

## XII. HINDUISM IN AMERICA

There are over a million Indian immigrants in the U.S. there are more than 400 Hindu temples. The children are less committed Hindus, and are not evangelistic about Hinduism

The growth of Hinduism in the U.S. is through conversion of whites (80%), mostly from Judeo-Christian backgrounds. 74% attended church during childhood. 35% were Protestants, 33% Catholics, 15% Jews. More than 70% are middle class. Most join groups like ISKCON [Hari Krishna} between the ages of 13 -25.

## XIII. THE NEW AGE DOCTRINES

The New Age Movement has its roots in Hinduism. Its basic doctrines are:

### **1. A New Age is Dawning:**

- 1.1 The Present Age is that of Pices (fish = Christianity). In it rationality, empiricism, and material realities have been emphasized. Inner occult knowledge and power have been devalued. The result is wars, alienation, ecological disasters and human oppression.
- 1.2 The New Age is that of Aquarius and begins about 2000 A.D. (an age lasts 2,200 years). It is the age of humanism, inner power, love, peace and unity of all life. Jose Arguelles argues (The Mayan Factor: Path Beyond Technology) that the New Age began August 16, 1987, when three planets were lined up with the new moon.
  - 1.21 Lord Maitreya: Some look for the coming of a new messiah--Lord Maitreya (from Buddhism). First proclaimed in public papers in 1982 as the founder of a new world order, government and religion. Benjamin Creme claims he is Christ returned, and is now living in East London awaiting the time when people will recognize him.
  - 1.22 Some believe we must realize the messiah is in each of us. Barbara Marx Hubbard teaches that each of us has a Christ or cosmic consciousness within.

### **2. You Will be Like God:**

- 2.1 All is One (Monism):
  - all dualisms are rejected: God/human; spirit/body; culture/nature. We must seek holism.
  - Jonathan Stone: "I feel that there is coming a World Order in which science will merge with monistic philosophy and all the world will be swept up in a new consciousness."
- 2.2 All is "One," all is "God":
  - God ultimately is an impersonal spiritual energy field, a life force, not a being to whom we relate.

### 2.3 We are all gods (pantheism):

- we are all divine and have in us a cosmic consciousness
- Betty Galyean: "Once we begin to see that we are all God, that we all have the attributes of God, then I think the whole purpose of human life is to re-own the God-likeness within us; the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, the perfect understanding, the perfect intelligence, and when we do that, we create back to that old, that essential oneness which is consciousness."

### 2.4 We are all connected to one another, and to the universe.

- holism – all dualisms are rejected: god/human, spirit/body, culture/nature

### 2.5 We create reality with our minds. The concept of a real, external world is an illusion.

- There are as many realities as there are people.
- Mind is over matter. The method we seek is mind control, and self-realization, not an external salvation.

### 2.6 We can all be healthy, wealthy and happy through mind control if we only discover the power of our mind to create reality.

## **3. You Will Know Good and Evil:**

### 3.1 Evil and Good are one--two sides of the same coin.

- there is no ontological sin for which we must seek forgiveness.
- all sense of guilt is an illusion based on our ignorance.

### 3.2 The problem is ultimate ignorance, not ultimate sin.

- ignorance is the feeling that I am trapped in the finite limitations of my body and myself.
- if we only know who we really are, we can be perfect and fulfilled.

### 3.3 Salvation is enlightenment.

### 3.4 All religions lead eventually to enlightenment, but some are further along the path than others.

- the lower ones require gods to save you
- in the higher ones you realize you are on your own. You must find enlightenment yourself.

## **4. You Will Not Die:**

### 4.1 We have lived before, and will again—transmigration, Death is not the end, but a step to a higher level of consciousness. We need not fear it.

- 4.2 We have lived many times before (transmigration). We can recall the past through hypnosis, vision, recall or regression. Doing so helps assure us that we will continue to live.
- 4.3 Our lives are a progression towards full enlightenment. Each life is above the previous one.
- 4.4 The world is processing to a new age through the process of cosmic evolution in which global consciousness will be achieved by the information revolution [Chardin's noosphere]. The end of this cosmic evolution is a New Age when everything will be peace and perfect.

### **5. Your Eyes Will be Opened:**

- 5.1 Truth lies not in empirical realities, but inside you. Subjective realities are to be more trusted than external realities.
- 5.2 Enlightenment is not based on knowledge or reason. These, in fact, are often part of the problem because reason keeps us from seeing and experiencing the truth.
- 5.3 We need a new consciousness, an enlightenment, an inner explosion of light and recognition of what is real and who we really are--an "a ha" feeling that comes when we recognize the truth. It comes through the 'inner eye and inner light,' or the 'inner voice,' not through our material eyes and ears. Truth lies in inner insight, not outer activities and perceptions.
- 5.4 When we are enlightened we realize our oneness with everything.
- this 'cosmic consciousness' brings us total inner peace and tranquility.
  - when enough people realize cosmic consciousness, then the society turns towards good, peace and happiness.
- 5.5 We need a guide or guru to reach enlightenment--you cannot achieve it through studies.
- these are ones who have been enlightened, and who want to show us the way.
  - Jesus is one of the many gurus we can follow.
- 5.6 We can choose our own guru, and path to enlightenment.
- 5.7 When we are enlightened, we must help other people to reach it too. In the end we will be come one world spirit.

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## A COMPARISON OF NEW AGE AND CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEWS

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### NEW AGE

### CHRISTIANITY

Ultimate reality is a field

Ultimate reality is a being

Human reality is rooted in experience which is inner and self validating

Human reality is rooted in a real creation, and a real history.

All is one—monism. All dualisms are rejected

God is eternal, the universe is real but eternally dependent on God.

All is God

The universe is eternally distinct from God, and dependent on him.

I am God. therefore I am in control of myself and my reality. I can make things happen through mind over matter. The methods are visualization, command, etc. I am my own creation

God is God, I am creation, therefore I must submit to God and worship him. I must live in relationship to other people and nature, both of which exist apart from me. I am created in the image of God.

Evil is ignorance. I am good but ignorant of my true reality

I am a sinner because of a broken relationship with God, and therefore have broken relationships with other humans and nature.

Salvation is to be enlightened—to see myself as I really am. It is self-discovery.

Salvation is to confess my sin, accept forgiveness, and be reconciled to God and others.

I live many lives, and progress towards enlightenment. This may take many lives.

I live one life, and then face God's judgment. The result is heaven or hell.

Enlightenment is personal, so everyone must choose his/her own way.

There is one way to salvation—Jesus Christ. All must enter through him.

All religions are ways to God, and so are relative to one another.

Only Christ is the truth. Religions are not relative to one another.

To be enlightened, we need a *guru* or a teacher. Jesus is one of many *gurus*.

To be saved we need a savior. Jesus is that Savior who died so that we might live.

Communication with others is to recognize my oneness with them—to vib, touch, feel, and merge with them.

Community is to “feel” the oneness I have with all other persons and things through an inner experience of oneness.

Death is a transition to a higher level of consciousness. It is not to be feared.

Truth is personal, existential, perspectival, relative and subjective.

Our hope lies in the New Age which is dawning.

The future of humanity depends on our willingness to accept our role as the creators of reality. We must bring about global unity and the oneness of all.

Our ministry is to help people achieve their full potential through self-realization. They are all basically O.K.

Communication with others is to relate to them as distinct beings other than myself. This involves listening, speaking and hermeneutics.

Community is to work at relationships and to build a community of free, autonomous beings through love and mutual submission to one another.

Death is the end of existence in this world and entry into eternity.

Truth is universal, eternal and objective

Our hope is in the return of Christ, and his new creation.

God is in charge of human destiny. History moves to its culmination according to His will. god is our hope for the future.

Our ministry is to reconcile people to God, to one another, and to nature. They are sinners in need of forgiveness and restoration of fellowship.

## XIV. NEW AGE PRACTICES

### 1. Examples of New Age Movements:

- health: American Holistic Health Medication Assoc., and Association of Holistic Health.
- political: World Goodwill, Planetary Citizens.
- consciousness-raising: Lifespring, EST, Transcendental Meditation, Silva Mind Control.
- think tanks: Esalen, Naropa Institute, SRI
- religious: Ananda Marga Yoga, Scientology, Church Universal and Triumphant, Rajaneesh, TM.
  - God is ultimately an impersonal energy, force or consciousness.
- PAL program on college campuses on selfhypnosis, clairvoyance, auras, tantric practices.
- Sportsmind. Chris Major.
- NAM music introduced in 1964 by Tony Scott, *Music for Zen Meditation*.

### 2. Key People:

- Ron Hubbard - dianetics and Church of Scientology. 1 million members, 3,000 churches, 130 countries.
- Betty Eadie and near death experiences. *Embracing the Light*.
- Neal Donald Walsh. *Conversations with God - 1, 2, 3*.
- Helen Schuman. *Course in Miracles*. [psychologist]
- Marianne Williamson. *Reflections of Love*.
- James Redfield, *The Celestine Prophecy*.
- Deepak Chopra. *Agless, Body. Timeless Mind. Creating Affluence*.
- Jack Canfield and Mark Hansen. *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.
- Oprah Winfrey. *The Uncommon Wisdom of Oprah Winfrey: A Portrait in Her Own Words*.
- Maureen Murdock. *Spinning Inward*. [education, using guided imagery].

### 3. Holistic Health:

NAM healing programs draw on the 'universal energy' to heal. It is based more on the philosophy of homeopathy than allopathy. For example it draws on Ayurveda that calls for a balance between the three principles of bodily air or *vrata* [subtle energy that governs biological movement], Fire or *pita* [governs digestion, absorption, metabolism, temperature], and Water or *kapha* [lubricates joints, heals wounds, fills space in the body and gives vigor and stability]. It uses touch therapy, rolfing, yoga, visualization, blue color light, kronging and other treatments that align energy fields in the body,

#### 2.1 Health is organic, not mechanical:

- the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We must not lose sight of the patient as a human being.

- 2.2 Health is "wellness, not only the absence of disease.  
 - we need a dynamic and harmonious equilibrium of all elements making up the human being.
- 2.3 We are responsible for our own health.  
 - We can diagnose ourselves.
- 2.4 Natural methods are preferable to drugs and surgery.  
 - acupuncture, biorfeedback, chiropractics, homeopathy, psychic healing, massage, meditation.
- 2.5 Health is evolution and death is the final stage of growth.  
 - death is a passage to a higher level of life.
- 2.6 Energy, not matter, is the key to health.  
 - We must understand energy fields, and feel the flow of healing energy.
- 2.7 Holistic health must be incorporated into the fabric of society through public policy.

### **3. Psychological Health.**

- 3.1 Freud: unconscious is irrational driven by sex/death.  
 Jung: collective unconscious.  
 Skinner: external stimulus drives humans.
- 3.2 Maslow: Saw in people more potential than pathology.  
 He saw a will to self-realization. Highest values are being values: wholeness, perfection, justice, aliveness, beauty and self-sufficiency. These can be realized in 'peak experiences.' In those we become god-like. Humans are essentially good, and have unlimited potential for growth. There is no place for sin.
- 3.3 Eric Fromm: Self-realization, not obedience is the supreme value. The fall was the first act of liberation from coercion. God is the symbol of our own powers which we try to realize in our lives. Religious experience is seeking the oneness in all things.
- 3.4 Human Potential Movement: Carl Rogers, Esalen, EST, Life Spring. Use medication, touch, group dynamics.

3.5 Trans-personal psychology: Uses yoga, meditation, and other Eastern forms to gain trans-personal experiences, and altered states of consciousness.

3.6 Critiques: self-actualization is not the direct goal for the Christian. It is forgiveness and salvation. New Age health is totally subjective. It assumes the inherent goodness of humans, and deifies them.