

## Dangerous to Ponder!

**GUHA:** When a unique person like U.G. appears on the scene, people talk about him and want to know more about his personality. They are looking for certain behavioral aspects that match their expectations of a person who has apparently achieved a deeper sense of freedom or emancipation; the general consensus is that it should be reflected in how the person lives. Unless it is, he is only paying lip service to his understanding or is at best a philosophical enthusiast. U.G. never indulged in such things. It is not easy to describe someone who completely denied the spiritual aspect of the culture, yet at the same time everything about him seemed to indicate that he was the outcome of the highest spiritual teachings. U.G. seemed to generate an unusual interest, buried in the deep unconscious as if a living signature of the glorified past of the forgotten old.

Perhaps U.G. was saying something altogether new! How can one be *sure* of that, if he by-passed arguments and denied logic, not to mention the *foundation* of the arguments? What evidence do we have to justify his utterances? We have no biological evidence that he was radically different, yet we recognized that there was something extraordinary in his personality and in the way he touched the lives of people.

My personal experience with U.G. seems to have brought about some irreversible change in *me*, and when I try to analyze it to make it comprehensible to others, without creating a myth, I find it is very difficult. It is extraordinary because something is going on inside, but when I try to communicate this, sooner or later I have to ask what my motivation is for talking about this. There has to be either some biological advantage or a common mode of expression. In other words, the essence of one's experience has to match the outcome of the glorified old. You can see the difficulty. These were the things I used to reflect on all the time when I was experiencing bizarre physical effects around U.G.

Deep down in all of us there is a gnawing conflict emphasizing the eternal struggle between the concept of freedom and surrender to authority. Until a fragment of my information bank, a particular string that constitutes it, matched my experience and

resonated with the value system, there was no comfort for the information center. It was a struggle through and through.

There are two aspects in our existence, theoretical and experimental, in other words conceptual and functional. You may be a farmer who has never heard about neurons; it doesn't mean a thing to your brain. Your brain functions exactly the way biological evolution brought that instrument to the present state, independent of the nature of your knowledge, but depending on the previous genetic lineage that shaped its functionality. It will function that way, independent of your causal information about it.

**Q:** *Would you say functionality is the new?*

**GUHA:** Functionality came from the old. There is some foundation that has been laid down by the ancient scriptures, the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Vedanta*, and from *Astanga Yoga* to *Tantra* and in all of these there is a fundamental theme, and it is not something you can argue about. To many it was and is a working solution.

If a person has perfect 20-20 vision and sees things the way they are perfectly cut out for his existential needs, the measurement will be the same now as it would have been ten thousand years ago; it is independent of the nature of the information. How our brain is functioning is a question of philosophy, psychology and biology – theoretical knowledge, which includes the information he has about the world and the body. There is no argument about the physical clarity of vision. The problem starts when we gather information with the hope of achieving functionality.

Our value system imposes conditions on individuals to follow certain ideals and set up goals. It projects an ideal and creates a path to reach it. As a result we find ourselves like goods in a factory, a product on an assembly line. The value system will emphasize again and again that if you work hard, you will be amply rewarded, if you seek you will find, if you practice from the heart with love and devotion, if you have faith in god and diligently sustain it, you will function perfectly, and this is the goal of life. This is the game we play with ourselves and others.

U.G. was functioning very close to the expectations of those exemplified values, but he was denying the causal connection. His functionality had nothing to do with following do's and don'ts and gathering information. He was talking a different language, and he negated everything. He emphasized again and again that this is not the way these things happen, nor the way we function. The experience is extraordinary because there is no ground on which we can have a common mode of expression. In that state, there is no source movement that creates fear about the future or desire for pleasure. How can one communicate such a thing? It is an extraordinary functional life in the face of an additional complex, suffocating problem. If it is an ordinary experience, like looking at a rainbow, certain things happen to you and you name it and everybody experiences it, okay, that is fine. There is a category, however, in which you know there is something happening inside you and you are functioning differently, yet you cannot communicate what that is to anyone. This is the problem I have seen and face all the time. In addressing the situation that I find myself in, I am upsetting friends and family. The communication ends because it requires a relationship, and there is no reference point.

An analogy would be, I have some currency notes, 50,000 dhinra. To someone who does not know anything about that currency it has no comparative value; therefore he has to find a relationship between his money and dhinra. Only then will it make sense to him. This is the relationship that is needed to have a measurement; to measure is illusory because you always take something as a standard, and from that standard you find meaning. Now, if something unfolds inside you, which is unknown even to you, you are frustrated because you have no reference. It becomes an extraordinarily difficult problem when it comes to communication, yet it is functioning and is the most ordinary aspect of life. Any definition of this condition is an assumption. Indian thinkers have exhaustive accounts on such topics, extremely logical yet so subtle, that it is beyond comprehension.

If an internal shift happens to an individual, and as a result of that shift, it looks like he has renounced everything and therefore unburdened himself from the pressure of the value system, and if his living is attractive, then others may try to similarly renounce to achieve that kind of functionality. But that does not work, it is unnatural and it generates untold misery. One begins to think that person must have come to know something

extraordinary, such as *Brahman* and *Atman*, and has become a *Brahmajnani*! You can write verse after verse based on this theme. You can expound on what happens if someone is *brahmajnani* or *sthitaprajna*; he is supposed to be above the pain and sorrow that ravages the ordinary human mind; and so you want to understand how someone can function outside the realm of ordinary, desire-driven living and thought-induced suffering. How does he function so very differently? You try to analyze why such a person functions differently. If his view doesn't resonate with the analysis of the pundit – who doesn't function that way himself – it is difficult to tell what is so special about that guy.

**Q:** *As a westerner with a Catholic background and no familiarity with Hinduism, after meeting U.G. and watching how he functioned and then reading the Hindu scriptures, I found many descriptions of people who seemed to be functioning like he was. There is no description of that as far as I can tell in the western system. It was coded because it was dangerous to talk that way in the west. But it does seem like they are describing this state; you can't come up with those descriptions unless you have seen and interacted with somebody like U.G.*

**GUHA:** The difficulty becomes extraordinary because you begin to experience something that is extremely difficult to convey.

**Q:** *Well, just to be contrary, here you have these descriptions ...*

**GUHA:** Yes, we have the descriptions, and now from these descriptions, suppose a person believes in the existence of a state by reading *Brahmasutra*, *Patanjali Yogasutra* or from the definition of *sthitaprajna* in *Bhagavat Gita*, and then looks for a personality who has those qualities, the end product should be someone who talks and lives like that. There is extensive information about the way such a person would function; how he would talk, sleep, his condition when awake, how he would interact with people, whether he dreams or not. *That is theoretical knowledge!*

The problem begins when we want to know what is going on with such a person to make him function that way. In this context U.G. differed fundamentally. Here is the

basic difference I noticed: In all ancient texts, holy books and scriptures whenever they refer to a natural physical desire, they give the impression that it is a low-level animal state, like hunger and sexual desire or natural pain and pleasure, it has a negative connotation, and it is to be overcome. But these are the fundamental aspects of the movement of life and U.G. acknowledged their validity.

My doubts are more important than my faith; this is what I feel is more fundamental than what my culture tries to convince me to identify with. Dealing with the doubts can bring about proper discrimination. My desires are real and my effort to become desireless has no foundation. By accepting the greatness of being desireless, one is forced to be false.

The natural state has nothing to do with the so-called enlightened state the religious teachers talk about. This is where the whole problem starts. It has nothing to do with *satchidananda*; there is no religious content. The bliss, beatitude, immensity that they promised in the so-called enlightened godly state has nothing to do with it, according to U.G. That state is the result of *soma juice*, an artificial high that produces poetic bliss. He totally denied the validity of the description, since it came from an artificial high. If you read those texts, you will see that they are referring to something that takes place internally, inside a person; the way such an individual functions and behaves reminds us that something like that happened to U.G.

There is a distinct line between U.G. and most of the other so-called enlightened gurus and godmen. They all believe that they have come to the state that has been described and exemplified. U.G. was referring to something altogether new. Therefore anything that exemplified and created a value system had no value to him. The moral positions that they dish out have nothing to do with what he was referring to.

It is difficult to describe how U.G. functioned. If I exemplify the things that match their expectations and support their value system, and suppress the things that I feel they wouldn't approve of, it would be the same thing the holy men in the marketplace are doing, claiming something that is not functioning in their own lives. I myself would be perpetuating the value system. They are miserable because they are forcing themselves to try to be something they are not. So what is more important to me, their value system or

U.G.'s existence and the way he functioned? He vehemently denied the value of the teaching, saying, "The teacher is important not the teaching..."

**Q:** *That's the thing that got displaced.*

**GUHA:** It has to be talked about. This is the thing, until U.G. breathed his last, he had to fight against our tendency to create myth and our weakness towards blind faith and useless ritual, and instill in us the courage to see things the way they are. Putting a picture of U.G. on your shrine and reciting the Vedas every day is easy, but the very thing that settles down out of a demand for security and comfort is bondage and a prescription for misery.

**Q:** *It's harder to kick him in the teeth. There's no point in kicking him in the teeth either, you know, but in a way he was saying until you kick me in the teeth, I am not going to be of much use to you.*

**GUHA:** U.G. was constantly kicking from inside; look, don't utter his name in vain. It's not a joke. It's serious. You use him as a shield for your psychological fear, the very thing he wanted you to resolve once and for all, and you are using his name to keep it going. You are perpetuating something that he was fighting tooth and nail to obliterate in you. That is the reason it was so hard to listen to U.G. When you came to him he orchestrated a serious verbal attack. You felt the earth would crack and you would go down if you had an investment in any idea. Or you could just walk away and ignore him. He wanted you to observe what he was saying and how he was functioning, and only then would you begin to see the effect in yourself. Someday you have to stand alone, by yourself, that's how nature unfolds in every individual.

**Q:** *But everything around you is saying, "No, no, no, no, no, you need him."*

**GUHA:** No, to me that is where the problem lingers. You have this part in your information world that he was constantly referring to as, "Shit, shit, shit." You eat more,

you shit more; you read more, you dish out more verbal shit. You do not give importance to what you already have, to what is most important and vital. All your experiences and your enormous information bank has not helped you to resolve your conflict, that is the reason you read U.G. in the first place, and it made sense and so you wanted to interact with him. Now you are adding some more information about U.G., that's all!

The image of U.G. is not different from all the images that you already have and it is not helping you to see anything, because those images are irrelevant compared to what functions inside you to keep you vibrant and strong, in the space of life. If your background, your self-consciousness has that as a foundation, you begin to see something different, that is why U.G. never failed to say he didn't have anything that you don't. He was asking all the time, "Why do you want to be a cheap copy of anybody?"

You are always giving importance to the wrong aspects of your existence. The myth-making tendency of human self-consciousness is never content with what is. It creates an imaginary self and when, through its peculiar logic, it finds it cannot justify its specialness, it creates the bigger "Self" and aggrandizes the little self by attaching to "That," which is the result of an illusory movement. If these things are not sorted out inside you – deeply – you cannot express yourself in a way that will exemplify you as a unique individual – unique, not superior.

This is the main thing that U.G. was constantly hammering away at, that actually *should* be the meditation – holding one question at a time to get to the bottom of it. He asked himself, "How do I know I am in New York City?" That was *his* meditation when he came here for the first time.

After I interacted with U.G., things started happening in such a way for me that his personality became *my* meditation. I had no doubt that something in him was producing a physical and *irreversible* effect in me. My reflection on this effect on my physical body after I came in contact with him made sense to me, not because I had read and practiced, but when he came into the picture he helped me to appreciate the underlying essential qualities and the essence of that information in me.

I realized that it was because of my interaction with U.G. that something impossible to deny was beginning to take place. I did not buy the description of chakras

and the different shapes and colors of the lotus described in the various spiritual texts, those descriptions became meaningless; they were selling a nice picture to entice people and convince them of a particular concept. U.G. never talked about those things; they are a product of our image-making faculty, a figment of our imagination.

The concept that “everything is material” was very important to U.G. “Thought is matter,” and our concept of time is created in us by our thought, therefore everything is material. There is nothing spiritual and there is nothing to our images. The movement that generates the energy that powerfully beats inside the body is the prime mover of life. That is the whole thing. If this becomes your meditation, you will be surprised what follows. I have no doubt that what U.G.’s presence brings about is the essence of what Patanjali says in the *Yoga Sutras*. Ultimately you are alone, that is your fundamental nature.

When we believe in somebody and trust that person to be realized, the very presence of that person can induce in us a similar condition, but that effect is ephemeral like seeing a good movie, attending spiritual talks, participating in yoga and meditation retreats, or associating with feel-good new-age enlightenment peddlers – new titillations through new information to fool the senses – all short-lived. When I began to interact with U.G. what did happen was not at all ephemeral. If you are honest with yourself, you will discover the nature of the merry-go-round!

**Q:** *Some people say about their spiritual experience, “This must be a thoughtless state.”*

**GUHA:** A thoughtless state does not exist. It doesn’t matter who says what. If you think that you will achieve a thoughtless state, you will die with that hope. To live in this society sanely and intelligently, you have to use the common mode of expression that has come to us through thinking.

**Q:** *So, when U.G. said, “They are all wrong ...”*

**GUHA:** They are all wrong because they think they have achieved some state like *advaita* or *bodhisatwa* by the blessings of god or the accumulated karma of past lives. God

communicated through someone and gave all the sacred religious books, the scriptures, the *Vedas*. Lord Shiva handed over the enlightenment platter from *Kailash* to some lucky chap.

We have invented god. We just can't accept the unknowability of the source of life and consciousness in our functional existence; first we invented god, now we are inventing something or other to prove or disprove that invention.

**Q:** *I remember standing in the back of church thinking, "This is complete and total bullshit." But I know it works for a very good reason. Even when you think you don't believe in it, the pattern of behavior is still about obedience and submission.*

**GUHA:** It works because it temporarily postpones the conflict and brings about a sense of peace and gives the physical body a little respite and a sense of belonging; it works in both ways. How it worked for centuries in human beings was a mystery until they coined the term placebo. It is not imaginary; it is a real physical effect and it is something very interesting. The capacity of the human being to think means we have the capacity to imagine a world outside the space of life. The capacity itself is a product of the movement of life. That space where we imagine and create can exist in relationship with preordained knowledge.

The concept of identity born out of that capacity, although closely related to the biological proprioception of the particular organism, creates a sense of separation and illusive fear, hence a drive toward belonging and fearlessness. The urge to return to where the identity crisis began is translated into the preordained knowledge of human society in the acceptance of the almighty god or a state of dissolution. Everything is always in relationship to that definition.

**Q:** *So the preordained knowledge is god, by which you mean the belief, this is a shared belief, which is what god is. God is the shared belief.*

**GUHA:** I really want to give you the hang of it. There is the dynamic of thinking. You need an object to think; sometimes the subject is the object. It is impossible to have no object of thinking.

The god that is a product of conceptual space only exists in the parallel world, in the space of imagination, never meeting life!

**Q:** *So this is a parallel world that is totally subjective, it doesn't exist. Isn't it a material concept that has taken root?*

**GUHA:** No, the parallel world is indirectly a biological necessity. It has tremendous functional value, but it is an extremely difficult proposition to have any relationship or one-to-one correspondence between the conceptual space and the space of life. The space of life is the biological space in which we exist, which is geared to accommodate biological existence – you and I cannot occupy the same space at the same time, but that is not the space in which our concepts operate.

This hand and that hand cannot be in the same space at the same time, they need a separate space to exist, but in the parallel world that requirement is not stringent. Our concept of time is the time that is invented by thinking. Thought is time. Our concepts are born out of a process known as thought.

\*You have a beautiful but problematic situation, beautiful because the movements in the conceptual space give you the sense of freedom to create and ponder the possibilities, but problematic because the drive to actualize those possibilities creates a burden on the system; when the burden becomes unbearable the movements turn towards understanding itself, which is impossible, since the nature of its production is divisive, illusive and hidden from introspection. The question of what maintains the division has no meaning, therefore there is no functional answer; we are the victims of this cyclic process and the momentum grows. There is an unfolding in the long run in biological space to somehow adjust the system, however that is extremely difficult to conceive of, and to be supported by the biological system. There is nothing outside of the biological system. The demand from the conceptual space is a huge pressure, an illusory demand that causes

enormous stress. The entire system is hardwired to function in the space of life by managing a dynamic balance, hence the problems related to self-consciousness and conceptual demand are going to grow out of proportion in individuals and obviously will be reflected in the culture, which is of course a collection of such individuals.

Once U.G. completely stepped into this biological space and functioned accordingly, to him our so-called ideas and concepts were a mere necessity for social survival, just a means to a particular social end, a functional necessity.

**Q:** *Then you have really passed through the other side of the mirror and whatever you say no one can understand.*

**GUHA:** The other side doesn't exist! If you take a piece of paper and put on a different stamp, it has a different value. That's the space we think we live in.

**Q:** *It makes no sense at all.*

**GUHA:** Can you eat that and survive? No. You do that with exchange, that's a functional reality. That's the only thing that is there. The only thing there is money, nothing else. All relationships are in that category.

**Q:** *U.G. did a really fantastic job there, Guha. That takes the whole thing out, emotion and idea, philosophical and emotional, which are usually held as two very different things – bhakti and jnana and all that crap.*

**GUHA:** Finding yourself in this space is not in your hands, nor in anyone else's. It is an uncomfortable idea. This proposition is not acceptable to the sense of self that has had such tremendous achievement and success, even if you think through your logic that it is a superior state and you pretend to accept it. Finding yourself here leads to a denial of all authority, traditions, systems, methods. The knowledge and image that creates authority ended in you and you will never ever exercise any authority on anybody.

This seems to have been U.G.'s specialty. There were people before him who must have had a sense of it, one of them J. Krishnamurti – *“The path is not the mountain, existence of a goal is always in the known, there cannot be a path to the unknown,”* and so on. But the hope of a future always seemed to linger.

**Q:** *It has to be, this is the hard part; the hardest part is like this weed garden. Because I could listen to him and I could listen to you but then I step back out and our sense of survival is the social survival, and it is so powerful, and they both, U.G. and JK, acknowledge the momentum of that, but that's what holds me ...*

**GUHA:** Why do you think there is a way? Think about the brain, you don't know the process that goes on in there. What comes to you is the end product, the final thought and your response is to that. Do not underestimate that process and the power of thought and the logic that justifies its agenda. You have seen in your own life how suddenly there will be a sense of logic which will crop up and try to convince you that what U.G. is saying may not be all that correct. Perhaps you think there might be some other way to come upon the truth. You ask why you are reading U.G., why you are there; you wonder if you should be doing something else – could the whole of society, philosophy, cultural background all be wrong and this guy right?

**Q:** *But in the end what you are both saying is that everything is paying lip service until that moment.*

**GUHA:** There is a qualitative change when the conflict ends, there is no sense of investment, therefore the unknown remains unknown without a trace of pretention; one can say things the way they appear. Repeating an idea comes from the protection of the continuity of the thought-thinker cycle. The mechanism that protects the thinker utilizes the same mechanism that protects the organization called body; that's why the sense of self is akin to physical fear.

Fear is the most important survival instinct of this physical organism. Without fear the body will die. If you don't move when seeing a cobra about to strike, if it does not

create an appropriate proprioception inside you, triggering an action, then you will be a dead duck. Fear is a necessity.

We have a tremendous amount of information about the world, which causes us to operate according to necessity. There is a similar principle that we call “psychological fear,” which has been illusively translated into the protection of the sense of self. The protective mechanism, which sustains the sense of self, is psychological fear.

**Q:** *You mean the social world? You mean the body?*

**GUHA:** You give the name “fear” to that most important ingredient of the responses that take care of the body’s survival. The hypothalamus, along with the thalamus, pituitary and adrenal glands, are highly evolved and beautifully configured to make the body act.

Now, you have created a parallel world; you have to delve deeply to comprehend this. You must have seen the way the old man functioned. If someone asked U.G., “Do you have fear?” he would say, “Yes, physical fear.” And then they would say, “That means, you have fear to a different degree than we do.” They didn’t get the point. The psychological fear that comes through thinking and that involves a future time was almost absent in him. He would express it by saying he did not believe in the psyche. Now, this parallel world, which functions in the conceptual space, has very little to do with the way most of our system works. It creates a fictitious state through the faculty of imagination and then uses the body’s total chemical repertoire in exactly the same way that the body’s physical survival mechanism uses it.

**Q:** *This parallel world which functions in a different space has very little to do with reality, the biological reality?*

**GUHA:** Not exactly, but I am trying to give you the hang of it; the body responds to a physical threat, and also to futuristic psychological fear, with similar intensity. In that information world, the fear of something imaginary can be so real that you may feel like committing suicide.

If you happen to step into the other side, if the structure of the conceptual space collapses, you will never create a proposition that would put you into such a situation. You remember U.G. saying, “If you are not worried about good and bad, you are not going to do anything bad.” It is not just a very wise statement; deep down it comes from his functionality. What is happening there, in my opinion, is that his verbal influence is also as powerful as his physical presence, but they are qualitatively very different. The process through which our self-consciousness works has a deep reasoning mechanism. You must have observed that U.G. spent a tremendous amount of time expressing how he functioned. The hearing and comprehension mechanism of the listener resonated with him in a mysterious way.

Self-consciousness, the one that is involved in recognizing, reflecting and recollecting, has a deeper resonance with its functioning than you know and understand. It creates its own causality, subject specific. One of the most beautiful aspects is that if a person’s conflict is reduced, conflicting ideas also arise less frequently. This is difficult to prove because we don’t fully understand the unconscious process, but for me it is a personal empirical observation. In that sense, in the realm of mind, I think religion can reduce conflict in some individuals, although there was and is huge collective violence.

Certain practices have been invented to reduce complexity. Deep faith can bring about a reduction of conflict, and therefore to some extent reduce continuous stress, which is the demand of the self. If you keep thinking about Jesus, for example, your number of diverging conflicting ideas decreases; feedback is supplied through one channel, true, but there is a bigger danger. Not only can you get stuck, but to defend this idea you have to use all the other mental faculties, and you are back to square one. Now there is a fresh new burden for the physical system.

**Q:** *Are you talking about somebody like Ramakrishna?*

**GUHA:** From what I am aware of about Ramakrishna, it seems he had some kind of systemic collapse when he was on the verge of killing himself, a rupture of some sort. His system completely broke down.

**Q:** *But that was his path, in a way. It was this total devotion to the one idea of the mother goddess.*

**GUHA:** That didn't do it for him. His delusional condition did not bring him to the state that he was in from that time on. It was the *giving up*; he wanted to commit suicide — giving up is the end of the search. Every ingredient of his endeavor had to culminate in that.

Now I am speaking personally about the dynamic; during those early interactions with U.G., I did not understand what was going on. There seems to be an individual cognitive limitation for everybody. If the response to that limitation is honest and is not replaced by dogmatic faith or belief, which strengthens the sense of self, there is a much better scope for an individual to become aligned with the rest of life. There is genuine modesty in that.

The moment you take something for granted, make an assumption, create a faith and keep working at it, the conflict is not going to end. The outcome of life is never going to match your concepts, in which you have an enormous investment and which you don't want to lose. Anything that makes you suffer, from a social injustice to a physical affliction, the sense of self will justify and try to maintain the faith. The faith is *you* and you do not want to come to an end. Your understanding will tell you that God is punishing you because you have done something that is not fulfilling the condition that should satisfy the idea you are holding onto.

**Q:** *So, really god is the total social order in that sense.*

**GUHA:** God is not a total social order; believers can't bring on that internal order, nor can non-believers. God was and is a concept. The Hindus have actually gone very far to claim *It* has no qualities that interact with the human mind and *It* is independent of human will. You can't conceptually imbibe *It* in any sense of the term. That's the definition of *Brahman*. You can't imbibe it through understanding and it is beyond intellect and experience. If you believe in god, you never give up your concepts, but if you

accept that you don't know, you don't blame yourself or praise yourself for whatever happens.

**Q:** *You may say you don't believe in god, but you still blame yourself so that means that you believe in something that's the equivalent of god, so you are in the same situation.*

**GUHA:** U.G. was constantly focusing on that subject of justification because that is the way the individual mind operates. Mind means totality in Hindu or Eastern thought; here in the west it is the totality of consciousness. Animals have consciousness, but we have the added element of *self-consciousness*, the one that is aware of itself, which can create its own understanding. In that world, the movement in the field of consciousness that creates thinking cannot move easily, therefore it begins to break down the causality, the backbone of the information structure and the apparent center. It always exists in relation to its content.

**Q:** *Then what do you do?*

**GUHA:** Then you don't *do*. Your confidence and certainty grow according to the way things unfold. It is in this regard that U.G. had a conviction and the certainty came from his experience – an extraordinary experience that he could not pass on to others. Conviction and functionality go hand in hand, and were fully operating in him. When the movement of thought that is responsible for any demand begins to slow down sufficiently, the information processing ceases, and there is a natural energy balance that can tip the dominance towards the functionality in the space of life.

I cannot say exactly what happened to U.G., and if I reflect on what happened to me, it's only recollection, conjecture and speculation; it's an effort to explain my own experience and knowledge. I'm trying to prove my views.

At the present stage, there are many things we don't know. How, for example, something can be biologically triggered inside a human being that is independent of our knowledge but that keeps the demand of knowledge in its proper perspective individually

to start with and effectively on the whole in the long run. Why is it that my system began to function in a different way when the movement of self-consciousness uncontrollably slowed down? That was my constant research. U.G. used to say, “You will discover something.” I would respond, “I discovered *you*, that’s my discovery!”

In fact I believe the main purpose of human enquiry into the nature of the self is for something to unfold in the system so that one can begin to live in a different way. When you reflect in an effort to understand how life works, it will always be empirical – and the resultant ideas are static and lifeless. It’s the knowledge game. What can you discover that is not known? You may get a few ideas that will help you straighten out certain things; you may have some odd worries that will go away with proper introspection. This is the same thing therapists can do. They suggest you think about it this way or that way, but it is only a replacement.

There are certain things that I found have functional qualities, if the objective is to understand with ruthless integrity the nature of desire and conflict. If you focus your thought for a long time on a single subject, you may acquire the qualities of mind that can help you to function more efficiently in this world; there are many things that demand that kind of mental attention, and attention reveals the connection of the information that justifies your point of view. There can be a change in the quality of attention, however, and what emerges will surprise you.

This I passionately believe because something happened to me that made my conviction stronger. I had practiced meditation for years, but nothing really caught hold until U.G. came into the picture. There was a stunning quality, a definitive difference in his functionality that was exhibited through his actions; as soon as I came in contact with him, that quality became my automatic object of meditation. This was the most mysterious thing that ever happened to me. I tried earnestly to understand.

Then I came up with this point of view – the response mechanism of life. I observed how the attention of two animals locks in one with the other; I observed their focus. The connectivity of life is so complicated and vast, and our responses so much deeper than we know, that it bypasses much of our intellectual ground and recognition processes that are accessible to self-consciousness. The limbic system of our brain is where

most of the functions and relay processing take place. It makes one feel like there is a guy sitting there in the thalamus. Well, not a guy really, but actually many nuclei!

This may not make any sense to you, but you can inquire, “What is that in U.G.?” You don’t have to believe in god or nirvana, yet what is it in him that reflects the quality all religious and spiritual literature exemplify?

*Q: This is one of those points that you have mentioned, if you do talk about U.G., you have to talk like this, and others will say, “I know that. My guru is just like that.”*

**GUHA:** Yes, that’s fine. Then it will come down to something simple. If somebody talks like that and does not function that way, he is still living in an illusory world. The functional aspect is most important; you don’t need to verify anything. The justification process will certainly lose its ground in you. If meditation happens there is a subtle hierarchy to the dominance that is functionally beneficial, and addresses the greater harmony. Is meditation holding onto an idea? That would mean you are still functioning in that conceptual space.

Our functional reality has increased tremendously. Necessity forced the system to modify itself by expanding and layering the circuitry in our neo-cortex which made the system response, and to take on the challenge, with similar baseline activities, that deals with the feedback and reentrant mechanism to negate or terminate the demand. Every conflict and continuous stress-related problem can be solved through the information in the circuitry. This functioning physical system, with all its attributes, existed long before the thinking process began. Thought is incapable of addressing the symbiotic equilibrium of the physical system, an equilibrium that has been established through millions of years of evolution.

The biological space is connected in an intricate way to the conceptual space and has to support the functional reality of the conceptual space; there is but one energy resource for both which is connected to the dynamic balance of life. There are certain dynamics in that conceptual or imaginary space that won’t interfere with the programmed activities of this biological space, and thus will not disturb the core wellbeing of the system

as a whole. That equilibrium is what meditation is supposed to be for the system. If you aim through meditation to dissolve the self, to achieve a thoughtless state, you are going to fail and end up in disaster. All meditation efforts are a movement in self-consciousness; therefore it is going to keep self-consciousness dominant. When you try to meditate, it is a movement in the field of consciousness that produces the sense of self, hence it will perpetuate the dominant role of the sense of self, the source of your problems.

**Q:** *So it will just tie itself in a knot?*

**GUHA:** And keep rotating around that, a real merry-go-round. If you are honest, the only option for you is to commit suicide to end thinking, which you have mistakenly accepted as the objective. This is what U.G. was trying to tell us, there were cases of saints who jumped into the water and drowned themselves. In Bengal we have a saint who did exactly that, we exemplify that action by calling it, *jal-samadhi*.

**Q:** *I thought U.G. was kidding about that, but it really wasn't a joke. When I asked him about that directly once, he said, "Yes," and I said, "Because your thinking would not come to an end."*

**GUHA:** You thought that by meditating more and more you were going to stop thinking. As long as it is an activity in that space, it's a movement that keeps its dominance intact. That sums it up – *give up!* Give up everything that you are doing to get what you think you want to get. That's why U.G.'s favorite Sanskrit lines from the *Upanishads* were: *Na Pravachanena, Na Medhaya, Na Bahunasrutena, Na Karmanye, Na Prajaya, Na Dhanena, Tyagenayike Amrutatya Manashaha!* Which means, "Neither through discourse, nor through intellect, neither by repeated listening, nor by work, neither through progeny nor through money – only through *renunciation* does the eternal state of mind come into being." Listening to someone's commentary and using your intellect, you are not going to get it. By listening again and again and doing good works, you aren't going to get it, just because your dad or mom or uncle got it, you're not going to get it, by spending or giving money

you're not going to get it. The renunciation that U.G. was talking about was renouncing all the methods you and your predecessors have discovered and adopted.

**Q:** *That was his whole argument against neti-neti; it's a positive approach.*

**GUHA:** Yes, it is positive because the *negation* as an approach implies you will arrive at something positive. Its outcome is already embedded in the process of negation. Negating for a positive goal is a convoluted process. Indian thinkers – oh my god, they will drive you crazy!

The difference between Indian and Western thinkers and mystics is that Westerners in general believe that by reasoning and rational thinking one can come to the truth. Indians understood early on that one cannot end the misery of thinking through reason. This is the brilliant stroke of *Advaita Vedanta*. Of course for an intellectual, thinking and knowledge are its greatest pleasure. *Vedanta* is the end of knowledge. The logic that continuously generates knowledge is not going to be the solution for the balanced existence of a living organism. Most Western thinkers die holding onto the hope that the human mind can know it all, that it can somehow achieve absolute knowledge.

**Q:** *That was always the problem with those guys. You read what they wrote and it's fascinating, but then you read about their lives and it was a nightmare – depression, suicide, madness.*

**GUHA:** Or, as U.G. used to say, if they're lucky, they'll get Alzheimer's! According to him, most Indian gurus were like that. I think the drive itself is a signature of imbalance; extreme imbalance is narcissism – the end product is I am *That* or God. If you say I am *That* or I am not *That*, it implies the knowledge of *That*, and that contradicts the definition of *That*! Those who claim such things do not find equilibrium!

There are subtle aspects that I observed and liked very much in U.G. He was extraordinarily profound. Things he had considered and examined deeply operated in him. You may not understand what is working in *your* life, but that functionality has more value than understanding. I always thanked my lucky stars for that movement in U.G.

because it was there for me to respond to. The movement that made him go from place to place made him accessible to me! Had he lived in a cave, or in some remote village, or was not available on the Internet, probably I would never have known or heard about him. Am I certain of this? I would have to say of course not, I really don't know!

You need food for survival, and certain things to sustain your wellbeing. Much is available to you, most of it harmful. What U.G. was addressing is the very thing that has to make sense inside of you. Your knowledge is always mystifying things because it is derived from a partial observation. This is true especially when it comes to your own life; you *do* mystify, even if you don't want to. Your effort to acknowledge the fact that you have come to know of *something* that you can't put a finger on creates mystified information. The mystified information can now be used as a camouflage, by convoluted intentions. One can be aware and come to know about that too. The real problem is here. Just because there are dangerous animals around a waterhole, you can't stop going there if you need that water to survive. You have to find a way to the water, despite the danger.

In social dynamics, there are internal dispositions that address our wellbeing, but they are often camouflaged. In the name of providing wellbeing, some people pretend to possess that disposition in order to exploit others. They will say, "Yes, this will help you, and I have it to give." This is the source of the conflict. There is always a danger of eating poison, but at the same time you can't survive without eating.

U.G.'s personality and restlessness were beneficial and life-abiding. If you equate that with egomania and/or narcissism, it was not a problem for U.G. The problem rests in your faculty of discrimination. Do you see the difference? The thinking mechanism is incapable of detecting that which is addressing the system's wellbeing. It is not the instrument, and there is no other instrument! It may be of some value at some point, when you see that you cannot move in any direction other than that which is constantly trying to bring a similar disposition from inside.

I remember a beautiful story told to me by U.G.:

*"There was a person who had heard about Buddha. He began to read about what Buddha said, and the more he became familiar with his words, the more he wanted to see him in person. Finally he began a journey to find him. Through different disciples, he located Buddha's whereabouts. One evening he arrived at a place where there were quite a few*

tents, and in one of them, Buddha was supposed to be staying. At the entrance to the grounds, as he was about to search for someone to ask, a person came out and asked him what he was looking for. Instead of showing him to a tent, this person asked him, "Why do you want to see Buddha?" After a long discussion, the same person asked, "If you do not know Buddha, do you have any way of recognizing him?" This question startled the man. He began to ponder. "Is it possible to have something that could detect the special quality of Buddha?" Perplexed and unable to answer the question, the man returned home. He had been talking to Buddha all along!"

How can you recognize that which is operational in a person in whom you are already interested? That is the most important question, but the most difficult one.

**Q:** *Because you can see it in him if you can't see it in yourself?*

**GUHA:** No, it is not even that. The moment you see it in him, you already have won the jackpot. If what you saw in U.G. was so unmistakably correct, appropriate action would follow.

We are constantly trying to match and react to the same information bank. An actor can play the role of a king better than a real king; that is human camouflage. You are only conditioned to respond to acting. You have nothing other than that recognition, but unfortunately you will only respond to a wordsmith who will play the game of logic and come out victorious!

**Q:** *If you see U.G., you see it in his movement; it is like the dog, it's true. You see a bunch of puppets dressed like dogs and then you see a real dog.*

**GUHA:** What is it that feels this tremendous attraction to U.G.? All you can do is think about him, while at the same time still seeking justification from the cultural value system. This is the fundamental research that will bring what attracted you in the first place into vital operation, and you will realize that aspect of life does not need external support. What you are seeking outside is a game that is going on in your intellectual faculty. You can learn it from a book. A book or a tape will do a better job. If only that *could* do the

job! *Brahma Sutra*, *Yoga Vashista* and *Bhagavat Gita*, were there for centuries in India, and look at what happened!

**Q:** *Not very good evidence in favor of books, you learn like monkeys, it's true.*

**GUHA:** U.G. would say, “Don’t give me that crap about your capacity to repeat *Vedas* – the tape recorder will do a much better job of replicating all these things you put in there. Nothing ever touched you!” Your brain is no match for the computer when it comes to repeating things. You make mistakes, the computer rarely does. If that repetition worked, there would be a *brahmajnani* on every street corner, and if it were beneficial to mankind, it would be seen all over the world.

It just does not work that way. Functionality and the instrument that you are using to test the validity of a working solution were the most important aspects of U.G.’s existence. As he said, “What you are using is not the instrument and you have no other instrument.” At the same time you cannot deny the effect of that man in your life.

What unfolded in U.G. that made him function the way he did? If this could become a meditation perhaps life would touch this body and an order would unfold, and you would begin to function in a congenial rhythm that would address your genuine wellbeing. Instead, you are trying to figure things out intellectually so you can use that knowledge for the sake of the information center. What you are doing is an outcome of the drive to find out how to solve the problem.

Your question has to be why U.G. made such an impact on you; you know the vocabulary. You will sense a new movement that will beat from inside, and you will take a different kind of leap. You will begin to see that the old man left behind something in you, almost like an epigenetic influence. Something will unfold in a different way and when it does, everything around you will take on a different dimension. You have witnessed this hundreds of times with him – how it suddenly changed everything in your perceptive world, how it electrified your surroundings.

**Q:** *What's crazy is that I watched it, I heard it, and then went right back and did the same things again. I mean, okay, I did that but I am going, "No, no, something wrong here." Everything he said sounded like a joke when he was saying it, and only now it feels like it wasn't a joke, it was the punch line.*

**GUHA:** In India people can't swallow what U.G. was saying. The living quality of his energy was destroying the cultural input, part of their self-image; Hindu scripture calls it *samaskara*. If one could digest what he was saying, all these *brahmasutras*, all these gods and goddesses we created in our imagination – a burden for the system – would have no value at all. The thing that was unfolding inside would have given us a powerful balance and the courage to make such an unburdening possible. There is a peculiar problem: It is not that there is *nothing*, there is *something*. What is it? **Whatever it is, there is nothing outside the human being. It is in the space of life, not in the space of concept and imagination.**

Everything is inside if it unfolds appropriately. A completely new way of living will emerge. U.G. was a perfect testimony to that. We have all seen how he functioned. Fear was not a term that was applicable to him. Fear of God? To make his point he would say, "I would have put more nails into the cross, so that that fellow could never come back!"

There is nothing to say. So, what do you do? If you really imbibe U.G., you say things just the way they appear to you to be. I once said to him, "If I ever ask you for anything, it will be this, 'Give me the strength to say things as they are.'"

U.G. exemplified these characteristics. He did not play the social game; he had zero investment in it. If someone didn't see that U.G.'s presence was an important necessity in his or her life, he would just say, "Nice meeting you and goodbye!"

**Q:** *It's the tenacity, the weed-like quality of those beliefs. I remember the first week in the Southgate, joking with him, thinking, "If anything is sacred to that guy it will be wrong." Somehow I felt that in my gut, if anything is sacred it means he has something to hide or has something invested, and there was absolutely nothing. And he went way further than I did with that. The beauty of it for me was he was saying, "Right, there's nothing to any of it." And I don't think I could even take the degree to which he meant that.*

**GUHA:** The moment there is recognition of the value system it plays this trick on us. The trick is its nature. The moment you have a particular aspect of your investment, say you want to see him as a divine teacher, the desire grows inside you and lo and behold along with this you also want to become a divine teacher yourself someday. From this root, thoughts and ideas will spring forth. Everything is going on inside you, and will come to you as an active passionate movement in the thinking world and will drive you to do things; I am not saying good or bad, it is just how the thinking human responds.

**Q:** *It means you've got to lose everything; it's really true. You have to lose it all.*

**GUHA:** Yes, so there lies the beauty, his life itself. "Dump my dead body into the garbage. You cannot do it because it will stink." U.G. was that disrespectful of the idea of himself just to show us that whatever we are holding onto is not the living quality of life. It's not disrespect; his experiences were extraordinary. For him there was nothing more important, no power, no god compared to his own living body, the greatest temple that ever existed on the planet Earth; nothing could change his conception of his experience. There was absolutely no space for doubt, nothing. He was playing with fire, and he knew it first-hand.

Those parrots, the teachers who were determined to control us, handed over their concepts to us. U.G. was trying to destroy them, because if they were not finished inside, they would come out as our worst enemy. Then we would use him to satisfy our desires, protect ourselves from psychological fear, and aggrandize the information center, the most illusive high the human gets! All the time he vehemently opposed the phoniness of the holiness in our culture. He was trying to destroy our image-making structure. We are constantly trying to gather knowledge, all the holy shit, and thinking that this is more than life itself. The human mind is a myth-making machine.

We convince ourselves to exemplify things that do not really exist; we may be sentimental about it, but in the long run it is a means of oppression, a means of self-delusion, a means of controlling others. Without our conscious knowledge we gather

information to reinforce and exercise control over others. Knowledge is power. I know, you don't. So you should bow down to *me!*

*It is dangerous to ponder this!*