

1/3/2024 Self-Inquiry Dyads — Edrid

This is a transcription of a talk given by Edrid at the January 3, 2024 Self-Enquiry Dyads meeting on Zoom. I've done some minor editing to make the text more readable.

Smaran: Hello everyone and welcome to what I believe is our 21st monthly gathering, always on the first Wednesday of every month and we're fortunate today that Edrid will be presenting to us. He led or presented on the very first gathering we had back in April a year and a half ago and he gave a fantastic introduction to his involvement with Charles Berner, a lot about Charles Berner and Charles' early being involved in Scientology, and the school of awakening that Charles set up.

But today he will now focus much more on his own involvement in his own life with Enlightenment Intensives, in participating in, leading them, in training people and all that he has learned in the probably about 70 or more enlightenment intensives that he's been a participant in.

Oh, I don't really know how many. I remember him very well from him being a participant and being my partner and the totality of his commitment as a participant and how he would go ahead and put himself into it, even into a crisis as he worked through whatever was arising.

So now I'm going to turn the meeting over to... if you spotlight both of us now please... turn the meeting over to Edrid to introduce himself a bit further and to take over with the presentation. Thanks. Good luck to Edrid.

Edrid: Hello everybody. I'm not used to speaking much about myself as much as working on the principles and the practices with people. I've never really been much into sharing my personal history with people so it's kind of a novelty for me. I mean among friends, I have, but when I've interacted with people in this field it's mostly been about the practices and any help I could give them in making the practices work for them because I felt like that was really my job, to be able to say things in a way that would allow them to get the most benefit out of doing the work. That was my orientation, but I'll give it a try and share some history of my own personal process a little bit.

I think before I met Charles Berner I did not have a clue about enlightenment at all. I hadn't thought about it. I was more into physics and electronics. I was sort of a nerdy guy. I could invent things and science was really interesting to me. I had a kind of knack for physics and mathematics in high school.

But I remember one day, I think it was one of the early years in high school, I don't remember which year exactly, I was sitting on the steps in front of my house. My father

had planted a little tree in the front yard, a little chinese elm tree. It was about four feet high. I was sitting there without much on my mind and I was looking at that tree and it started to glow. I'd never experienced anything quite like that but it began to radiate this light. I was having a kind of hallucination of sorts and it just expanded and expanded and I was... I call it my "burning bush" experience because it reminded me of the biblical burning bush story.

Anyway, it lasted for just a few minutes but it was a natural psychedelic moment of some kind, and reflecting back on it, as a matter of fact I didn't have anything to connect it with or compare it with and so even though it was remarkable, it wasn't long before I had forgotten about it and went on with, you know, what you do in high school.

But reflecting back of it, there must be something in my brain or in my mind that is kind of volatile in a certain way. It isn't anchored as deep as it might otherwise be. It's sort of a spontaneous spiritual experience that happened. It was more of a perceptual experience but it had an aura about it which was unique. I hadn't experienced anything like it before, as if I was in a different world. But I forgot about it.

Later, during my first year of college, I was going to USC (University of Southern California) as a physics and mathematics major and my friend told me about this fellow who was giving free lectures in Newport Beach in southern California from his home. It was Charles Berner. My friend encouraged me to really check this out because he was very interesting.

So, okay, I went down there. It was sort of the late spring or early summer of 1963 and he was giving a talk on mental pictures which I'd never considered before. It turned out upon reflection that I had known that I did picture things in my mind but I never noticed that I did. There was some sort of a quality like I never really got that. I mean I could understand my mind but I didn't see my mind objectively in any way. I don't know if you understand that or you can get that but there was no sense of the capacity of meta-cognition of my mind. My mind is a thing and he introduced me to that nature of mind. It wasn't spoken of that way but in reflection that's what it was.

The mind is a thing. You have a mind. That's a very Cartesian perspective. It doesn't hold up maybe in the long run but it was a good starting point for me. I noticed I HAD a mind and that it had pictures in it and it had all the other attributes of a mind. And that was the beginning of a process and, for some reason, I was just fascinated by that.

I lost a lot of my energy for physics and mathematics and all those other things as it was much more personal and much more interesting to start to investigate the nature of my mind and Charles Berner was really putting that out, you know, in ways of relating to your inner space and the processes of your thoughts.

These pictures had a kind of energy in them that affected my personality. That was the model, that these collections of experiences I had would maybe not be conscious all the time but they were definitely kind of bleeding into my character and I was very interested in how these prior experience affected my behavior and my attitudes and my choices. That became very real to me and it was so personal and so relevant to me that it kind of superseded my other interests. And so I was drawn into the process of looking into the nature of my mind.

Charles was teaching mind clearing at the time and I got drawn into that and learned about mind clearing techniques and I found there was really a larger panorama than I had initially appreciated.

There was a lot going on inside me and I was lucky because I didn't have any deep trauma in childhood so it wasn't a kind of salvation model that was going on with me, of trying to solve a problem of real tortured emotions or anything like that. I was motivated mostly by curiosity about the nature of being. This was emerging from my association with Charles. I was interested in how things worked, sort of a "sciencey" thing more than a "salvation" thing.

There's a kind of dimension I really respect—the people who delve into their mind who have been deeply traumatized and they really have to do something about it to live a reasonable life and so in some ways I maybe can't fully appreciate the kind of thing they have to deal with. But for me it was curiosity and it was enlightening. It is a wonderful exploration of being, of the magic of existence.

I remember early on Charles had this thing he called "Mind Program Four" and I was being cleared with it. It's this thing where you get the idea of being in a particular state that interferes with your life that you want to resolve and then you get the opposite. You get the idea of being in the opposite state, and you go back and forth and back and forth. I was doing this with a friend, Drew, who was my clearer at the time. I went back and forth and back and forth with this one thing where I was feeling like being really hesitant about certain things and so I was dealing with the concept of hesitantness, of holding back. The way it went, it was like I had ideas about that and I had memories of being hesitant so I could get the idea of that and I could get the idea of the opposite. It was based on a law of opposites kind of practice and after I had a couple of sessions on working on that one concept there was this moment when I realized I was creating it from a source within me, that I could just do it from myself and that it was not contingent on any other influence. I hope you can appreciate that I could actually create the state I was in purely from nothing, and also it's opposite. I realized in that moment that all states were of that nature and I got this incredible rush from that and my body heated up and I was seeing white light. It was an amazing experience, a revelation about the nature of mind. It still required a lot of work to get on top of certain states but it gave me purchase on almost any state I was in. I

had confidence that I had the capacity to master any state in myself. It wasn't a finished and accomplished thing. There were lots and lots of things I needed to do to improve my state but I had that capacity and I knew that about myself. It was kind of an enlightenment of sorts. So that was a really important moment in my life and it gave me mastery over a lot of what was going on with me internally.

This was before the Enlightenment Intensive. Later, enlightenment was in the air but early on I thought this enlightenment stuff was mostly about clearing. It was about getting rid of junk in your head that was a barrier or limiting your ability. It was the idea of getting some ability to live life better and that was the focus. It wasn't about the ultimate nature of being or anything like that. It was just accomplishing a release of your native ability to live life better.

We were doing Dyads in the evening and one of my friends was doing "Who am I" and he began to shake and quiver and have an experience. I was quite surprised that there was such power behind doing that question.

I used to hang out at the Institute of Ability a lot. I was kind of volunteering on staff most of the time so I was able to get all the courses for free. One day my friend, Drew, was saying to me that you're not your body. You wouldn't say "*my body*" if you were the body. I thought, oh, that's crazy. That's just an artifact of language. It doesn't mean anything, and he said, nope, you're wrong, like that. It was kind of irritating. He came at me that way and so it stuck in my mind. This was about maybe a month or two before the first Intensive.

I thought about it later. I couldn't quite get it out of my mind. What do I mean by *my body*? What does that mean when I say *my body*, *my body*...

So that was contemplation, clear and simple, before I was taught about how to contemplate in Dyads and the Enlightenment Intensives. I was doing that, being very open to that experience and the next day I came back to it again. I was in the same room, alone in the main room of the Institute of Ability, and standing there I was kind of in this reverie like, "What does that really mean?" and suddenly I got who I am for the first time, just clear as a bell.

It came with all these side effects. It was amazing, the white light and the trembling and the ecstasy. There was a kind of ecstasy that just overwhelmed me and yet inside I was really quite calm and just reflecting on, "Oh, me! Oh, me!" I got me.

It was weird to have an ecstasy and at the same time be quite not wafted away in it, you know what I mean? I was present in a simplicity.

When the first Intensive came along Charles always gave an initial interview and I said, "Well, you know, I got who I am." I checked it out with him and he said, yeah that was what you go for, so I knew I wasn't kidding myself. I mean it was really quite self-evident

so he said, "What do you want to work on?" He offered me "What am I?" and "What is your true nature?" and I took the second one because it sounded cooler. That's really it. It just sounded cooler to work on what is my true nature than what I am so I worked on that and I had an experience that was really...

It wasn't "what am I," which is more like an ontological penetration to the depths of what one is. It was like my true heart, my true soul, my true... um... true nature and in that sense it was maybe like a root personality of some sort and I guess I get... I get an emotional rush when I contact it... takes me a second to... I get emotions from it ...um... Later I found out what I got is a key part of Tibetan Buddhism. There's a deity called Samantabhadra which is the non-dual good. It's not the good-or-bad. It's that the nature of life is fundamentally good and that I'm not different from that. That deep goodness in myself became self-evident, and any sort of guilt or regret, all the history that one regrets about oneself vanished in a moment. It was like a deep purification and it actually made Charles cry. It was really a beautiful moment. So that's what I got from the first Intensive. [feels strong emotion]... I have to get out of it because I get emotional rushes. It's a deep part of me.

It really woke me to the power of this process and to the intimacy of self-awareness, the depth of being and what's available by engaging in this kind of work.

Meanwhile, between the first Intensive and the third Intensive I moved from southern California to northern California to move in with Forest Dalton. He invited me up there because he had this vision of doing something and he had a beautiful place in the redwoods and we were going to have an intentional community and maybe a growth center of some sort that had a kind of Zen orientation.

Later that first year I went to a few more Intensives and then we began running them there. We'd do one a month and I got the habit of running Intensives. I wasn't actually trained to be a master. I remember sitting in with Charles Berner on one Intensive and he gave me some pointers but that was about it. But I had a lot of training, I guess, in all the clearing stuff and you know it was just like that. I had already absorbed a lot of how to go about it.

But you know Charles had a personality, an intense way he approached it. It didn't quite match with my emotional center. It was too harsh. There was something I couldn't quite abide with. When I was mastering, Forest really influenced me. I must admit I deeply appreciate the quality that he brought to the party, which was of a loving kindness about it and kind of "enriching the field" and bringing out of people their best understanding of the depth of their nature, as opposed to something where you have to do it really hard and get down and get into a crisis and rip yourself to shreds. You know the process. I mean that sometimes happened but it wasn't our fault, so to speak. It would just be the natural outcome of the process and so we were just giving deep permission to express the truth of

yourself and finding a way to open that channel between people and allow their true nature to be exposed.

Our Intensives had a different feel and there was a some criticism among a lot of people. They thought that intensity, that drive and that structure were so important. I did a lot of experiments, we did a lot of explorations, and we found that wasn't the case for us. That it had to do with a sense of openness, instead. A sense of permission to be who you really are. The permission is actually a big piece of the puzzle in my mind, to be who you truly are.

During that period I would go to college for a semester or two and then I would work in electronics. I figured that I didn't want to be a renunciate. I didn't know how to do that. I had a knack for electronics so in parallel with all this spiritual work I was also developing a career in electronics. I had this knack. I figured out how to design computers sort of spontaneously. I could do that; I don't know why. It's just like that's the way my brain works, so I found easy employment in Silicon Valley and I became a design engineer and there were a lot of opportunities for getting involved in startup companies because this was the time when the microcomputers and the personal computers were just bursting on the scene and there were so many opportunities. I found I could do that work and it was fun. I loved the creative process and I got to a pretty high level in it. I became an engineer without any actual training. I just sort of could do it and in those days if you could do it, you could be an engineer.

I had this personality—like I remember when I was consulting and somebody asked me to write an operating system for a tape backup system and he said he wanted me to write it in C and I'd never heard of C which was a new programming language that was just coming on the scene. He says could I write it in C and I said, oh sure, like that. I'd never seen it. I'd never heard of C. I said, oh sure, and so I thought oh, my god what have I gotten myself into? So I got the book on it and somehow I taught myself that computer language in like two weeks and was able to pull it off.

I think there's a lot of those moments. I have a kind of trust in myself that I could figure out how to do things and that's a part of my character, a kind of inherent confidence of some sort.

I did that a lot. I got a job at Atari, the game company. I wasn't interested in games but a friend of mine invited me to go there and I had just become an engineer. I knew little about engineering, really, other than being a technician and knowing how to solder things together, mostly, and I went as a senior engineer! They hired me as a senior engineer for no good reason.

I remember being given an office and sitting in this empty office and they said to come up with some incredibly good game for the new Atari console, and I remember sitting in that office for like an hour or two and I think, "What am I doing here?" I thought, "Well, I'll

just wander around and talk to people and see what I can come up with." And I actually had a very successful time there and I wrote a video game called Indie 500 which is still popular.

It was things like that. I didn't even know how to program and so I got lucky to have a willingness to throw myself into things and take a chance. My being an Enlightenment Intensive master was a lot like that too. You know, where I just took a chance and to see if I could. I want to do a really good job at being a master. I really wanted to make it worthwhile for other people to be there. I wanted to make it work for people. I really had a high bar for myself, so I really kind of stressed that in myself, really trying to understand what would actually work for people. And there were lots of wonderful successful Intensives and I grew in my ability and gained confidence.

Sometimes people will have these explosive energetic releases where they'll shake and quiver and cry and freak out and when you see one of these, what do you do? I found myself just going, Oh good! I would come up to them and say, "Oh, this is wonderful! Let it rip! Just let it go totally, with confidence." Somehow it would resolve and the people would have these marvelous experiences. It could go the other way. People could be frightened about them and it would bring people down and they could end up getting damaged by it in some way, maybe, or there would be lasting negative effects. But I think that just that positive sense of being with them and encouraging them to get the most out of that moment while keeping their question at the center of their focus just works a miracle. I guess it's a part of my nature, like my willing to just go a little bit beyond what is my comfort zone.

I remember visiting Bali, Indonesia. My wife, Anatta, said we ought to have a wild vacation. "Let's go somewhere interesting." She found an ad for going to Indonesia with an ethnomusicologist and we went there to study gamelan music, the native Indonesian music, and to meet the premier musicians and artists. The ethnomusicologist, Dr. Robert Brown, was a professor at San Francisco State and he was sort of famous. He'd done a lot of Nonesuch recordings, and things like that, of world music.

It was a small group, like 10 of us or so, and I got to meet all these marvelous musicians and artists and I fell in love with the culture. It is a Hindu culture. It was just fantastic and I bought a 13-piece gamelan orchestra. I asked my boss back in California send me a bunch of money. "I gotta have this in my life!" I was going to start a gamelan orchestra in California and I was going to find people who wanted to join me. That never actually played out but I had this orchestra of pieces and I was learning the gamelan music on an instrument called the gender. It is like a xylophone, a metal key xylophone.

I went back a number of times and Dr. Brown connected me with a world famous master of the gamelan and he became my teacher. I was completely unprepared and I thought, "Oh what the hell" and so I sat with this master. I mean, in his closet he had a picture of

the president of Indonesia giving him the award for being the top gamelan player and here he was teaching me in this village. I had no right to be there and yet it was just this marvelous experience and I guess there's that quality of openness to experience. With Charles Berner we often talked about a willingness, expanding your willingness to experience things, of somehow having a mindset where you're willing to experience more than you're normally willing, like you open up your aperture, and I think that was a big part of my life schema, trying to open that aperture up and

I'm realizing the time is going on here and I could tell a hundred more stories of things, about my character, about how I got involved in enlightenment, because it's not just a direct experience of an ultimate reality. It's bringing life... it's like making life enriched. Enriching the field and opening the channels between people and bringing that out into... making life better in a broad sense. So let me skip ahead because there's so many really interesting things that I could share.

After I moved to Oregon I got involved with a bunch of people ... it was social activity and I got elected to Oak Lodge Community Council which is like a city council for an unincorporated area and I got involved in local politics. My goal was to bring music and the arts into the local community and so I started these things that gathered people, open mics, performances, and finding musicians. I have a band and so part of it was to get our band out there into interesting situations ... self-serving, indeed, and it ended up that it became a meme in the area and now this area is thought of as being really friendly to the arts. We did this festival several years in a row and the last festival, it turned out, had grown to be a hundred booths and we were blocking off the street and donations of like ten thousand dollars were gathered to cover all sorts of expenses and it was just this incredible thing and there were like five thousand people attending in this big celebration with music, art and promoting local social organizations.

There were things that I and a group of people did just because of our enthusiasm, just being involved in opening things up. At the open mic, the theme was the community just entertaining each other and encouraging people to be open and to treat others well so that people had confidence to bring out their musical and artistic sense.

There's so many wonderful experiences around all that activity, the political things and social things, and I think it all comes down to this basic orientation that Charles Berner put into my brain, that the deep purpose of life is to open up these relationships with others, to clear away the barriers that seem to keep us separate, and to allow for the love, the understanding and the shared experiences to manifest, and to enrich life, to make it more fun and more entertaining and more fulfilling. Anything I could find that would actually make that happen or help that to happen, I was interested in. Of course the central theme was this Enlightenment Intensive and later on a very deep excursion into Vajrayana Buddhism and all the ways that helps bring that opening about, trying to be as wide open

as I could to what actually works and what brings fulfillment to life. I wanted to have this idea that when I'm getting ready to die I'd look back and say, you know, I gave it my best shot. I gave it my best shot. And that I was a contribution in some way to the world.

So maybe I should stop because I'm running out of time. I'm open to questions or comments and so I'll just stop. I really got about 10 percent of what I wanted to say but, whatever. It's cool .

Smaran: Thanks so much Edrid. So if anyone has questions...

Sidika: If you'd like to raise your hand... If you look in the bottom, excuse me, and you'll see a reactions icon. If you click on the little arrow next to that there is a little hand you can click on. If you can't manage that then unmute yourself and wave frantically and hopefully one of us... or you can type your question into the chat and I'll read it out for Edrid. Uh, so any questions... Smaran?

Smaran: Yeah. I would like Edrid... I've known you only through Enlightenment Intensives and so I would like you to maybe in one minute just let people know about approximately how many Enlightenment Intensives you have taken, how many you have led, and about how many people you have trained in order to lead Enlightenment Intensives, just to get that context around things.

Edrid: Okay, you know I lost track but on a couple of occasions I tried to psych it out and I think I've led or co-mastered about the same number of Intensives that I participated in. I tried to keep a kind of balance on that so I wouldn't forget what it's like to be in the trenches, so to speak. I wanted to keep it really real. I think around 70 is the number that comes to mind, of each of those, plus or minus.

Osha Reader invited me on several occasions to train masters with 10-day immersive training courses. We did five of them, like every couple of years. There were a dozen people in each one. They were really rich and marvelous experiences but I don't know how many masters actually came out of that so I don't think they were particularly effective in enabling people or getting people to run Enlightenment Intensives. A few people did. Nevertheless, it was a very enriching experience for everybody and a lot of people became monitors and they became very involved in Intensives. They were beautiful experiences, these deep, deep inquiries into what we're up to.

The thing that Murray Kennedy was doing and still doing is probably more effective in the sense that they're like years-long mentoring once a week, and he invited me a while back into sharing that with him. He's been doing these Wednesday night dyads for like 40 years. I mean the guy is just a persistent fellow and deepening all the time. This other group are people who are interested in becoming masters and week after week we'd have these discussions.

I've been involved in it for over a year now, just sort of joining in a little bit and adding a little bit of flavor to the soup, but we are just constantly processing what it means to be a master and that seems to be working because there's a number of people who are now running Enlightenment Intensives and doing beautiful jobs with them. So I think that I discovered the value of a long-term evolutionary process for a master to come out, you know?

Sidika: Thank you.

Edrid: Is that what you wanted?

Smaran: Yes, thank you. Okay. Excellent.

Sidika: I have a question Edrid. I'm just wondering what you found the most challenging aspect of being an Enlightenment Master and what helped you to kind of resolve that aspect, if that happened.

Edrid: That's a good question. It doesn't feel like it was ever really challenging personally as much as it was trying to find out what really worked. What really helped people. So the challenge was trying to match what I was saying with the truth of what worked. You know what I mean? One of the things was the talks, of being able to say something in a way that was truly helpful and authentic and would open up a channel or open up an understanding .

In the mid-70s I had a job and I had a 15-minute commute on the freeway. I'd give a short 15-minute enlightenment talk, a practice talk, while I was alone in the car instead of listening to the radio. At first they were really clumsy. I'd do it on the way to work and on the way back, and after a few months of doing it almost every day I began to channel something. It began to come from a source that was really kind of sparkling. It came from something that was a little bit beyond me and sometimes I'd amaze myself at what came out. I kept doing that for, well, ever since, since the mid-70s. When I'm alone in the car I'll be giving a talk on dharma, on the truth, and that is my way of meditating in a way. In the morning when I wake up, my wife gets up earlier than me, so I will go into a contemplation and I'll do it verbally as a talk and it would draw out of me these insights and ways of articulating and I would just try to access these truths. I've done that like, what, 40 years or something, and I hardly missed a day. I do it in the shower too, instead of singing, and it's just a part of me. It's so deep a part of me. I find this flow gets going and I have become some sort of fanatic... I guess I just get into this curiosity about the essence of life and I just keep plugging along. And there are periods when I don't feel I make any gain at all and then other times I feel like I do and overall, when I look back, I go, okay, I've sorted a lot out. I have a sense of deep truth and I just find the love and I find the magic of existence just enthralling much of the time and I have wonderful experiences about touching life in all different ways.

Sidika: Okay thank you. I have a question that came to me through the chat from Michael and the question is: from your memory of Charles what do you see now as his strong features what were his bad or weak sides if any?

Edrid: I think it was what I was saying here and it was something he transmitted to me which is that he was looking for something that worked and that he was willing to give a fresh look at what actually works to help people and he was very, very dedicated. He was always “on” and he was sincere that he wanted to know what actually brought people into a better place in life and he found many ways. He wanted to get that across to people and he was very dedicated to that and he was brilliant at it at times, just amazingly brilliant at seeing into things and articulating things that were helpful, at least that’s how it seems to me.

And on his weak side he was sometimes a teacher that showed you what you shouldn't be. He taught me what didn't work and what was really not good. But his sincerity you know... I'll tell you one thing about him. He grew up in a very difficult environment and part of... and please realize that I'm just speculating on this part... I'm guessing that part of his motivation was to get over his trauma of living and growing up in Colton, California which was not the garden spot of western civilization to be sure. It was truckers and gangs and a tough place to live. And he had a speech defect. I believe he was very sensitive and, you know, being a young boy in a really harsh environment and having and being an odd sort of a guy with a different frame of mind about life, and not a tough guy, you know, and also having a very pronounced speech defect, which, by the way, over a period of years he actually mastered until you couldn't hear it anymore. I could barely understand what he was saying when I first met him. All of that probably was harsh, you know, and his desire to have better relationships came out of that, I believe. He was a really smart person who was really sensitive and so I could see that there were a lot of things going on in him that maybe he never got fully resolved but, in a sense, maybe resolved on a deep level. I don't know how to quite understand him, but he did some things that were really bad and on the other hand he did some things that were really good and you know I put that together in my own own understanding so that there's no blame... there was a process I went through. Really appreciating his good aspects were important to me. He had some weaknesses for sure but he also brought... I mean he was the most important influence in my life and I still appreciate what he taught me.

Sidika: Thank you. So we have Roy and Dawn with their hands up and a couple of questions in the chat so, Roy if you'd like to unmute yourself...

Roy: Hi Edrid. Thank you. We just love hearing you talk. I've been sitting here trying to get to the most... my takeaway from it that I just want to run past you, and that is that you're just so open to the experience, the richness and diversity of the world that excites you and just receiving that and at the same time open to your gifts and what you have to share and

bring out and that channel, letting that channel flow, the intention to let that flow, that kind of is the channel, the sincerity and intention of having that connection just happened and being conscious, being aware of it.

Edrid: Yeah, I think that that's probably pretty clear that you know I want life to be good for myself and everyone and that's at the top of my priority list. I want it to be good for me, I mean I'm not leaving me out of it. You know I want to have a good time of it and I want to experience the best of what being a human being is and being whatever this is. I want it to unfold. I want to get to the heart of it. These enlightened beings who shared the deep experiences in all these different... Buddhism and in Hinduism, all these exotic experiences. I wanted all those too, you know. I want to really understand what it means to be alive, you know. There's this one guy a scientist. He says you start out with a cloud of hydrogen atoms at the big bang level, and you wait 13.8 billion years and you have cell phones and isn't that weird!

It's like, what's happened? What are we? To get a cosmic appreciation of what it is to be a human being, I mean you know, like a Carl Sagan vision of this tiny little planet in a vast space— this little wet ball, you just step away back and realize what a miracle it is that we have these sentient beings alive on this tiny speck of Earth in a vast space. I mean, wow, I mean that blows my mind, and sometimes we get really concentrated into what's going on, in this tiny little realm of our current things that are attracting our attention, like what to do about this or that problem and sometimes, to expand out and realize, oh, my god! What is this? And it's like a union with God kind of experiences when you get it, the grasp of the magnitude of it, of what this is, and how uncanny it is that there is a sentience that can appreciate the cosmos. It's like, what's that about, you know? And so I love tapping in to the full scope of what it means to exist.

I spent the last two years spending two or three hours a day listening to YouTube lectures from scientists, about cognitive science and neuroscience and quantum field theory and general relativity and philosophy in order to expand my mind, to really get the full measure of these genius people, these really brilliant people delving into life and trying to absorb the entire spectrum...

Roy: Right, that's a high bar. We try to proceed with confidence.

Edrid: That's right, that's right, proceed.

Sidika: Okay thank you, Roy. So, um, Dawn, if you'd like to unmute yourself...

Dawn: I learned something new about you every time I we meet or I hear you speak but I wanted to share something that years ago when after I met you at the first annual and you had this blowout experience there and I remember the person I came with Jackie Dennis. She said, "I want what that guy's got," you know? And it was very inspirational. But then the next thing I remember is somehow you gave me a copy of the master's training

course... or the ...not the master's training course but Charles Berner's two volumes of training. You gave it to me. You copied it and gave it to me. You came to our house in El Cerrito and you asked me to monitor for you. I hadn't a clue how to monitor. I hadn't taken Lawrence's master training course. But you sat me down beside you and we were sitting cross-legged on the floor and two things I really remember from that. At one point you turned to me and you said, "I don't care if they get enlightened," and it just boggled my mind. I'm thinking, "What? You're the master of this Intensive and you don't care?" You know that that's what struck me. It took me giving a few intensives before I really got that. You know how important it is that our ego is not connected to that. That that's not our job as a master, to, you know, make you have an experience or get our egos involved in that. It was a great lesson.

And you also said once, you just had me sitting by you and you turned to me and you said, "Well, what do you think I should say?" It was such a gift to me that you recognized something in me that you thought was worthwhile cultivating, I guess, and you were right, you know, and then I did go on to give Intensives and I can remember sitting in dyads with you and I can remember being a master one time and I'm walking by and you looked and you said, "Oh, there's Dawn. Maybe she can help me."

So I just basically want to just thank you for the myriad gifts you've given me over the years and so many people and your mentorship and friendship and I'm very grateful.

Edrid: Wow! Thank you. That's really cool. I appreciate you saying that. Yeah, You know I wanted to invite people to be, you know, like "all you can be." I wanted to invite that and I wanted to see if I could help with that and that's really like a central theme, just to invite that participation of your heart into life, to just give people permission and to encourage it, just to pull it out of ourselves. What I mean is to just let it enrich the field that we all share.

Sidika: We've got a couple of questions in the chat so I'll ask those before going on to the other people with their hands raised. Somebody has asked could we hear a thumbnail sketch of the other 90% of what you intended to share?

Edrid: Oh okay. I'll say a couple of things. There's a number of gurus that I happened to run into that were really influential in me. It wasn't just Charles Berner. It was Master Subramuniya from the Himalayan Academy. He was an advita yoga master. Boy, did he really affect me. Forest Dalton introduced me to him and got me involved and there was this mantra language I learned called Shum which was so clarifying about the nature of mind. That was really great and also there were a few magic-like experiences with him like you read about in these yoga books, things where he did these things that were siddhis and exposed me to... I won't go into the details, but they were really mind-blowing.

Then there was Tsuan Hua who's a Chinese chan master. Chan is another word for Zen which is another word for dhyāna, which is another word for meditation or contemplation.

He just blew my mind in so many ways and there was one thing, he focused on the Amitaba Sutra and there was this line in the Amitaba Sutra:

“In his own country each brings forth the appearance of a vast and long tongue everywhere covering the three thousand great thousand worlds and speaks these sincere and actual words all living beings should believe praise and hold in reverence the inconceivable merit and virtue of the sutra of the mindful one of whom all buddhas are protective.”

This quality of mindfulness, of seeing, of developing this meta-cognition, of being mindful and seeing the nature of mind became a real theme for me.

I really would love to share this idea of the difference between the *content* of one's mind and the *nature* of mind because if you realize the nature of mind it changes your experience of the content of your mind globally so instead of piecemeal trying to sort out what's in your mind and getting over stuff, it recasts the mind in a different way when you realize the nature of mind. I got a lot out of that.

And then there was the Shaktipat initiation which was a moment of absolute surrender. That was completely transformative to me. Not just sort of ordinary surrender of like letting things be and accepting and all those kinds of things. Surrender to god. It was an utter, total surrender moment. It was Charles who delivered that, who talked me into it, so to speak, and that was a life-changing event. I could talk a lot about that.

And there was this guy, Haidakhan Baba, who was this magical guru in India who somehow in an Enlightenment Intensive blasted out of this picture. Somebody had hung his picture on the wall and this beam of light... it was the third day when things were really opened up... and a blast of light came out and he inhabited me in a magical way for a couple of years. I had conversations with him. He did these amazing things that just broke my conventional sense of reality on such a deep level. There is a magical element to life that I had not conceived of before and I could tell stories about how that came through. And then there was this experience... am I going on too long?

Sidika: I think we need to book you for another one!

Edrid: That's right. I got another. There's still more. I mean I had all these marvelous experiences. There was this Dzogchen experience. Dzogchen is the ninth vehicle of Vajrayana Buddhism. That was another big total reset button for me where I met this guy Garab Dorje and had this amazing contact with him, but he had been dead for over 2 000 years. It was an amazing recalibration of everything and it brought everything together. I wrote a little booklet about it called *Dogzen, Cultivating Naked Awareness*, and it became a central theme in my life from that time. That was in 1998.

There is more but maybe I should stop because I can see I way overshoot my time but what I want to say is that I've had a lot of really marvelous experiences and the reason I had

them is because of that dedication and integration of this work into my life and being open to every one of those things that these great teachers have been saying, and trying to embrace all of that stuff and really truly understand it.

Sidika: Thank you. I think maybe if Eliot and Abby, if you could ask your questions, very briefly in succinct answers, and we can just squeeze you in.

Edrid: ...once I get on a roll man...

Sidika: So you got five minutes, two and a half minutes each so let's unmute please.

Eliot: I was just wondering if you have any thoughts about how our little movement might expand in the future and if there's anything in our way collectively, you think, to work getting it out better.

Edrid: I think the really important thing is be what you teach fully and love is at the heart of it. Love and the willingness, the openness, to treating others well is really important and then just continue with confidence.

I think the discovery of the Dyad as a spiritual practice and of the Enlightenment Intensive, its implementation, had not occurred before. I've done a lot of reading and this is new and it's particularly powerful and it is particularly deep and it is starting to work its way into the culture. I've seen it just because people realize that you can have access to these deep states of consciousness by doing this work, and it's starting to work its way into Buddhism and to a lot of other places. You know they do Dyads in Clackamas County, Oregon at the North Clackamas School Board. The school board has implemented having people do Dyads, in this right-wing county in northern Oregon. I mean there's a lot of right-wing, rigid cowboy mentality here and they're doing Dyads. I checked and they're the Dyads we're talking about. It worked its way into the school system here in this county. It's a total surprise and I just think that that's going to happen because Dyads are really good. It really helps and so I have a lot of confidence... it'll take years for it to do it and I think our job is to realize that it really is significant and that we really ought to do the best we can at representing it as truthfully and as clearly as we can, with expertise. Just not let it go awry, not let it get messed up.

Sidika: Great thank you. Thank you so much., Edrid. Great question. And Abby, if you'd like to unmute yourself... There'll be a short one, Edrid.

Abby: Thank you for speaking today. It's wonderful to hear you. I just had a question about your thoughts given that you've mastered and attended 70 or 140 retreats. My understanding is that Charles thought maybe just a few retreats and then you sort of move on to something else so your comments on what do you get about doing it so many times over such a long period.

Edrid: I really appreciate what he said and I think what it is, is that if you're only doing Dyads it may not be the best thing for you. Dyads and Enlightenment Intensives—if you're only doing that you have to open to a larger scope, I think, to see the history and the richness of the entire enlightenment and personal growth culture, and to absorb all those things.

I think that a really good practice ought to erode itself out of your life eventually and become... in a way, I'm in a Dyad all the time. It's non-stop now and so the formality of a Dyad isn't as important to me as it used to be, and the formality of an Enlightenment Intensive isn't as important to me as it used to be. I think that's a natural progression. But I notice that people love it and that certain people want to keep doing it and it's just really helpful and enjoyable to them and so, you know, I don't have the feeling that you shouldn't do them after a while, but I think you ought to be open to expanding into, inquiring into, the entire genre of these things to really have a deep understanding of it until you know what we can bring into life. There's all sorts of vantage points and all sorts of experiences you can have. So that's what I get.

Smaran: Thank you.

Edrid: That's it I guess. Hah! Well I really blew it on the time. Back to you or Sidika?

Smaran: Okay, Edrid. Gratitude! Golly, it is just a blessing to be with you and absorb some of what you're sharing. It's a privilege and thank you. I feel, yes, I appreciate that we did have as much time as we had and so I guess I have to just now wish you on your way and move on to the next part.

End...