," his biographer, George Woodbury says,

"that his own soul has suffered no loss, as if it were his own 'eternal part' that was made plain to him in the experience. His natural grief, however, was not the less and the death of his beloved Waldo at five years of age was the greatest shock of his life." When Emerson said the "soul knows no persons" Woodbury concludes, "The death of his brothers, the death of his first wife, the death of his son, lowered the value of personality by showing its transitoriness." In Emerson's 1841 discourse on *The Method of Nature*, this sense of detachment was summed up. "Man is not born for prosperity, but to suffer for the benefits of others, like the noble rock-maple which all around our villages bleeds for the service of man."

Belief in God, a sense of the "Oneness" of all nature and the experience of an expansion of consciousness bearing witness to a Divine manifestation are sure signs of an enlightened mystic/genius. These particular characteristics are so in abundance with regard to Ralph Waldo Emerson it would require several books to convey them. Choosing the examples for the purpose of this paper created the difficulty of having to leave so many out.

In his work, *Spiritual Laws*, Emerson wrote:

"A little consideration of what takes place around us every day would show us that a higher law than that of our will regulates events; that our painful labors are unnecessary and fruitless; that only in our easy, simple, spontaneous action are we strong, and by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine. Belief and love – will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the center of nature and over the will of every man, so that none of us can harm the universe. It has so infused its strong attachment into

nature that we prosper when we accept its advice, and when we struggle to wound its creatures, our hands are glued to our sides, or they beat their own breasts. The whole course of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right words.”

Emerson was, like many enlightened individuals, in revolt against rituals and forms in religion and after much struggle left his ministerial studies. He was influenced by Plato and the German philosophers among others. “Emerson saw that anterior to all things was an Ineffable Oneness,” says Phillips Russell, “and to know this was impossible within the intellect; and that at the core of things beneath their apparent differences in structure, lay an unbreakable unity.” Deeply influenced by Eastern thought, Emerson also read widely including the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. Russell also detailed Emerson’s creed... “that the world is not the product of manifest power, but of one Will, one Mind and that one Mind is everywhere active...”

Paralleling Gopi Krishna’s teaching on Kundalini as the hidden source of all our thoughts, desires, passions and feeling; the All-pervading, mysterious element of Creation, Emerson explains in *The Over-Soul* that “the soul of man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; it is not a function like memory, calculation or comparison but uses these as hands and feet; it is not a faculty, but a light; it is not the intellect or the will but the master of the intellect and will...” and from his poem, *The Sphinx* –

“Sea, earth, air, sound, silence
Plant, quadruped, bird
By one music enchanted
One deity stirred”

In his 1995 book *Emerson: The Mind on Fire*, Robert D. Richardson

touches on this universality of belief in God and the fact that rites, rituals, formal worship and church religion are not what the religious impulse is all about. “God,” he quotes Emerson, “builds his temple in the heart on the ruins of churches and religions...we are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples.” After a meeting in New Bedford, Massachusetts with Mary Rotch, a Quaker whose experiences with an inner light affected him deeply, Emerson wrote of his own experience of expansion while sitting in a sunny room at Mt. Auburn

**DO NOT GO
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- RWE

in Cambridge – I opened my eyes and let what would pass through them into the soul. I saw no more my relation to Cambridge or Boston. I heeded no more what minute or hour the...clocks indicated. I saw only the noble earth on which I was born, with the great star that warms and enlightens it. The pines glittered and challenged me to read their riddle, the oak leaves turned their little somersaults, the wind bustled high overhead...” Again in his poetry, the sense of expansion and oneness flow:

“Again I saw, again I heard
The rolling river, the morning bird
Beauty through my senses stole
yielded myself to the perfect whole”

In his introduction to a collection of Critical Essays on Emerson, Milton Konvitz makes this observation – “For

Emerson, then, there is no antithesis between the practical and theoretical, between the humanistic and the scientific, between religion and science, between value and fact – as there is none between inner and outer, between man and nature, between character and event...Man is One, Mind is One, Nature is One, the World is One. This, perhaps, is what the Bible means by its great affirmation of the oneness of God; for there is a single order, one set of laws that operates for man, as well as for beast and star, in the marketplace as well as the body.”

Emerson invites us:

“Come out of your warm angular house... into the cold, chill, instantaneous night, In the instant you leave far behind all human relation, wife, mother and child and live only with the savages – water, air, light, carbon, lime and granite. I become a moist, cold element. Nature grows over me. Frogs pipe; waters far off tinkle; dry leaves hiss; grass bends and rustles; and I have died out of the human world and come to feel a strange cold, aqueous, terraqueous, aerial, ethereal sympathy and existence.”

If we accept the theory that the human brain is still in a state of evolutionary transformation, it is not a great leap to see that the intellect will become greatly enhanced and that a channel of perception will be opened enabling us to understand the world in which we live on an extraordinary level. Gopi Krishna in *Reason and Revelation* explains, “There is no other explanation for the appearance of genius, with its products and creations, all tending to extend the area of man’s knowledge, to increase his sensibilities, to improve his aesthetic sense and to refine his emotions in a wholesome way...extraordinary individuals have been born, who, in one branch of

knowledge or the other, or in one art or the other, excelled the rest, discovered new truths, made fresh discoveries, created new masterpieces of art and found new methods for a happier social or political life of man, lifting the race higher and higher up towards a target which is still beyond our sight.” Evelyn Underhill sums it up as eloquently, “In the born mystic these powers are great and lie very near the normal threshold of consciousness. He has a genius for the transcendental – or as he would say, a divine discovery, in much the same way as his cousins, the born musician and poet, have a genius for musical or poetic discovery. In all three cases, the emergence of these powers is mysterious; and not least so to those who experience it.”

In his 1968 biography, George Edward Woodbury describes Emerson’s genius this way, “Emerson was not a great writer but he was a writer with greatness of mind; he was not a great poet but a poet with greatness of imagination...It is not by intellectual light but by this immense moral force that his genius works in the world...No man rises from reading him without feeling more unshackled...One has often in reading him that feeling of eternity in the thought which is the sign royal of greatness. It is in his poems that I feel it most, and find there the flower of his mind...The excellence of his prose...is in the perfect turn of short sentences, his eloquence...his thought sinks into the mind and haunts the memory... He had no constructive but only an ejaculatory genius...its original power...owes little to the form.”

Richard Geldard describes this uniqueness of expression in Emerson’s essays – “In *Nature* was presented a kind of writing that was unlike essays and poetry. It lay somewhere in between because it constituted the language of a literary visionary.”

Emerson’s belief in the union of science and religion is also a radical departure. “In our secular world,” continues Geldard, “Emerson’s ‘world view’ is lumped into so-called paranormal phenomena and is often discredited as sentimentalism. In science the *subtle* is merely what has yet to be fixed by experimentation and demonstrable proof. For Emerson, *subtle* meant *unseen*, what had to be intuitively known. It also meant *real* and he defined it as a source of energy by which life was generated and sustained.” Geldard presents another of Emerson’s radical thoughts – “...the mind seen as a universal faculty whose characteristics and powers were to be the foundation of an evolved human nature.”

When Jerome Loving compares Emerson and Whitman, he observes, “Both overcame the stifling influence of their culture to accept the challenge of producing a literature that was uniquely American.” If Emerson’s thoughts were not considered original by some, there was originality and beauty in their expression. Even critics such as George Santayana concedes, “His grasp was not particularly firm, he was far from being...a Plato or Aristotle...but his mind was endowed with unusual plasticity, spontaneity and liberty of movement...he was like a young God making experiments in creation.”

Stephen Whicher calls Emerson’s idea of man’s entire independence one of the most startling new notes in American literature – “The aim of this strain in his thought is not virtue, but freedom and mastery. It is radically anarchic, overthrowing all the authority of the past, all compromise or cooperation with others, in the name of the Power present and agent in the soul.” Phillips Russell recalls Emerson’s view that man should have an original relation to the Universe – “our own revelation, our own history”. In examining Emerson’s poetry Russell says,

“Emerson was at his best in the verse which is sometimes contemptuously called ‘free’ and in which medium of expression he was the predecessor and path-breaker for young poets who arrived one, two and three generations later.”

To my mind, Emerson’s idea of political morality is still a rare, radical and mostly untried vision. The crisp turn of phrase that holds a universe of truths still jump off the page at modern readers of Mr. Emerson’s thought:

“Your goodness must have an edge to it.”

“The sole purpose of books is to inspire.”

“Nothing can give you peace but yourself.”

“A man is fed, not that he may be fed, but that he may work.”

“The faith that stands on authority is not faith.”

“Adopt the pace of nature. Her secret is patience.”

“All I have seen teaches me to trust the creator for all I have not seen.”

“Bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss.”

“Common sense is genius dressed in its working clothes.”

“Don’t be too timid or squeamish about your actions.”

“All life is an experiment.”

“Have no regrets.”

“Never imitate.”

“God enters by a private door every individual.”

“Let us be silent-so we may hear the whisper of the Gods.”

These words are not abstractions. They are the “Practical Mystic’s” message to us coming down through the ages. We ignore them at our peril.

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24th Annual ICR Conference

Our annual conference definitely lived up to the theme of "Kundalini: Changing Lives from Within". People like you and me shared their personal stories about this creative energy – Kundalini; how it awakened in them and the changes that took place in their lives. For many those changes are now a permanent feature and Kundalini continues to provide them with new opportunities for personal spiritual growth – often in surprising ways. That is the wondrous mystery of this Divine creative force as it propels us along our evolutionary journey. Life is the adventure.

Paul Pond opened the conference by giving a brief overview of the concept of Kundalini for the benefit of those who joined us for the first time. It is our belief that putting inner experiences into perspective within the Kundalini framework

provides the individual with a sense of balance and inner strength. After all, one experience can change our life in an instant.

Next, Eileen Holland made a surprise short presentation. Since Kundalini is held to be responsible for inspired creativity, we introduced Eileen by playing a song that she was inspired to write and sing to Gopi Krishna when she met him in 1977. Eileen then shared a poem she wrote about how waiting for a thunderous experience could prevent us from hearing the gentle whisper of the Divine creative energy - Kundalini. Its not the magnitude of the experience, but rather the changes it brings that is important.

AWAKENING

too many years
pursuing the secret path
storming heaven's gate
coveting someone else's experience

missing my own
grace may come in blinding flashes
or soft as a hummingbird
how can I hear its urgent murmur
if I am listening for thunder?

Dale Pond shared one of her experiences in "Looking Back Through the Eye of God". She first thought to do a play about her interior experiences, but instead was drawn to create a meditation that detailed the experience. Through music and poetry she drew us into a moment of understanding, if only briefly, of our soul's journey.

Neil Sinclair shared his poetry and his understanding about channeled poetry - that it is a sign of awakened Kundalini energy. He gave examples from the poetry of Rumi, Blake, Shakespeare, and others to illustrate the factors that indicate an activated Kundalini. Neil stressed

(see 24th Annual... continued on page 7)

REMEMBER MOTHER EARTH: *Our Sustainer and Environment*

Open Thy Eyes and See God Everywhere

By Vitold Kreutzer

Let us entertain a universal principle that is creeping into human consciousness at an accelerated rate during our current stage in human evolution. "The Creator and all of Creation are one." Or in more intellectual terms we can say that there is nothing before, outside of, or after the Creator. This form of spiritual thinking may be expressed by many, dwelt upon by some, understood by few, but truly lived daily by even fewer. There is no judgment made in this statement. The facts, the habits, the thinking, the deeds, the feelings and the wishes of modern humanity are the evidence one examines when arriving at the conclusion mentioned above.

Time and space do not allow for a thorough examination of human understanding of such spiritual thought. In this discussion we will take a simple approach in illustrating the state of modern human consciousness in relation to all that surrounds and envelopes us. Although most individuals are too focused in their own self-directed survival, or too dedicated in beliefs and ideas that they find comfortable or just refuse to accept the impact of evolutionary impulses upon their being, a growing number of souls by the grace of heaven, and earth, venture into unfamiliar realms of life, love and

thinking. This new reality becomes a permanent feature of one's consciousness as one awakens to that which lies beyond the physical, but is ever present behind the thin veil of physicality. One might thus ask, how does any soul break through this veil during this earthly lifetime?

My soul entered this physical world with the help and guidance of numerous spiritual beings and forces. An enormous privilege, vitality and responsibility have been placed upon

We become One with the Source of All

my soul as I renew an active role in the cosmic play of life on this life giving, healing, and receiving planetary being called Earth. At conception a doorway opened, and my soul entered into a world incredibly alive. This world, where cosmic forces set the stage for my inner soul's growth and evolution, envelopes and permeates my being with divine splendor and wisdom. The attributes of this physical home provide me with every possible opportunity and the background to fulfill my destiny and that of all around me. My individualized experience of life during this incarnation, meshed together with countless related, interdependent and eternal life forces brings about life's pur-

pose to evolve towards that which is the truth. Such an opportunity can bring about a spiritual insight that acknowledges the falsity of the notion of separation as a reality.

One must recognize that humanity has made enormous strides in technology and science. We have, as a species increased drastically in number and spread our influence over almost every corner of the globe. There is no place on this planet that has not been affected by our physical activity. Our interactions with our human brothers and sisters, and with all other life forms on this planet has revealed a thinking whose impact on all life is seriously approaching a level of infection that brings all closer to a terminal illness.

Our aggressive behaviour and our materialistic tendencies possess a self-centered egoist sense that endangers anyone and anything that appears different or may not serve our best interests. Whether this is motivated by greed, fear, hatred, or selfishness, this is the effect of separation.

When we look out into the physical world, we are surrounded by an endless array of life entities and forces. Life abounds all around and within us. Barely a moment goes by without the stimulation of our senses and imagination. The noise and activity seem to be continuous. This constant stimulation is, however, seen

as originating and coming from something outside of us. It becomes a part of us only, when we bring this externality inside us, where we mold, interpret and work upon it with our minds. These experiences do not become one with us, however, until the moment, when in the stillness of our hearts, we become one with the source of all, and witness the connection amongst all that is physical and spiritual. Until that moment, all other human souls, all other species of life, and all phenomena remain outside us. Why is this moment not a naturally occurring

state of being continuously flooding our existence? Why is this not a state of being engulfing all of us now and forever?

Would our actions, intentions and thinking be any different if we understood the following universal codes of life?

Love thy neighbour as thyself. See yourself in every living thing. What you do unto others, you do unto yourself. Every molecule of life is eternally connected and vital to every other molecule

in existence. There is only love. All life is love eternal. See God in everyone and in everything. There is no separation. We are All ONE.

Vitold Kreutzer is a custodian of a little piece of Nature, a baker of organic goods and a promoter of alternative forms of energy and human sustainability. He is committed to studying the spirit in Nature and humanity and their connection to the cosmos.

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that he never “forces” the effort to write but rather opens his mind to receive a poem from the unseen intelligence of the universe. Neil, like Whitman and others believes that this type of poetry has great significance for the welfare of mankind. In this vein, Neil referred to several of Gopi Krishna’s books of poetry. These books are not made up of separate poems, but each book is a continuous poem that addresses current world difficulties and offers a solution based on understanding Kundalini as the evolutionary energy and Her workings within us.

David Hickey drew us into another space, where planets create their own music. With a brush of a quartz crystal bowl, a gentle or strong pulsating of a mighty gong along with the intermingling of occasional chimes, we were up-lifted to another space, another consciousness that is awe-inspiring. Using his very special talent, David gave us a moment to be one with the All.

Cecilia Van Manen shared her many experiences that have come to her through universal Divine Love. She now eloquently shares this boundless Love with all she comes into contact with. When she awakened to this love, Cecilia discovered its truth in all kinds of everyday experiences. Her sincere sharing uplifted us and we know that the opportunity to respect and love life is now and forever.

Beverley Viljakainen gave us many things to take to heart and to act on in how the Kundalini process evolves within us. She feels we are led to situations that will help us grow and recognizing this we can embrace life’s changes. At this point in her life Beverley is being drawn to share with seniors by helping them to remember their special significance and importance in the evolution of the race.

With great emotion, Richard Jaunzemis shared the spontaneous Kundalini experience that permanently changed his life. Since that time he became much more intuitive in both his personal life and in his work as a massage therapist. Richard shared numerous experiences of this intuitive knowing, especially when he had a heart attack last year. Just before going into the operation where they would take a vein out of his arm and leg, he mentioned he was a massage therapist and relied on the strength in his arms. The doctor heard this message and decided to use another technique, getting what they needed from somewhere else. When they told Richard after the operation what they had done, he knew that he had been blessed and tears flowed. To this day Richard has come to a point where he listens attentively to the messages being shared within his

being and continues to grow in understanding Kundalini - the intelligent energy that moves us.

Jennifer Clark proved once more that these experiences are unique to each one of us. Her souls’ imprint shined through her artwork and the narrative that she wrote about each of the 72 wondrous paintings that came from her Kundalini experience. She described how the energy moved through her entire being, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Her paintings have shared with her the realization that the Kundalini energy once awakened, moves us towards a state of wholeness in ways that we do not always understand at first. We know that Jennifer’s deep emotional self-discovery continues to move her into a place of wholeness. Her presentation helped us to see the conflicts involved as well as the resolutions that take place as we flow into the next phase of change.

We would like to thank all of the people who shared their interior experiences of this Divine process as it continues to awaken people everywhere at this time of major global change. It is our sincere hope that somehow everyone who gathered at this conference took away some of the inspiration that was shared and find it of good use in their own journey.

Kundalini and Creativity



Don't miss this exciting hands-on workshop where you will:

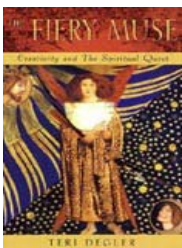
- Explore Kundalini-Shakti's role in inspiration
- Do exercises in creativity and creative writing
- Enrich your ability to be creative and think creatively

with **Teri Degler** based on her new book:

***The Divine Feminine Fire
Creativity and Your Yearning to Express Yourself***

In this supportive, encouraging workshop, you'll delve into the divine feminine – Shakti, Sophia, Shekinah – as the cosmic source of inspiration. You'll discover how to enhance your writing and self-expression, explore new ways to solve problems in your daily life, and play with art materials in ways that reconnect you to your childhood creativity.

About the workshop leader: Award-winning writer Teri Degler is the author/co-author of ten books including *The Fiery Muse: Creativity and the Spiritual Quest* (Random House of Canada). She has researched yoga philosophy and the lives of highly creative mystics for years. Her freelance writing has appeared in many publications, and she has taught numerous workshops on creativity in both Canada and the United States. (See: www.teridegler.com)



Sunday October 18, 2009

1:00pm to 4:30pm

The Centre - 316 Dupont St, Toronto, Ontario

Registration: \$20

For more information or to register:

www.icrcanada.org/events.html or 1-800-986-1857



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