

ROOPA: GURU CHELA RELATIONSHIP

ROOPA: ...to talk about the reality of a guru and what that is. This is to be handed in and read by academic people. It was quite a challenge. And at one point when I was really working on trying to figure out how to convey what is the meaning, what is the bond between a guru and a chela and a chela, of course, is a committed student, a student who is committed to the spiritual path with a teacher who is realized so anyway what I did, a little unorthodox, but I decided to try the I Ching, which supposedly reflects back what's going on in the moment, and I thought, "Well, look, I'll try anything. We'll see what kind of an image it gives me." So I did it, and it gave me a hexagram. It gives you a hexagram, in case everybody doesn't know this, it gives you a hexagram, and then it interprets what is going on in that hexagram. So it gave me the hexagram number sixty one, which is entitled, "inner truth," and I went um! because I asked it what is the essence of the guru chela bond. It said "inner truth." And the image at the core of inner truth, it said, it was based on a character Fu, which means truth, I guess, in Chinese. And it said the way the character Fu... What the drawing is, the... What's that called.... What's that called, the way the Chinese write?

VOICES: Ideograph. Calligraphy.

ROOPA: Ideograph. Ideograph. The ideograph for Fu, it said, is actually based on the image of a bird's foot that's raised above an egg. And the idea is that of a mother bird who is taking care of her egg, so that the egg will hatch into a bird that can fly on its own. And the hexagram itself, it said, was shaped like an egg, because it was hollow inside but the rest was very strong. And so it said the fact that the hexagram is shaped like an egg and the character for truth is based on a mother bird and a baby egg, it said this is the relationship, this is the meaning of inner truth. It said there must be a mother bird. It didn't mention spiritual teacher in this thing, but it was exactly the essence, it said, "as a mother bird has to have warmth to keep the egg alive and to draw out it's life, so does there have to be this warmth going on in inner truth." There has to be an external source of warmth. But at the same time, the mother bird could sit on that egg all day, but if the egg didn't have life within it that responded to the warmth nothing would come of that relationship; and in the same way we have to have that spark inside that can see and respond to the warmth and unfold out of ourselves.

And then it went on to just point out that... It had one sentence I thought was great. It said, "Far reaching speculations can begin from this image and this image of the egg being warmed" So I wanted to share that image of the guru chela relationship. I feel that everyone of us here is obviously a chela, meaning you feel a deep devotion, a deep commitment, really, to the work of unfolding the Divinity that you are, and have asked undoubtedly for help and have come into a

relationship with a teacher, and what is this relationship. You know, who's who! Who's, the life! The life is the same in the mother bird and the baby bird and the egg. And yet the egg when it unfolds is unfolding its own life. And when we unfold with Gururaj, what I have found, and I think a lot of us too, is that I become more and more myself. It's my own life that is whatever my own essence is, it has come out more and more. I've seen it also in everybody that has been with Gururaj over time. You get a group of us together and everyone of us is himself or herself becoming more and more uniquely what we are, and yet so connected with that same thing. So anyway I just wanted to mention that image. And I would like to know if there's anyone here, those of you who have worked with Gururaj, who have known him for awhile, or even people who haven't known him a long time, but especially I want to hear the wisdom of people who have been through the kind of thing that Chetan was talking about when he said that beautiful thing about how you get to the first barrier the first time when your mind goes up and that's both a danger point and the place of greatest opportunity to grow. So I'd like to hear... Is there anybody here who's gone through something like that that would have something to say about it that they would want comment on. Just want it to be open.

VOICE: I'd like to just pick up where Chetan left off and what you were about to say, not really with an example but with an observation. An observation I've been making, especially over the past year or so. Through the many years of my association with the BMS and the AMS I have seen a lot of people come and go, and it's been recently that I've started to think about that. Why is that happening? Why is there such a tremendous turnover? I believe that Roopa hit upon an important idea a couple of days ago when she was talking about "It's the Westerners lack of understanding of what a guru is." And I think that is a major part of this. When Chetan was saying that people come upon a barrier, or something that Gururaj might say that really causes a block and they run away, and there have been many of these over the years, major and major things. Everyone has their own button that he has pushed. Those who understand what a guru is, hang in there and continue on. Those that don't choose another path or stop or whatever. I was talking with Kelly earlier today, and she was coming up with a wonderful explanation of the process of... especially relating to last night. There were several things that Gururaj was saying which I had a feeling were... I mean, there were a couple of things he said that I was a bit embarrassed by and surprised that he would mention. And I thought certainly there must other people. And so here we had a good example of pushing buttons. And Kelly... Over lunch we were talking about the concept of... it's not so much believing these things which they might shock you, believing that this is the truth that's just now been revealed to me and I can't accept it. But what about the possibility of for a moment suspending the rationale of trying to figure out, is this true? You know, have I been mislead all along? Just suspending that and just say, let me for a moment suspend my beliefs and let me believe in the possibility that this might be the case. Now,

whether or not it's actually true or not is not important, but you're allowing your mind to [?????] that block so that you can see through it and begin to see the possibilities. And I believe once those possibilities are seen, "Yes, maybe this is true, I don't know. Let me think about it. Let me talk to other people about it." But it's not being stopped by that block. And that I believe is an important part of spiritual growth. And the thing that Gururaj actually said or did that caused the person to have their button pushed, again may or may not be true, but that's not important once you allow yourself the opportunity to say "what if?" Then you're letting your mind expand, and you can just put that thing aside and forget about it and say, "You know, I don't really agree with it, but, you know, let me think about it." But it's not so much that, you know, Gururaj might be making this statement that shocked us, that surprised us, or we can't buy. But if we just allow ourselves again to suspend our disbelief and consider it, then that's a growing point.

And I believe that it's an important time now too, since we see so many people coming and going, if we see that it's not the techniques that are chasing people away but the misunderstanding of the guru, then it's time to put some of these ideas down with stories about Gururaj, insights, your experiences being close to him, you know, cassette tape, in written form, presenting it as a part of the introductory process to new people who begin the practices, and so they at least they have the introduction of what on Earth a guru is. Because we in the West need to be educated.

ROOPA: We sure do.

VOICE: The key to spiritual growth is not buying everything that Gururaj says but sticking with it as long as you can.

ROOPA: It's like everything he says has truth in it, though very seldom is it true in the way our mind would call it true. And yet, the effect it has when we take in is truer than any little fact our mind could have assembled on a situation. And so often he'll give you an answer to something, not necessarily a direct one, but he'll give you an answer. And in trying to grasp the answer you get the answer. And it's a much bigger thing, much bigger than what you originally thought you were asking.

VOICE: Another point about expectations, which we were talking about at lunch also, that many people in the west have their expectations of what a guru is supposed to be like and he doesn't, in so many people's minds, doesn't fit into those expectations.

ROOPA: No. Right.

VOICE: That's another one of my points; seeing him do something, hearing about something he did doesn't fit into whatever our limited perception of what a guru is, and therefore has caused flight.

I remember when I had my first meetings with Gururaj, just when no one even knew who he was, way back in the very first courses that he taught, I had a private meeting with him and it was about 1:30 in the morning, and I had these tremendous expectations that here was this... Mind you he had a tremendous buildup by the teachers at that time in England of this spiritual master. So I expected my meeting to consist of instant enlightenment. I thought he would touch me on the forehead, then rise and [????] everything solved. And so not thinking he was going to just expound all this beautiful stuff to me, I walked... I was in the room and sat down and he didn't say anything. So I just started talking about all these problems that I was having, and areas that I felt I needed help. He listened patiently for about seven or eight minutes and then yawned and looked at his watch and mentioned that it was getting kind of late and he was feeling a little tired. [laughter] [Inaudible] and said thank you and left. And I was devastated. You know, I... That wasn't supposed to happen. [laughter] He reeks of cigarette smoke, but you know gurus don't smoke!

ROOPA: Right. No, they don't.

VOICE: That annoyed me also. And so for me over the years has been letting go of expectations I had. I was just telling some people when Melissa came out and told me that Gururaj wanted to see me at 6:30, and I had mixed reactions about that. You know part of me said I don't really want to talk to him. [laughter] I don't want to go over problems, and I don't want another technique, you know, and so I walked in the room and Roopa was sitting there and he started by giving Roopa some incense to give him, blue granules with charcoals, and I explained to her how to use it. And I walked into the room and he starts fumbling with this incense, and I stood there and I said, "Oh, I got it. You want me to explain to you how to use the incense," in a very joking way, and he said, "Yes." So I explained to him how to use the incense, and then he just kind of turned his back and [inaudible] standing there. That was it. [laughter] Expectations, I think, are...

ROOPA: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

VOICE: [Inaudible]

ROOPA: Absolutely, right. And of course the greatest gift, or one of the greatest gifts, one of the great gift that I feel Gururaj gives us is constantly to destroy our expectations and the image that he makes of himself. Sometimes he'll go,

he'll allow an image of himself to build up for awhile, one that you're particularly fond of, whatever is your favored image of what you wanted the guru to be. He'll let you build that up for a little while sometimes, depending on you know, each person. And then when you really are just sort of... My feeling is when you've gotten to the point where you're fully experiencing, you've lived out somewhat this idea you're carrying of what you thought a guru ought to be, you're ready for the next stage, which is to throw that whole thing away. And Gururaj will help you with that! [laughter] It's like you thought it was this way. Guess what? [laughter] I'm this way! You know, and...

VIDYA: He also has a way of, if you about to experience or beginning to experience of really a blissful experience or an expansion of consciousness that he'll let you experience it momentarily, and then wham, then he would do something that brings you right back. Chetan mentioned this in Canada. You know that all of a sudden he would turn out like a joke, and he did this last night when he did the meditation. [Inaudible] [when we were meditating?]. And it was a beautiful experience! And in a few minutes he just... He wouldn't let us stay there very long. It was like Wham! [???] right out, and then he's making jokes and laughing. Eugene made the comment about hearing the laughing. That's why Roopa and I [inaudible], because it was like everything was just [???] beautiful, and a few minutes later there's giggling and [inaudible] awareness.

VOICE: I say it was probably the girls doing it. [laughter]

VIDYA: But it was brought on by his...

ROOPA: Intention.

VIDYA: And it was... It reminded me almost of that dyeing of the cloth, where you know you dip in to the depth and then, or you know, rise to heights, however you want to put it, and then you get brought right back down to Earth again. And then you [inaudible] raised up and brings you down. And this whole thing is a process of integration where you know we're integrating that into us so it will grow stable and solid. But we can't float off there forever, because that's not reality either. He always teaches that Divinity is within us and we live it. It's like he says he's an ordinary human being. He's integrated that total awareness of Divinity or living in consciousness of Divinity but [???] ordinary life. It's beautiful the way he brings us to that experience also.

ROOPA: He just pulls the whole range out. I mean, he'll go from the kinds of statements that he was making last night at certain points when he was talking about the consciousness itself, and he'll mix that right in with an awareness of, you know, when he says things like, "This is nothing," you know when he says, "Ah, this is nothing," he'll mix them all together to paint the whole range that is ours. From being everything to being able to say, oh, this is nothing and really mean it too and not just...

He teaches on so many different levels at the same time. And that's the kind of thing that Vidya and I were noticing last year. We continue to notice all the time. What happens is he'll do something and you'll get it on one level and you'll sort of sense another level behind it, then as you get to know him better you see him doing the same things and you'll begin to see multiple levels going on in what he's doing. So if you have... Do you have any examples of that? We were talking about that before. Did you come up with any? So many things...

VIDYA: Verbal examples?

ROOPA: Oh, other verbal or otherwise... Other kinds of examples.

VIDYA: Well, often it has moved us. They look very random, but we've observed over the years that they're not to be random. He may come up to you and as he's talking to you, he may just touch you on the shoulder. You don't think anything of it, but that's a healing. You know, it's not random that he happened to have touched you on the shoulder, but that's probably a [polarium?] point for something that's going on over here, you know, on the other side of your head. And in talking to people we've found that, you know, shortly after that there has been some kind of physical change with them, or that the pain that they had disappeared.

So his movements, we've noticed, although he doesn't know consciously because he has this force flowing through him all the time just naturally, he does what you need. He gives you what needs to be done, whether it's a statement, or whether it's a physical touch, whether it's ignoring you. You know, it always seems to come back to breaking down the ego, you know, no matter what it is. He'll build you up and make you feel really wonderful, and pretty soon he says something that just tears you up inside or makes you angry at him. It can come out in many different ways. But it always comes back to... The function of the guru seems to be to help expand that ego that he talks about and make it more transparent so the light can come through. And it just doesn't disappear by itself, something has to happen. He gives that impulse to us so that ego can become less the controlling factor in our lives.

ROOPA: Also the way he throws you for a loop as often as possible. I mean he'll often just do that. That's another way where he'll...

VOICE: [inaudible]

ROOPA: Oh, good! Oh, good!

VOICE: I haven't seen Guruji for three years, and he... Vidya sent me a letter and said that in England he had asked how I was doing and that he hoped to see me on the course. I felt wonderful you know that he had thought about me. I didn't know if he remembered or not. So I came. But the other night at the satsang when I asked a question, he said, "Oh, are you being initiated for the first time?" [laughter]

ROOPA: Yes, isn't that...?

VOICE: But I knew what he was doing. And I also know that whenever we react with the feeling, you know, feeling inside, or we're angry, to me that's always telling me that there's some level of fear there. And where there's fear, you are not being loving. And you are not being totally one with what's happening. So I just... Whenever I get those kind of feelings I always just look at them a lot more closely. And sometimes I think it's scary for us to go through those kinds of pains, you know, confronting yourself, because he is putting a mirror up to us and showing us that, "No, this is your ego," that you know, "it's not the true self. It's the ego."

ROOPA: It takes a very strong ego, I think, even to be willing to look in the mirror. I mean, it takes a great deal of strength, which doesn't obviously come from the ego, but certainly involves the ego. You got to be brave. And I remember we were talking to him, I was asking him yesterday or something, something about how can it be that people who have been with you for many years, some of which, you know, many of which I've known, get to a point where they leave. And he said, "Oh, it gets more difficult as it goes on in some ways." He said, "Because the last, you know, the last barriers, whatever they are, are the most difficult." And then he said, "Those are the most difficult." You know, he said that... NIRMALA: The others fall by the wayside.

ROOPA: Yeah, he said if you can get over the last ones... He said when you have a desire to really leave the teacher, you know, for whatever reason, and as I say over the years I've seen almost every reason for leaving the teacher, and I've had them all myself, as a matter of fact. And I've seen them embodied in my dear friends, some of whom have returned as I did. I left Gururaj and I returned. He said, "You know the longer you've been there and you get to that thing the harder it is. That's when you need the teacher the most, because the real battle is going on inside you, which is just being shown by what's going on with you and your teacher. It's really who is asking whom to surrender to whom, when you're going through a battle like that. What is really going on there? I mean, what does the guru care, really, seriously, if you think about it. As far as he's concerned he is free, and he loves you no matter what.

One of the things I've noticed with Gururaj that I did not see with certain other spiritual teachers that I knew before I knew Gururaj, is he feels absolutely no resentment when a person leaves. He says, "The door is always open." And he really means it. I've seen other teachers who got very angry with people who were their students who left, and there is a bit of... But with Gururaj I've never seen that. I see him always willing and I mean, and I can speak from my own experience always willing to just welcome you back. In fact to him you never left no matter what you do, because he made his commitment to you when he accepted you. He made his commitment, and his commitment goes beyond your lifetime. It is a commitment that can be taken to any level of depth that you wish, or it can bring it to. You'll find Gururaj. That consciousness is waiting for you there. It's already there. So it's just there waiting for you and saying, well, it's good to see you. And that's the way he is with his students. But anyway he says when it gets similar to what Chetan was talking about when it gets really tough and you have all these great reasons, that's when you're really going through the work, and you really... the issue that you have been dealing with, that we've all been dealing with for millions of years, is up at that point. You know, it's right up there and we're in the middle of it. The issue of who. Whose life is this, you know. And we project it all on the guru and say, "Well, I'm not going to let the guru live my life, so I'm leaving." [she laughs] And really it's not about that. It's not about the guru living your life. There's only one who can live, and that's who you want to live your life. The guru helps us along, that's all. Just really, almost impersonally. It's a wonderful mixture of impersonal and personal involvement. And It's quite an adventure, and it continues to go on. As far as I'm concerned, it keeps going on. I'm amazed, you know. It just keeps going on. There's more and more and more, and it continues to be challenging.

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