

The Adidam Advocate

*The Monthly Newsletter for Associates, Pre-Students,
the Third Congregation and others interested in
The Eleutherian Pan-Communion of Adidam*

July 2004

Volume 1; Issue 11

The Revelation of Divine Truth

In the depth of every human being, there is a profound need for answers to the fundamental questions of existence. Is there a God? What is beyond this life? Why is there suffering? What is Truth? What is Reality?

The Adidam Advocate is an opportunity to be introduced to the Wisdom-Revelation of Avatar Adi Da, whose Teachings truly and completely address all of these fundamental questions. How can Avatar Adi Da resolve these fundamental questions? Because He speaks, not from the point of view of the human dilemma, but directly from the unique Freedom of His Divine State. Adi Da's Birth in 1939 was an intentional embrace of the human situation, for the sake of Revealing the Way of Divine Liberation to all and Offering the Spiritual Blessing that carries beings to that true Freedom. He is thus the fulfillment of the ancient intuitions of the "Avatar"—the One Who Appears in human Form, as a direct manifestation of the Unmanifest Reality.

Through a 28-year process of Teaching-Work (beginning in 1972), Avatar Adi Da established the Way of Adidam—the Way of the devotional and Spiritual relationship to Him. In those years of Teaching, He spoke for many hours with groups of His devotees—always looking for them, as representatives of humanity, to ask all of their questions about God, Truth, Reality, and human life. In response, He Gave the ecstatic life of real Divine Communion with Him, and all the details of how that process unfolds. Thus, He created a new tradition, based on His direct Revelation (as Avatar) of the Divine Reality.

To read Avatar Adi Da's Writings and the stories of His devotees is a great Blessing—for His Teaching is itself an Agent of His Spiritual Awakening-Power. As you will discover, Avatar Adi Da Samraj does not offer you a set of beliefs, or even a set of Spiritual techniques. He simply Offers you His Revelation of Truth as a Free Gift. If you are moved to take up His Way, He invites you to enter into an extraordinarily deep and transformative devotional and Spiritual relationship to Him.

To find Avatar Adi Da Samraj is to find the Very Heart of Reality—tangibly felt in your own heart as the Deepest Truth of Existence.

This is the great mystery that you are invited to discover.

An Excerpt from Jeffrey Kripal's Foreword to the New Edition of *The Knee Of Listening*

*Jeffrey J. Kripal is the J. Newton Rayzor Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University in Texas. He received his Ph.D. in the History of Religions from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago in 1993. Since then, he has also held positions as the Vira I. Heinz Associate Professor of Religion at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, and as the Visiting Associate Professor of the History of Religion at Harvard Divinity School. Dr. Kripal follows here in the footsteps of Alan Watts, who wrote the foreword to the first edition of *The Knee Of Listening*.*

Foreword

When the incarnation comes, the common people are unable to recognize him. He comes in secret.

- Sri Ramakrishna in *Sri-Sri-Ramakrishna-Kathamrita* 2.16

From the day I first encountered the writings of Adi Da (as Da Free John) in the mid-80s, I knew that I was reading a contemporary religious genius. Here was someone who had succeeded in making the nondual spirituality cherished in the traditions of Asia relevant to the Western mind—that specific historical form of consciousness which is defined by, among many other factors, radical individualism, a constitutional stress on freedom in most all of its forms, a specifically psychological view of the human being, a deep appreciation of human sexuality and eroticism, a history of passionate religious experimentation and expression, and a generally scientific or materialistic worldview. The multiple texts that followed those first readings have done nothing to dissuade me from this initial impression. Quite the contrary.

... The present edition of *The Knee Of Listening* is a particularly rich document that extends and deepens Adi Da's spiritual effort of cultural translation and transformation into the present—that is, up to 2004, and into you and me. This edition of *The Knee Of Listening* does not actually constitute a single narrative written at a single point in time, like, say, its previous incarnation, which was simply the running narrative of the present Part One, composed more or less at once in the early 70s. This greatly expanded edition is different, with "later" strata layered upon "earlier" strata, to form a kind of dramatic historical witness to the evolution of Adi Da's embodiment of radical nonduality.

Adi Da has gone to great lengths to relate his Teaching—philosophically (via textual interpretation and rational argument), metaphysically (via reincarnation theory), and personally (via autobiographical narrative)—to earlier paradigmatic gurus, particularly Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi, Swami Nityananda, and Swami Muktananda. The overall result is what we might call an “esoteric history” of the siddha-guru in the present age. In this history, Adi Da manages to balance an obvious appreciation for and devotion to those who have come before him with a keen critical sense of where their teachings are inadequate or limited. It is obvious that even his most penetrating questions about traditional Asian forms of spirituality and their teachers are animated by a spirit of deep concern, existential commitment, and profound love.

No reader professionally or personally invested in Asian forms of spirituality and concerned about their effective (as opposed to dysfunctional) translation into Western culture can afford to ignore *The Knee Of Listening* or the larger textual corpus in which it is now placed, that is, Adi Da’s twenty-three Source-Texts. In my opinion, this latter total corpus constitutes the most doctrinally thorough, the most philosophically sophisticated, the most culturally challenging, and the most creatively original literature currently available in the English language. Certainly there are even larger canons in Asia, but these are written and expressed in languages (primarily Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese) and interpreted in cultural frames that must remain permanently foreign to the contemporary English speaker and reader. What sets the twenty-three Source-Texts apart is the fact that they were written in English, and that this English idiom has been enriched by a kind of hybridized English-Sanskrit, and that a new type of mystical grammar has been created, embodied most dramatically (and, to the ego, jarringly) in Adi Da’s anti-ego capitalization practice, in which just about every grammatical move is nondualistically endowed with the status once imperially preserved in English for the non-existent “I”. Such a reading experience constantly calls upon one’s ability to think and feel beyond the socially constructed ego.

I thus will not even begin to pretend that the literary result is easy reading, or that this corpus will not present its own personal challenges and philosophical problems to many of its future readers (including this one). What I can reasonably claim is that *The Knee Of Listening*, now placed within this total corpus, deserves our closest attention, and that it stands in a long modern Western textual transmission that begins with Charles Wilkins’ translation of *The Bhagvat-Geeta, or Dialogues of Kreesna and Arjoon* (1785), develops and deepens through Max Mueller’s *Sacred Books of the East* series (1875), and extends into the previous century primarily through such spiritual classics as *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (1942), *The Collected Works of Swami Vivekananda* (1907), the collected works of Sri Aurobindo, *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* (1955), Swami Muktananda’s *Play of Consciousness* (1978), which Adi Da (as Franklin Jones) helped to edit, and the numerous writings

of Krishnamurti, Yogananda, Alan Watts, and Chogyam Trungpa.

My Hungry Search for Spiritual Wisdom and How It Came to an End

by Ed Molek

Ed Molek owns a remodeling and construction business in southwestern Pennsylvania. He became a devotee of Adi Da in 2003. This is Ed’s story of finding Avatar Adi Da through His Autobiography The Knee Of Listening.

ED: I remember one day when I was six, riding home after church with my parents and announcing to them that I wanted to be a priest when I grew up. My spiritual search started then! As a child and a young man, I was always fascinated by Jesus, religion, and the question “Why are we here?”

After my father died when I was thirty, I became deeply involved with the images of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. One day, a friend of mine named Cruso, who I always had talks with about spirituality, gave me a book called *The New Man*, by Maurice Nicoll, who was a disciple of G. I. Gurdjieff. That book cracked my head wide open beyond the boundaries of Catholicism, and put me on a hungry search for spiritual wisdom that led me to the works of Paramhansa Yogananda, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Krishnamurti, Barry Long, and many, many other books. It seemed to me as though I was being fed what I needed on each step of the way of a mysterious process.

One day in the early nineties, my friend Cruso and I were talking about spiritual masters. He then, out of the blue, showed me a picture of a baby sitting cross-legged. Cruso said this man was called “Da Free John” and that he was born enlightened. I looked at the picture and then handed it back to him. There was something very unusual about the picture that I couldn’t put my finger on, but I paid no attention to the feeling at the time.

By 1996 I had acquired a large library of spiritual books. I was exhausted by my search, exhausted by my own fascination with spiritual possibilities. I had been stimulated by what I read—but I was never moved to become anyone’s devotee or join any organizations. I didn’t know where to go or what to do with this impulse toward spirituality. I was lost—left only with myself. I was in great need and had no idea what to do about it. And I was sure that the one thing I didn’t need was another spiritual book to add to my collection!

One day, my partner asked if I would take her to a bookstore. She wanted a book on hand-knitting. I was a little reluctant, wanting nothing more to do with bookstores, but I gave in and accompanied her. Having vowed to myself that I would not go to the section on religion and spirituality, I calmly waited for her to choose a book. My patience wore thin, though, as she combed through what seemed to me to be every knitting book on the planet. In spite of myself, and

disgusted at the obvious futility of the gesture, I wandered off to the spiritual book section. As I walked in the first aisle, I looked up and saw a book that immediately caught my attention. The cover showed a group of people holding their hands up in the air in praise of a man with long hair. I picked up the book angrily. Everyone is a guru these days, I thought. I was so disturbed that I actually had to look inside to see what nonsense was going on here. I opened the book up and saw a page titled, "The Secret of *The Knee Of Listening*". This was the introduction to that 1995 edition of the book, written by Adi Da's devotees:

There is a State of Being that is completely, unequivocally, permanently, infinitely Happy and Free—a State that cannot be lost under any conditions, in this world or after death. Such a State is not just imaginary. It is the underlying Truth of existence. In various times and places, great saints and sages have tasted this Happiness to some degree. The Knee Of Listening is the story of how this Truth, this Joy, perfectly emerged in the world for the first time, and has become the actual possibility of all human beings. There is no way to be prepared for the power of this book. It is a miraculous story of Divine Grace, but it is not a myth. It is literally true. The events described here took place in our own era.

In November 1939, on Long Island, New York, a baby was born who was not an ordinary child. But no one knew this. No one knew that this child—named by His parents "Franklin Albert Jones"—had intentionally accepted birth as a human being in order to accomplish Work that was great and sublime beyond description. This Work, which began at His birth, continues today, and will continue beyond His human lifetime, even forever. The One born as Franklin Jones is Adi Da, the Da Avatar, and this book is His early-life story, told in His own words.

The "Bright"

*During His infancy, Adi Da was perfectly aware of everything around Him. He saw that people were not Happy, that each person presumed himself or herself to be separate from everyone else, each struggling to find his or her own separate joy. As He describes in *The Knee Of Listening*, Adi Da found this remarkable—it was not His experience at all. He knew only Oneness, only Blissfulness. His consciousness was not yet identified with a bag of flesh and skin. He lived in an entirely different State of Awareness—as "Infinitely and inherently Free Being", a sphere of Radiance and Love that He called the "Bright". Adi Da was inseparable from the Bliss and Joy of the "Bright". He knew Himself to be the very Source of It, the true and "Bright" Condition of everything. How could a baby have known this? What Adi Da describes on the first page of His story is not the experience of a mere human infant. The secret of *The Knee Of Listening* is that the One who speaks to you in this book Exists eternally—before this birth and forever. The early-life story of Adi Da is the confession of the Divine Being, the ultimate Truth and Reality, appearing in human form.*

I read that one page and, inexplicably, was immediately taken at heart. For the first time, I felt that there was something to do in response to all my seeking. I sat on a chair and looked through the beginning of the book, my attention completely captured. I stayed there reading until Marita found me and asked if I was ready to go.

I purchased *The Knee Of Listening* and read it closely for the next two weeks. (And the picture of the baby that my friend had shown me years before was, of course, Adi Da as an infant.) I was totally absorbed while reading and re-reading the book. Each day, I couldn't wait to get home to pick it back up where I had left off. I was just completely taken over by it. I felt a peace and a love that I had never known.

I have since become a devotee of Adi Da Samraj, and His blessing continues to overflow in my heart with love. Even so, becoming His devotee wasn't an easy process. It took five years before I became a novice in Adidam. In that time, I read all the books of Adi Da's that I could find. I experienced an unfolding of love in my heart that produced a profound attraction in me to Adi Da. There was a spiritual fire exploding inside of me, which kept me continuously moving toward Adi Da. I saw that everything that had happened in my life up to that point had only been preparation for this. I attended some Adidam seminars and retreats and met devotees who further inspired me in my approach to Adi Da.

When eventually I came into Adi Da's physical Company on a several-day retreat, He looked directly into my eyes. I remember feeling that I wanted everything He had to Give and I almost "challenged" Him to do that as I gazed back at Him. Suddenly, I felt a complete emptiness, accompanied by an electrifying background sensation that I just cannot describe. The character, the personality, who had sought and read and finally made his way into Adi Da's Company and who wanted to be "Given everything" was now absent. Or maybe I should say that I simply couldn't identify with that personality at that point. I was only the "witness" of that character and everything else. When this experience passed, I had no idea what had happened to me!

The next day, I was given a completely different experience when I had the opportunity to see some of Adi Da's Image-Art. Looking at His photographs, I was overwhelmed with bliss, a feeling of being totally alive, along with everything in the environment. There were no "objects", there was just one thing, and I was simply a part of it. It was all Him. It was all transparent.

If a few paragraphs can take a life, turn it upside down and shake everything out, and install the intuition of the One True Heart there, then one can only imagine what blessings one receives when becoming a devotee of Adi Da. I cannot account for what has happened to me. But the heart knows.

The Controlling Logic of Every Human Life:

An Excerpt from *The Knee Of Listening*

In the first part of The Knee Of Listening (about Adi Da's early life ordeal), Avatar Adi Da describes the process by which He examined the mind at profoundest depth and discovered the "controlling logic", the source of all human suffering that he describes as the "self-contraction" or the presumption of separateness. In this passage, He writes about this process and how it became the recognition of "the source of presumed self-identity":

I was always driven more deeply into the underlying structure, and so I always remained focused in the mind itself, regardless of what passed.

Eventually, I began to recognize a structure in my humanly-born conscious awareness. It became more and more apparent, and its nature and effects revealed themselves as fundamental, inclusive of all the states and contents in life and mind. My own "myth"—the governor of all patterns, the source of presumed self-identity, the motivator of all seeking—began to stand out in the mind as a living being.

This "myth", this controlling logic (or force) that structured and limited my humanly-born conscious awareness, revealed itself as the self-concept—and the actual life—of Narcissus. I saw that my entire adventure—the desperate cycle of Awakeness and its decrease, of truly Conscious Being and Its gradual covering in the mechanics of living, seeking, dying, and suffering—was produced out of the image (or mentality) that appears hidden in the ancient myth of Narcissus.

The more I contemplated him, the more profoundly I understood him. I observed, in awe, the primitive control that this self-concept and logic exercised over all of my behavior and experience. I began to see that same logic operative in all other human beings, and in every living thing—even in the very life of the cells, and in the natural energies that surround every living entity or process. It was the logic (or process) of separation itself, of enclosure and immunity. It manifested as fear and identity, memory and experience. It informed every function of the living being, every experience, every act, every event. It "created" every "mystery". It was the structure of every imbecile link in the history of human suffering.

He is the ancient one visible in the Greek myth, who was the universally adored child of the gods, who rejected the loved-one and every form of love and relationship, and who was finally condemned to the contemplation of his own image—until, as a result of his own act and obstinacy, he suffered the fate of eternal separateness and died in infinite solitude. As I became more and more conscious of this guiding myth (or logic) in the very roots of my being, my writing began to take on an apparently intentional form. What was before only an arbitrary string of memories, images, and perceptions, leading toward an underlying logic, now proceeded from the heart of that logic itself—such that my perceptions and my thoughts began to develop (from hour to

hour) as a narrative, completely beyond any intention or plan of my external mind.

I found that, when I merely observed the content of my experience or my mind from hour to hour, day to day, I began to recognize a "story" being performed as my own conscious life. This was a remarkable observation, and obviously not a common one. The quality of the entire unfolding has the touch of madness in it. But people are mad. The ordinary state of human existence—although it is usually kept intact and relatively calmed by the politics of society—is founded in the madness of a prior logic, a schism in Reality that promotes the entire suffering adventure of human lives in endless and cosmic obstacles. I have known since I was a boy that this round of conflict, of contradiction and unconsciousness, was neither natural nor ultimately Real. And the total and guiding Purpose of my life has been—even by (and in the midst of) fully embracing the states and circumstances of conditionally manifested existence—to most perfectly Realize (and then to Communicate to all others) that Reality, that given Form, the Spiritually "Bright" Condition of Consciousness Itself—Which is not properly the illusive goal of life, but Which is the Very and Conscious Foundation of life.

Thus, in order to learn this "Thing", I had to endure the progress of my own "madness". I had to observe the madman himself and undermine him with my Knowledge. This "madness", however, is not merely unfortunate, irrational, and disruptive. It is required of all those who would pass into Real Existence, beyond fear and egoic ignorance. And, in the process, one experiences remarkable revelations, and eventually discovers (and realizes) the synergy of the mind and every movement of Energy in the world.

It was this synergy (or synchronicity), this conscious coincidence of the internal and external world, that I discovered (and realized) at that time. After the pattern I recognized as Narcissus began to show its flower in the mind and I became settled in observing its "creative" position in the entirety of my life, the internal and external events in my experience began to demonstrate a common source or, rather, a coincident pattern. My own thoughts or images, then, began to arise in a similar pattern to my external experiences. A narrative was being constructed as my very life, which was itself a mythic form. The people, the passing events, the dramatization of my own motives, and all the imagery and categories of my thought appeared to be generating a conceived pattern. And I knew that my own life was moving toward the very death of Narcissus.

If you would like to purchase the new edition of *The Knee Of Listening*, please call the Adidam Bookstore of Los Angeles at 310-358-0555.

We Praise and Acknowledge the Following People Who Deepened Their Formal Relationship to Avatar Adi Da in June:

New Course Participants

Cliff Paine, New Hall, CA
Phil Macmanus, San Diego, CA
Nick Milo, Los Angeles, CA
Joshua Rosebrook, Los Angeles, CA
Curt Wells, Santa Monica, CA
Gina De Korff, Los Angeles, CA
Royale Bombey, Los Angeles, CA

New Prestudent Course Participants

Jennifer Tatum, San Diego, CA
Mira Portents, Los Angeles, CA
Patrick Williams, Studio City, CA

New Second Congregation Devotees

David Lagasse, Sante Fe, NM

The Heart's Connection is published by The Outreach Department of the Southwestern Region in cooperation with the Third Congregation Office of the Advocacy Department of the Eleutherian Pan-Communion of Adidam. For more information please contact Tim Peterson at 310-358-0555.
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What's New in the Bookstore

The Causal Position / Transcending the Cosmic Domain
\$26.95

The Structure of Existence compact discs are drawn from a series of unique occasions of Avatar Adi Da's Instruction in 1995. During July and August of that year, while in residence at Adidam Samrajashram (the Island of Naitauba, Fiji), Avatar Adi Da gave several discourses to devotees in the ashram over the telephone from His residence on the other side of the Island. Devotees listened to His voice (and spoke to Him) via a speaker phone, and His words were recorded from the speaker phone. In these discourses, He answered many questions about the Nature of Reality, and made profound Revelations of the Nature of His Divine Avataric Incarnation.

Fascination with experiences and mechanisms of experience is produced by the same fault-self-contraction and the habit of identifying with the mechanisms of the body-mind and the potential experiences of the body-mind. You are feeling that the body-mind is self, suffering the illusion that the body-mind is self, feeling the cramp of the body-mind—its inherent limitations and mortality—and you are struggling, therefore, to be satisfied with various objects, gross and subtle. But

when there is the understanding, the realization, that all that is not self, then there is the Stand Prior to the subtle and gross hierarchy and phenomena, and the sadhana can move into its Perfect phase, moving beyond the causal knot itself—or attention itself, or the feeling of relatedness itself, and the sense of separate consciousness itself.

—Avatar Adi Da Samraj

August 16, 1995

Call 310-358-0555 to order. Visa, MC and Discover are accepted. We will ship in 24 hours. We can ship "media-rate" to save you money!

SUPPORT FOR THE SPIRITUAL CENTER & BOOKSTORE

As the Adidam gathering in Los Angeles area has begun to grow this past year, the Center on Melrose Avenue (now formally the "Adidam Spiritual Center and Bookstore" of Los Angeles) has continued to be renovated and developed as a prototypical space for anyone in the Southwest United States to access the Life, Teaching, and Person of the Ruchira Avatar, Adi Da Samraj, through the "reality consideration" that is Adidam.

At the beginning of this year, we established a formal design guild and created a scale model to guide the vision for this prototype. One of the key agreements with the guild is to keep the Center open while renovation is taking place. With this in mind, the development plan was accorded into project areas, prioritized and cost-estimated.

Some of the features for the new Adidam Spiritual Center and Bookstore are . . . an Altar/Temple Space, CD listening station, a Flat-Screen TV, Modular Wall with History of Adi Da Samraj, and an Outside Courtyard Garden and seating for contemplation and study.

You are formally invited to help us renovate this important and unique space. Help us with your financial support. To date we have raised \$1300, and the total amount needed is \$12,000.

Your contributions (by check) should be made to "ADIDAM" with "SUPPORT FOR CENTER" in the memo line. Mail to 8572 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Call 310.358.0555 for credit & debit card donations. Visit the Center Tuesday through Saturday 11am - 7pm.

Thank you very much for your generous support, and remember that these donations are tax deductible.