

To whom it may concern,

This letter is written to tell you of the profound effect Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has had on my profession as an educator for the last ten years.

I took a Bachelor of Science in Special Education and Creative Arts of the normal, mentally and emotionally handicapped child, in 1970 at Western Michigan University. I then began work on my Master in Curriculum in the United States and then London, England. In both places it was thru Michigan State University.

I have been active in the educational world all this time both as a teacher and as an administrator. My experience has been in the United States, England and India.

From the beginning of my professional life the question has always been, "what are we teaching our children"?

It became obvious in my work, both with children and their families and the system that something very deeply needed changing.

So much of what we called important and necessary appeared more and more as a burden and a drain on human potential. It was not opening and expanding children; rather the opposite, closing all doors to themselves and learning.

My involvement with Bhagwan and his work began in 1973 and from that point on everything changed for me in my perception of the aforementioned.

Bhagwan's entire work is in dealing with the new man. Rajneeshpuram is a community of people in harmony with themselves and the world around them. The emphasis is on the inner exploration. His extraordinary vision and presence deeply affects my life and my work.

In working with the children the emphasis is on the individual child rather than a massive group expected to be all equal and up to standard. Their schooling is partial "classroom" work but also integrated from an early age into work within the commune.

Work is never seen as separate to their life, but a way of life and understanding themselves thru it. They experience different work situations and people and what fits with their energy. Thus life is not thru a book for them, but an active reality.

In the past, many people in my professional community opened to me and my way of being with the children. They began to assimilate it within their school structures, started asking questions and no longer felt the need to have such closed eyes on the situation.

Within Rajneeshpuram the children are dealt with on a one to one basis and in all areas of learning or working, placed with what fits them. The difference from "normal schooling" is that there is no expectation that by the end of the year they will all be the same. Rather there is a very deep respect for each child as being unique and all energy around him is to help him know himself and not what others may want him to know.

. The condition of all mankind has reached a point of necessity to turn inward or it will all disappear very soon out of a very deep unconsciousness.

Here each day, three times a day, everyone including the children experience absolute silence. We bow down to God and each other. Imagine New York City, or San Francisco all stopping each day and silently being with each other and within.

There seems to be much debate as to what can possibly be taught in silence. Out of ignorance and no experience of it, people must be asking this. Think of the conception and first nine months of growth in a child. All of it is created in silence.

Tens, over pushed and suppressed children have very little hope of finding nourishment in the existing school structures of today. And all children of today's society experience their energy with a big thumb on it. Thus they never really feel their energy at all.

In various studies made of the children in this community, people have found them healthy, extroverted, independent and in touch with themselves and the earth.

I have an 8 year old daughter who has lived her entire life in the commune. When my parents saw her at age six, they were very taken aback by her independence and verbal ability. One of my father's comments was, "I find it very strange when I talk with her on the phone, because I know this is a child, but I converse with her as I would any of my friends."

When my father's mother died, my daughter asked my father, how he was feeling with his mother's death and then asked him, "Did you celebrate her going, Grandpa?"

It was hearing that, that I realised she has absolutely no conditioning of societies fear of death and it being a taboo subject that "we don't talk about." She has been exposed to all parts of life here and the celebration of it and the passing of it.

There is nothing forced on the children here; ie. dogma. Rather they move into themselves because the whole community encourages it. They are as relaxed with the adults as they are with their peers. They can flow easily from the one world to the other. This eliminates a lot of the games and manipulations that children need to survive in the system.

The whole emphasis with Bhagwan is on our freedom to become what we really are and to have the space for that flowering to happen. The place that mankind comes from does not allow for any of that joy or beauty.

In consideration of the fragile state of all beings on this planet. I ask that you look more in depth at this man, whose very silence touches more deeply than any words or promises the "so called intellectual" communities of the world may claim to.

In Love
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