

Greville Street
Meetings
15 March 98
19 April 98



Issue No. 41
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Meetings are held at 10-30am on the third Sunday of the month at 81, Greville Street, Chatswood and are open to anyone interested in the possibility of finding out whether transformation of consciousness, awakening to what we really are, or whatever we want to call it, can come

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Editor's Note

This issue carries the promised report on the Rishikesh retreat plus letters from some old and new contributors. The Rishikesh experience is an ongoing process which I hope to air in these pages with helpful input from our friends at FACE. Steve Brett, Andrew's right hand man, is coming to Australia in May. There will a one day seminar in Sydney and possibly an informal evening meeting at a Sydney location yet to be decided. If you are interested in the evening meeting please let me know so we can tell Chris Parish how many Nowletter readers are likely to come. (Visit timetable on back page)

A major consequence of Rishikesh was a determination, on my return, to get to grips with the headless workshops and I will cover in the April issue.

The letter from Julian and Robin underlines the degree of commitment required and this is something which is also emphasised by Andrew. I am proposing to spend some time reminding myself about their approach, as detailed in 'The Enchiridion', and hope they will agree to discuss the issues that we raise in future issues of the Nowletter.

The NOWletter is an occasional paper which appears whenever there is sufficient material from readers and other sources to justify a mailing. (Between 8 & 12 issues every year)
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RISHIKESH THE ANDREW COHEN RETREAT

These are the principles and tenets referred to in the three reports on the Rishikesh Retreat.

Principles

- 1 Meditation is a metaphor for enlightenment
- 2 Being still is a metaphor for wanting to be free more than anything else.
- 3 Ease of being is a metaphor for letting everything be as it is.
- 4 Paying attention is a metaphor for having no relationship to the arising of thought or the presence of feeling.

The Five Tenets

- Clarity of intention
- The law of volitionality (We are responsible for our actions - we are not victims)
- Facing everything, avoiding nothing
- The law of impersonality (There is nothing which is strictly personal or truly mine)
- For the sake of the whole

Rishikesh 1 - Margot's report

I'll start by telling you about the Vanprasth Ashram at Rishikesh, where Andrew Cohen's retreat was held. About 280 people from many different countries attended and were housed in the ashram. We were in a duplex unit for 4 people - 2 bedrooms and bathrooms (Indian squat toilets) with a small communal sittingroom and kitchenette. All the walls and floors were marble. A huge eating tent had been erected by FACE members, with outside provision for washing and wiping your own dishes. (It rained briefly once.) The Meditation and Teaching room was about 5 minutes walk from our unit and within the ashram you could get your washing done, make phone calls and send faxes, and visit the Garden Cafe for chai, coffee or coke. (The coke was a puzzle because Pepsi seemed to have the monopoly everywhere we went in India.) The chai cost at least twice as much as Meena's, the little tea room just along the road (2 for 5 rupees, about 10 cents.)

The food was gloriously wonderful, cooked by Gilberto, an Italian who has lived for many years in India and who is regularly hired for Andrew's

retreats. Although all the food was spectacular (not to mention being prepared under totally hygienic conditions), my favourite meal was supper - always some kind of soup with a big slab of locally made brown bread with butter and local peanut butter. Although we ate big meals we didn't seem to put on weight and we didn't have any stomach problems (either then or later after we had left the retreat.) There was quite a lot of snuffling and coughing at meditation sessions, however, as more and more people caught colds. The guys in charge of water showed me the big filtering and chlorinating tanks on the roof of our unit and explained how they worked. We had access to all the pure water we needed.

The Meditation and Teachings room had a low bench where Andrew sat, cross-legged. People sat on the floor on zafus (small round cushions) mostly in cross-leg position, although there were some ingenious ways of coping with stiff knees and ankles. There were 2 rows of chairs around the periphery. Every session, except Meditation, was videotaped. (The worst thing about the meditation room was having to take your shoes off and then find them again at least 5 times a day.) I used to wonder why Andrew didn't change his cross-leg, to balance his body, but was told that this was the way to do it for meditation. Presumably the lotus position is the ideal. Andrew wore good plain clothes, sometimes jeans, nearly always a vest. I was relieved when he didn't appear in flowing white robes. I thought he was absolutely terrific - I really admired his conviction, his in-your-face New York Jew style of interaction. He's got a good sense of humour, a weird laugh, and can cut through to the heart of the matter in a warmly impersonal way. He really had his finger on the pulse of the retreat, probably because of the efforts of the people we called the Thought Police. We think it was likely that senior students (mostly guys) used to talk to people and listen in to mealtime and other conversations and provide feedback on individual or collective personal responses to what had been happening in the retreat. This was a bit disconcerting at first, but probably made good sense.

Andrew happily stereotypes, for which he makes no apology. Men and women are QUITE different, he says - "You would never hear a woman speak like that", he says of one guy's statement. The Dutch are depressed and angst-ridden, the French are long-winded and s-l-o-w. Australians are casual

(slack?) I didn't take any notes for this report, but here are some of the things I remember: a youngish French woman who annoyed Andrew by continuing to talk about things that he didn't want to discuss at that time. He cut her off. She sat opposite Alan one mealtime and started to cry because his eyes reminded her of her dead father's: an Austrian who Andrew told to lighten up and remember to smile because he looked so intimidating. I didn't think he looked intimidating and besides, he recommended that delightful dish 'Rawa Masala Dhosa' to us, and we had it later, in Jaipur: a 50 year old Canadian woman about to leave for Peru with 6 of her girlfriends to eat a healing vine. She said she had eaten it 9 times already: a 70 year old man living in Ecuador with a young Latin woman who is getting enlightenment "by osmosis". "How old is she?" asked Andrew - "Just curious". (She's 25): a Canadian father and daughter from Vancouver who have lived in another ashram in Rishikesh as swamis, he for 24 years, she for 17. They shared our unit, and the daughter told us how good it was for a western woman to be living in an Indian ashram where there was absolutely no danger of her ego getting out of control - for example, although she had done all the work on a book of their guru's philosophy, her father would get all the credit. Her father acknowledged this: a young black American guy who was going to leave the retreat but promised Andrew he would stick it out. (He did): an American who said he was from the Bible Belt in the US. Why don't you leave (the Bible Belt)? asked Andrew: a German woman who left Da Free John to learn from Andrew: two lesbians, I think from New York, who left a couple of days early, possibly because of gender issues: an Englishman who promised Andrew he'd throw his notebook in the Ganges, and he did: someone from New York who has promised his girlfriend they will stay together another year. Why do you keep doing this, asked Andrew, who then told some of the others to throw him in the Ganges. They did: a Belgian gay guy who had a good exchange with Andrew: an Indian woman who talked very fast and excitedly and who even waylaid Andrew as he walked from the room: a man from Oz who Andrew warned not to speak unless he could say it all clearly, simply and quickly. I think he finally said something on the last day: a woman who said she was the only Scot in the organisation.

H was an actor who had appeared in British dramas seen in Australia. H was his name, not just an

initial. I asked him how he spelt it - Aitch or H? Whatever, he replied. When he spoke to Andrew the latter asked him if he really meant it, "because sometimes actors are not sincere." Then there was a Japanese woman who had done The Course of Miracles and who wanted to "help people" because she was a therapist. (The crowd always hooted a bit if anyone said they were a therapist.) I met her over the washing up one day and she asked "You are Alan's wife?" "Yes," I said, "my name is Margot." "Oh," she replied, mis-hearing me, "you're his *mother*." I did shrivel up a bit in India, but not that much. And then there was Alan who had to report publicly to Andrew every day. The only person I fell out with was a guy from New York, because I said I was going to meditate on the 5 tenets, which was not what Andrew wanted. Pure ego, said Mr. Big Apple. It's easy to criticise someone else, I replied. I'll keep on doing it (BA). Good for you (M). Not very edifying, and ignoring all the tenets...

The retreat ended quietly. I was slightly dreading a hype session to finish up with, but during the last Teaching, Andrew got sick of people testifying in ways he thought were not constructive, so he cut the session short with a meditation, and then left. I was impressed. The next night was The Party, further down the river at a hotel on the bank of the Ganges. The garden had been decorated by the students, and there was wonderful food, as usual, and some very serious bopping - not to Indian music either. All the intensity and sustained focus of the retreat relaxed into an amazing outpouring of energy. I loved it. The next day we left with a lot of the others by chartered bus for Delhi.

Margot Mann

Rishikesh 2 - Enid's report

Andrew Cohen presented us with a kind of mantra, awkwardly worded and with a perplexing use of the word 'metaphor'. (I was reminded of Gurdjieff who, when asked why he used such cryptic language, answered "That hungry dog dig deep for bone.") For a long time I was distracted by the word 'metaphor'. That 'Meditation is a metaphor for enlightenment' I could accept as here it represents rather than **is** enlightenment.

'Being still is a metaphor for wanting to be free more than anything else.' That 'being still' is only a metaphor, worried me. 'Be still and know that I am God - I understand *being still* as an important

prerequisite of emptying and listening, not a mere representation of it. The little stone Buddha I bought in Agra, **that** is a metaphor. It is very still. It says far more than words can say. But it is only a metaphor. But in terms of previous experience I can't see being still as anything but hard literal fact, a willingness to be open and listen. My mind twists about this.

The third part of the mantra had the word 'metaphor' slipped in later. "Paying attention is a metaphor for having no relationship to the arising of thought or the presence of feeling." Now, how can the phrase on the act of 'paying attention' be a metaphorical expression of 'having no relationship to the arising of thought or presence of feeling?' Again, I see 'paying attention' as a prerequisite or aid to having no relationship, etc. That word again is teasing my mind. Hungry dog will have to dig deeper.

The day Andrew presented us with the Five Tenets of Enlightenment I felt a great sense of relief. Away from metaphor. Here is direct action. Moses brought the Ten Commandments down from heaven, Andrew brought the Five Tenets up from the Unknown. These, he said, are the means by which we bring 'heaven to earth.' They came as a Revelation. Live by these. They are laws. They give hope. They offer opportunity. This was a great day.

The First Tenet - Clarity of Intention - is stark and uncompromising. The intention of course is to want to be free more than anything else. With such an intention, if one is able to hold on to such an intention, how could one be wrong?

The Second Tenet is presented as a Law - the Law of Volitionality. The word appeared to me as an ungainly boulder, needing to be chipped away at. The root **vol** denotes **willingness** and willingness contains **will**, which implies decision and effort. The suffix makes it abstract and thereby general and impersonal. My mind wanders around this challenging word and it is discussed in groups and at meal times and I'm left with a desperate sense that I need - no must - be willing and strong enough to do whatever is to be done - in order to be free.

Of the Five Tenets the one that hit out at me most was the third: "Face everything and avoid nothing." It hit out at my weakest point as I've spent so much

of my life avoiding and not facing. (Such as this letter Alan, which I would like **not** to be doing...) Others I spoke with made the same claim. "We're all alike," I'm told, "no one is special." But what I liked about no. 3 was that I felt I understood it and could do something about it. (So - I **am** writing this.)

The Fourth Tenet, the Law of Impersonality, put the cat among the pigeons - especially as Andrew said it was "harder for women." (Andrew enjoyed generalizations - the Israelis 'can't be told anything,' the Indians are politicians, the Japanese are rigid, the Dutch are morbid. His humour was an important part of his presentation - though the 5 Tenets were presented seriously, even fervently.) Funnily enough I thought I understood this law at first because I immediately thought of the Lohan Buddha in the British Museum - which I saw over 40 years ago. This Buddha was in a large room and when you entered you looked at a face that was appealing and compassionate. "Come unto me. I know you are suffering," it said. As you come closer the face hardens. It confronts you with the Law. The Dharma. You are given responsibility. Then you go closer and find you are face to face with - nothing. The Buddha is not there for you. The eyes are turned inwards. The Buddha is totally impersonal.

Well, the Buddha was for me a metaphor for the Law of Impersonality. I felt it helped me catch a glimpse of the meaning of this strange law. As we discussed this law, I fell away from that "understanding", but one evening, in trying to have an impersonal discussion, the meaning came back. The egoless quality of the talk gave rise to a clean and fresh energy - a quality the impersonal Buddha had. (Or am I imagining this?)

The final Law - For the sake of the whole - well, it's self-explanatory. It's a wonderful law. A wonderful way to bring heaven to earth. Why say more?

Enid Jenkins

Rishikesh 3 - Alan's report

The retreat was held at Rishikesh from the 19 January to 2 February. The theme of the retreat was meditation and contemplation. The programme involved daily opening and closing communal meditation periods of between one and one and a half hours and two teaching sessions of approximately two hours each.

This is not an attempt to encapsulate the teaching but to summarise my understanding of what was going on and provide an individual reaction to what, for me, was a completely new way of addressing the question of liberation.

The emphasis on meditation and contemplation was aimed at creating the receptivity necessary for the fundamental shift to occur. Meditation was seen as a metaphor for enlightenment. The establishment of a peaceful alertness in meditation providing the ground for a transformation to be carried through into everyday life. (I understood this to mean that in the same way as I go in and out of stillness in meditation, so in everyday life. And if I cannot get it together in the ideal circumstances of the meditation hall what hope in the busy world)

The teachings involved some background talks by Andrew but by far the greater part of the time involved an experiential approach to awakening based on the application of three basic principles. These principles were applied to our meditation throughout the retreat whether in or out of the meditation hall. For the first few days Andrew dedicated the teaching periods to discussing the results of our application of these principles and dealing with questions about them.

At the outset we all contracted to go along with Andrew's method; putting aside all our previously acquired knowledge and skills so that the process was given the best possible chance of success. In my case that was principally the teachings of Krishnamurti and Douglas Harding and although Andrew seems well disposed towards both it is obvious that constant cross-checking with what we already know or have experienced is bound to wreck the process.

On day three or four we were introduced to five sub-principles or tenets which provide a means of working out what is preventing an effective outcome from the meditation.

The principles and tenets (see page 2) were presented with a minimum of explanation and, at first sight, seemed superficial and even contradictory. This resulted in quite a bit of frustration and negative feelings on my part but in working on my disagreements and the apparent paradoxes, both in the teaching sessions and in group discussion, the difficulties began to resolve

themselves and the complexity and depth of these simple statements began to unravel. After about day five we were only allowed to talk to one another about the five tenets. As a result of this combination of meditation, talking only about the teaching, the teaching sessions themselves plus the exclusion of all reading, talking and other forms of distraction we found ourselves in a very intensive situation. It became a process of self discovery not an accumulation of knowledge.

In the first few days I found myself swinging between thinking I had landed in some form of collective madness and realising that here was a truly creative approach to breaking the barriers. As the days went by some of my blind spots were revealed and I began to see that the latter was the truer situation.

As an example, some of you will recall a recent contribution to the NOWletter in which I laid bare my 'problem' which was the persistence of the ego-centred view in spite of occasional realisations of a much broader perspective. As a result of a couple of exchanges with Andrew in the teaching sessions and the application of the tenets I was made to see that there is no problem and that my insistence on maintaining that there is a problem is simply a disguised defence of the status quo. Another powerful insight was an understanding of the effect that doubt has had on my enquiry. Failing to be true to past insights and/or failing to take them seriously enough.

The most convincing aspect of the teaching for me was the way Andrew used my own philosophy to demonstrate my blind spots. A true mirror indeed!

Andrew is deeply committed to action. What we do is what matters, what we say and think is not so important. For example, he suggested I might be too involved in meetings, editing newsletters, etc., as another excuse for not getting on with the serious business.

I think the Andrew Cohen approach is very powerful. It requires an active involvement and clearly defined commitment by the student rather than the usual passive relationship with the teacher. The teaching also carries an effective, built in measuring and feed-back process.

I feel very positive about my two weeks at the retreat. Something has happened, is happening, I'm

not quite sure what. I had a number of relevant dreams during the retreat. One involved finding a man making alterations and extensions to my home. When I asked what he thought he was doing and whether he had planning permission he just laughed!

There are a number of questions arising from the experience which I hope to explore with the folk at Sydney FACE and maybe we can persuade them to contribute the odd article to the NOWletter or even better unravel the questions themselves in these pages as well as face to no face where possible!. I think it important to regard the teaching as ongoing.

One very interesting aspect of Andrew's teaching is his insistence on what he calls a 'collective victory', also referred to as 'ecstatic intimacy', in which people come together in a way in which there is no separation. I didn't get a chance to follow this through at Rishikesh but it seems to bear some relation to the 'shared meaning' of dialogue and what the banner to this newsletter has been pointing to for some years.

Alan Mann

I hope to have some tapes of what I thought to be the key talks at the retreat which I will be happy to lend out to interested readers.

Letter from Maria Dolenc

I appreciated the article in the last issue K The Essential Teachings and Almaas's work. Reading Krishnamurti gave me an incredible insight and understanding twelve years ago. I still read K's work and I'm getting much clarity about myself and human nature in general. And yet for me there was a piece missing that I found in later years in the work of Almaas. (Diamond Heart series) and in Gestalt training. I must admit the confusion I experienced, trying to figure out who was right, and came to the conclusion that for me Almaas put some light on K's work.

It was a relief for me to read the last article and the bridge between K's work and what Almaas describes as individual essence. Your contribution about K and Almaas gave me a bit more confidence in myself and my earlier assumptions. I have ordered Almaas's latest book "The Point of Existence" and happily await the reading of it.

A story about patience as told by Zorba the Greek:
I remember one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree just as the butterfly

was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited awhile but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes, faster than life. The cases opened, the butterfly started slowly crawling out and I shall never forget my horror when I saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them. Bending over it, I tried to help it with my breath. In vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently and the infolding of the wings needed to be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late, my breath had forced the butterfly to appear all crumpled before its time. It struggled desperately and, a few seconds later, died in the palm of my hand.

I too quite often in my life try to force things and this story illustrates how timing is necessary and important.

Maria Dolenc

Letter from Neville Jarvis

The continuing discussion in your pages on how to view the role of the the known, lived character of the teacher in assessing the validity of what is being taught, and on how we should process the teachings we read or hear, has been really fascinating. I have found myself acknowledging the merit of one point of view only to be later equally impressed with the merit of an "argument" presenting what seems to be the opposite position. What has resulted for me is a further acceptance that we can only come to appreciate and understand truth" through its paradoxical nature. Christ said at one point 'Judge not that ye be not judged' but later told the people "Judge with righteous judgement'. Which is true? Of course, both are but the truth lies not in the words or even the espoused principles themselves but in our absorbing their reality into our everyday approach to the circumstances we face. Truth cannot be separated from experience. If we accept that we are spiritual beings (i.e. with a level of consciousness that transcends the mundane level of our minute-to-minute operating), or even if we only accept a psychological dimension to our lives, it becomes axiomatic that we can never know what actually motivates another person to say or do anything. We can only know and experience the expression of that motivation in physical existence. We can judge

the act; we can never judge the motivation. Our view of others should always be tempered by that paradox.

Now, I have to confess that I come from a Swedenborg background, perhaps one unfamiliar to many readers of NOW. That has no real relevance except that this contribution is based on my understanding of what Emanuel Swedenborg teaches and my assessment of him as a teacher colours my views. I have been content to 'sit on the sidelines' and watch the debate going on in the arena of your pages. But life 'in the stands' becomes stunted and we all have to get onto the playing field of life at some stage. As a preface to my remarks, I do believe that everyone is born with a propensity to approach life from a selfish viewpoint - to want to get our own way, to be "top-dog (or "top-cat") and to run other peoples' lives for them. We only have to observe quite young children at play to see this very clearly. Swedenborg calls this propensity **heredity evil**; it has no detrimental effect on our lives (it is actually character building stuff) until adult-rational life when we are in a position to freely choose to make it part of our life's direction as opposed to other ways of living with which we have been presented by our reading and knowledge of various philosophies, and listening to people we respect. Whatever we do in our lives up to that point (or series of points because life becomes an ongoing process of making choices as to whether we follow the positive, others-centred possibilities, or our own ego-wishes) is of no consequence to our personal, spiritual development. Once we go past the point of no return (when we reach the point when we can freely reason about what is true for us individually), the scenario completely changes. In one sense, we are then truly on our own.

I have to apply this view to those who set themselves up as teachers. Prior to "asking" or allowing others to listen to what they have to say, I have no lasting interest in what that teachers approach to life and behaviour was. After that point, especially if they suggest their teachings carry through an higher enlightenment, for me their lives must perfectly express what they teach. If it does not, one has every right to make the judgments referred to earlier. Should there be a discrepancy between teaching and life, doubt over the validity of what is being taught, and the source of their enlightenment, must surely become overwhelming

despite its apparent soundness and correlation with what others teach. We only have to apply that doubt to our own lives to realise that the paradox of truth is not present in what is being taught.

May I just throw another Swedenborg principle onto the playing field? Love (deep desire, not superficial wants) is always first in existence but truth first in time. We need to formulate the building blocks of what we believe to be the truths about life into a solid structure first so that our deepest, inner desires can be given definite expression. If we don't, we will be like a rudderless ship tossed about on the stormy seas of life. Yet, we cannot know absolute truth; our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite. Teachers only bring an expression of the truth, clothed in their own minds' appreciation of life even if that mind has been enlightened directly by the Divine; another reason why the teachers own life must be perfectly in accord with what they teach once they have set themselves up as teachers. Perfection is simply bringing into harmony - into a wholeness - what we love/desire with the truth as we understand it. Actually Christ did not ask us to become perfect (a mis-translation); he asks us to become whole. And just look at Christ's teaching method. He taught/reinforced truth-principles through simple parables which everyone could understand. Whether they went on to the DO step was of their own choice. Keep it simple. Inevitably, as we accept and apply simple "truth" a thirst will develop to explore and understand the depths of that simplicity. The gems lying on the surface are enticing but the richer seams deep in the ground produce the greatest rewards. Christ's parable about building houses on sand and on rock is very poignant here. Truth is only provided to us by the Divine for us to build solid frameworks by which we can withstand the storms of life. Building actually takes place through the solidity of doing and not just in the shifting nature of thinking.

I hope you will regard this small contribution as something worthwhile in the ongoing 'debate' in your pages.

Neville Jarvis

Letter from Julian Fortnum & Robyn Bollard

We feel like writing to NOW because it is so worthwhile, alas, such a publication should be selling thousands and many of us should be discussing its issues. We hope you keep up the

good work.

Not only was last year's sojourn of desert isolation the most rewarding time we can remember, on our arrival in Albany, Julian had a Cancer alarm and has been, as it were, in front of a firing squad for the past three months waiting to know if we were going to, once again, go through the cancer trip. This has, to say the least, been a most stimulating time. A slight adjustment to the focus on the real issues in life after a gap of some 18 years, I might say the issue is much clearer and infinitely more powerful than in 1980 when we had only been ten years with the totality insight. Now I can see the whole totality thing in its Trans-universe setting, staggering.

Although we can understand why so much has been written about these topics and in our time we have read many words, about 'enlightenment' and post death states, I have to say that we really do feel that we have said enough in the Enchiridion to cover most points needed to pass beyond the major structures or models of reality that stop us 'transcending' this state and passing beyond.

We have had our say. We have had no real criticism of the work for its content, only its manner of writing which is just a reality-aligning' thing anyway. There has been plenty of misunderstanding of the work, but usually the problem seems to come from people misquoting the words of the work and then criticising those misquotes, they are then criticising themselves and we can do little about that.

The thing to remember is that this is not a religion and it makes no difference to us if it is not followed or if it is misunderstood. People either realise the significance of the message or they don't.

We think the dualistic mindset is now so thoroughly entrenched that there is little chance of it being broken, we would love to be proved wrong.

We think therefore that the doors to transcendence are closing for the state of humanity and the only option they can take is to battle the totally incompassionate laws of the universe until they are consumed by those 'laws' outcomes, this appears to be inevitable.

The consequences of any reality view built upon the possibility of there being a recurrence of ones pure

potential is ignored, the great masses of people seem to believe that they will not be bought to account for their actions, that is, that they will not re-live their errors or, if they do have vague beliefs in the direction of so-called 'reincarnation' they feel perhaps that they can put off any full, whole hearted investigations until the next lifetime or the next because this life they are leading at the moment is too hard or comfortable to break from. This is a folly. The chance to try for transcendence again will become very slim as the worlds economic and environmental situation deteriorates.

This is all perfectly OK, it is not as if they have had no direction.

What else can we say? It all works out in the end, but not in some Walt Disneyesque 'everything will be alright' scenario. This is a brutal world we live in and taking the path to transcendence which will always lie outside established avenues, is extremely hard. I felt at times that it was as if one was holding the jewel of creation in ones hand, but only supermarket copies were valued because they are easier to get hold of and are more acceptable because of their better marketing. So be it.

There is no bitterness in us for this, we lose nothing, there is just bewilderment in us. It will always seem staggering to us that, having found the way through, like any good cave explorer, we were willing to show others the way, but it appears other explorers are not willing to take the risk, willing to really find out where we went, not one! Always they want the a comfortable course. We feel there is no easier path than the one we found for this age, despite the taboos it breaks.

People want to talk about transcendence and enlightenment, write about it, wear the trappings and say the wise words of others as though they were their own but none has come to us and said, as we did before we started, 'this or death'.

In many ways this is a relief we said in the introduction of the book that time helping others must be limited by the time needed by the explorers to continue their explorations; there never is an end or a final goal, there are ever deepening revelations that look as though they will continue until one's demise.

It has been 18 years since we first tried to put this

pathway down on paper in the faint hope it may help others. We now have to come to the conclusion that real exploration of the pathway to transcendence is nearly dead in in this existence. Of course, there may be a few others like us working their way through in a totally committed way, but it is, as we are beginning to believe, over, and the age of humanity is dying. Without transcendency there is no point to existence.

As we say, this all works out perfectly in the end, no state of self awareness lasts for ever and in Humanity's case when we become dazzled by our own brilliance then we think we will stand a good chance of dying of vanity, for we will want more and ever more things to amaze ourselves, just as the Romans did, the senses jade so quickly. We seem to want evermore books, courses, meetings, groups, seminars, retreats, workshops, etc., when all the answers are within one.

People should question but know that in the end all this searching will cease. It is as if finally the spring of knowledge is cleared of obstruction and gushes forth freely. There is little point in trying to convey to others the knowledge that does come, it is up to each of us to reopen our fountainhead by whatever method works. In our experience this can take up to 30 years of one pointed dedication. At the end of that time one finds oneself in the classic situation, a mendicant with a most precious jewel only recognised by a few. How strange, but still, it is perfect! Regards,

Julian and Robyn

(Julian Fortnum and Robyn Bollard are the authors of 'The Enchiridion to the Totality'. A manual to explorations beyond the universe, reason and death.)

Gary's letter - Issue 40

A number of people have commented on Gary's article in the January issue. His letter is proof, if proof is needed, that nothing matches the personal account of direct experiencing.

In his final paragraph he says:

This whole subject has tremendous implications for the survival of human life and all life on this planet in the next few generations. Our self centred and lonely existences require that we create endless forms of escape and seek ever increasing levels of

sensual pleasure and consumption. Our inner fragmentation and disorder has created the same chaos in the external environment and we will not survive much longer unless many more individuals find their way back to their birthright of inner peace and wholeness and connectedness to all living creatures.

Most of the readers and contributors to NOW probably share this view and I like to think that our meetings, this newsletter, workshops, etc., are part of a movement in the required direction. But, as pointed out in another part of this issue these activities could also become part of the "endless forms of escape andever increasing levels of sensual pleasure and consumption" which Gary refers to, just an acceptable or respectable way of avoiding what is really necessary, i.e., fundamental change. I am sure this paragraph from Gary's article rang a lot of bells:

One morning I woke up at about 5 am (July 1996) and there was a silent awareness in my head which had a quality of tremendous open-ended energy. I was not thinking at all. From that moment my consciousness has changed for the better — I have a serenity which has no cause — it just is! Being alive is sufficient, more than sufficient. It is always now.

For me, 'waking up' in the sense that Gary describes is what it is all about.

Alan Mann

There is some confusion about where the two newsletters are coming from.

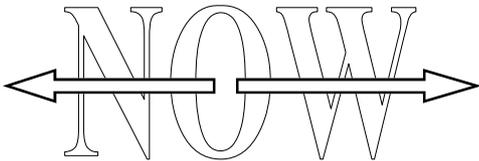
They are quite separate.

I send out this one, the NOWletter, and Terry O'Brien publishes the other which is called 'Dialogue Briefs'.

Terry's address is on the back page amongst the meeting information

DIALOGUE MEETINGS SYDNEY AREA

LOCATION	DAY OF MONTH	MEETING PLACE	TIME & CONTACT	Phone Nos.
North Ryde	First Saturday	Swedenborg Centre, Avon Road	12.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
North Sydney	First Wednesday	4 Feb & onwards - Don Banks Museum, 6 Napier St, North Sydney	7.30pm Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127
City	Second Saturday	Theosophical Society 484 Kent St	2.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
Chatswood	Third Sunday	81 Greville St. (off Fullers Rd) Chatswood	10.30 am Alan Mann	02 9419 7394
Clontarf	Fourth Sunday	49 Peronne Avenue Clontarf	10.30am Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127

**Steve Brett - Dates**

Steve Brett, a close associate of Andrew Cohen, will be visiting Australia in May to give talks on the Andrew Cohen teachings and to lead dialogues and question and answer sessions at various venues in Sydney and other centres in NSW

Evening talk and Dialogue

Thursday 7 May 7.30pm at the FACE Centre in Balmain

Full day Seminar in Sydney

Saturday 9th May - 9.30am to 6pm at the FACE Centre in Balmain

A further evening meeting, as indicated in the editor's notes on the front page, will be held on another evening around this time at a place yet to be decided.

For details ring FACE Centre on (02) 9555 2932
479 Darling St, Balmain (Entrance at rear of building)