

Christiane Köhler

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From 1970 to 1978 I studied foreign languages, philosophy and pedagogy for several years at the University of Münster, North Germany, and for one year at the Sorbonne in Paris. On several trips within Europe, to the States, to the Middle and Far East, I had a chance to live and become friends with people from other races, cultures and religions. I am now a teacher at a comprehensive school in Dorsten, near Cologne. I got to know Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh through a book by the former German reporter Swami Satyananda, in which seven of Bhagwan's disciples told about how they became sannyasins. Since I have started reading Bhagwan himself or listening to him on tapes or video-cassettes, life has begun to make sense to me. My father being a protestant priest, I had been raised in an atmosphere that encouraged feelings of guilt and inferiority, denying the joy of life. I became interested in Islam, therefore, but it is through Bhagwan only that I have finally been getting close to religion again, and even to better understanding of Jesus' message.

From all approaches that have been or are being made to bring happiness to mankind and peace into the world - e.g., Marxism, the various peace movements - Bhagwan's view is the one that fully convinces me because I feel he is totally realistic. Moreover, he shows a way to live in peace and happiness that really works. I have experienced this in several Rajneesh meditation centers in Germany and especially in Rajneeshpuram, Oregon. If you are open, you cannot help being changed yourself in this atmosphere. Bhagwan helps people to really grow (up) and get in tune with existence. I am convinced that if anything can prevent us from extinguishing mankind in a world-wide nuclear catastrophe, it will be the changing of our consciousness, it will be practicing love in the here and now as Bhagwan teaches.

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