

# "Smashing States of Mind on Inner Battlefields"

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Hippie, wu-wu, crystal worshipper, new-ager, wing-nut, health nut; for most of my life these damning labels shaped my attitude towards the holistic movement. It wasn't until recently that I became passionate about many things I was so intent on laughing off in the past. My declining mental and physical health brought me to the brink of collapse a few years ago and drove me to develop a deeper understanding of health and wellness.

I'd been treating my whole being like most people treat their cars: it's a vehicle of your will, it's not sacred. You don't know much about it, what it's made of, or how it works, and you only wish you did when it breaks down. Most people take their body and mind 'in' somewhere to "get fixed". When money doesn't allow, you have to do-it-yourself.

I had the good fortune of happening upon a radio program while at work called the Aware Show. The hosts interview cutting edge researchers, authors, healers, masters, and gurus of all types. Of course at first I xenophobically sneered at some of the far-out subject matter. I, like the Tibetan temple destroying communist Chinese, had fallen prey many years ago to the Marxian fear and disdain of all that was other-worldly.

While am quite certain that all organized religions are tools of enslavement, I'm no longer as quick to assume that the totality of the cosmos can be confidently explained by pure scientific rationality. No, I didn't have an epiphany or Vision, but as I laid suffering in fetal position on lunch

breaks or drove endlessly in the delivery van my heart and mind opened up to the content of this show.

The topics ranging from metaphysics to quantum physics, cellular biology to eco-psychology equipped me with powerful modern and ancient tools to restructure my physical and mental state, and thus my destiny. I feel that as would-be warriors, it's essential that we anarcho-punks develop a deeper and healthier connection to ourselves, each other, the Earth, and the cosmos by utilizing all the tools in the 3 million year old tool box of human cultural experience. This means integrating modes of thought, practice, art, science, diet, healing, etc. that we have either overlooked or not taken seriously enough to make as popular in our scenes as d-beats and rare records. Now's the time, while the Information Age lasts, to really sample the world's cultural database and get excited about an experimental existence. For some of us, creative experimentalism may be the last hope. For some, healing and empowerment is a life or death situation in which anti-biotics, Prozac, and mind-numbing partying offer little true medicinal effect. Consciousness I've learned is an ideal path to growth and healing, unconsciousness keeps us stagnant and ill.

Let me introduce the concept of holism. In the strictest sense it's the theory that the parts of any whole cannot exist and cannot be understood except in their relation to the whole. The significance of this ancient axiom's emergence in modern society is great because it subverts the dominant paradigm in shattering ways. It has re-introduced the sacred wisdom that every traditional culture and wild life-form honors daily: interconnectedness is the underlying truth determining the health and balance of all within a unified field of being.

While ego creates the illusion of separateness as we go about our neurotic modern lives like lone rain drops, the old ways kept us rolling through time in the waves of an oceanic state. While the drop is isolated and alone, when re-connected with the ocean it becomes whole again, complete, free, equal, and boundless.

Modern western civilization has been built on the concepts of "reductionism" and what's called the "mechanistic world-view." Sixteenth century English philosopher, Sir Francis Bacon set out to "torture nature for her secrets." Around the same time French scientist, Rene Descartes was an early vivisector who while cutting open live animals described their screams as analogous to the grinding of gears in a machine.

connected world was violently subsumed by logic and the myth of ascending progress from savagery to barbarism to civilization. It was once called "The Great Chain of Being" atop which stood the civilized European Man, at the bottom lay animals and the earth. The feminine was no longer of any grandeur, and all people of color were godless heathens.

God, so it was thought, had crafted this Earthly laboratory to test his male children's will to ascend to his might. He hid his powers of love inside the atom, to be split open with more grace than the lower primates splitting nutshells with rocks.

The Never-ending Story, Fern Gully, The Dark Crystal, and Princess Mononoke all fantasize this process of eco-spiricide telling the same story: there is more to reality than meets the eye, the essence of the universe is chaotic and enchanting, peaceful, loving, and egalitarian. There is more magic and meaning than one god and a story of humanity's Earthen exile can account for.

Whether my curiosity for transcendence applies to the nature of mind, matter, or

The sterile exploitative world-view of these men, and countless others before and after, laid the philosophical foundation of the modern techno-industrial death culture. Empire, while having destroyed and enslaved continents for thousands of years, had never known the vile power that would be unleashed as the Earth was declared dead under a single god. As Empire's masters moved from the church to the laboratory the world would be forever broken apart piece by piece, only to be resurrected into the searing, cutting, and caging technologies of dominion.

As spirits, goddesses, and shaman were killed with the assimilation and enslavement of autonomous tribes worldwide, we've lost much of the magic, mysticism, and healing arts and sciences of the ancestors. The circular interco

spirit, I'm now open to explore and use my own scientific methods to distill fact from fiction. I feel that it would benefit all victims of spiritual disembodiment to seek truth in the spirit of total rejection of the Western monotheistic monopoly of thought, experience, and imagination.

I used to be totally cynical about spirit, oneness, interconnected consciousness, the continuum between mind and matter, Gaian intelligence, etc.; though I think I've had it backwards all along. The natural backlash against Christian dogma is to throw the baby out with the holy water. Our gut reaction to the trauma of perverse spiritual abuse is to completely cast any form or conception of it out of our lives for good. But let us not forget, it was our peaceful tribal ancestors' pagan myths and spirits who were stolen and transmogrified under the blade and the flame. All throughout the world the sacred became the scarred. The stories that enlightened and empowered were re-written in blood and ash. Old characters were corrupted in new stories that made slavery on Earth seem bearable with the slight hope of eternal afterlife. Of course how good a

slave you are determines where that eternity will be endured.

In my experience in anarchist and punk circles, we're highly intellectually developed, but we leave much to be desired in less rational realms. Our backlash against the unknown has done the work of the rulers for them. The witch trials have changed venues to our own minds. Our own denial of transpersonal energy and intelligence has locked us in the cold, hard, meaningless, nihilistic prison of reality. What fun is that? If for no other reason than to just want to believe that a more playful and infinite universe awaits behind our eyes, why not learn about and practice a few things.

Whether you eat mushrooms, meditate, stretch, fast, vision quest, dance, trance, drum, ohm, mosh, head-bang, whatever, try taking Tyler Durden's advice and "just let go" once in a while. No one can tell me that raising the claw during a wicked black metal riff doesn't channel powers of inter-dimensional sorcery. Simple occasional awareness of the fact that we only perceive a billionth of reality with our untrained 5 senses might just be all it takes for doors to swing open. Perhaps they'll lead to "super-scientific" as opposed to "super-natural" pathways of healing, insight, power, strength, wisdom, grace, love and peace.

Life is a trip, life itself is psychedelic, drugs are optional. Altered states can be more real than reality and some would argue and prove that higher plains of empowerment can be reached through "the closed eye experience." Consider Shaolin monks walking on coals, breaking boards, and bending bars.

I used to be into all this stuff when I was kid. I was a martial arts freak with an associated affinity for Buddhism. No one could have told me that breaking stuff with invisible life-force energy wasn't the coolest idea in the world (until I got into punk and puberty from whence coolness took on a

whole new character). But seriously, stopping bleeding though focused breathing! And what about Mr. Miyagi?! The scene took away my self-discipline, the "porcelain god" replaced the punching-bag, and my once agile and flexible body and mind began to atrophy in a toxic blood stream.

Unfortunately the followers of Christ and the vices of punk aren't the only enemies of our holistic liberation. I think of Garth Algar mocking Wayne, "You'll never afford it, LIVE IN THE NOW." And the SNL caricature Stuart Smalley's self-affirmation talk, "I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and dog-gonnit, people like me." More recent and less cynical is the "Dharma and Greg" show. These light pop-culture jabs at holism shape our attitudes towards it. And our closer-to-home counter-cultural fore-bearers aren't much less ridiculous.

The laughable lack of strategic resistance on the part of the "Dead Head" movement has justifiably made us skeptical towards the offerings of their neo-tribe. My trusted second hand knowledge tells me that at its best at the Rainbow Gathering and at its worst at Dead shows, the hippie culture has cultivated some invaluable memes. It has spawned an archaic revival of communalism, free love, love of nature, and (sometimes respectable) use of sacred transpersonal intoxicants among other things. But gathering intelligence from beyond the tie-died curtain is more difficult than simply bridging the generation gap. There's often a wall of elitism and condescension that we stand behind, unknowingly cutting ourselves off from many streams of thought, bodies of knowledge, and fields of research. Some such endeavors when found beyond the VW and school bus contingents are actually not flaky at all and worthy of serious attention on our part. Noted contributors Judy and Stu Albert, Timothy Leary, and Terence McKenna exemplify both rock-solid and ethereal anarchisms that are a joy to rediscover.

I could take this in a million directions but I hope I've established in this scroll of zealotry the urgent need for us to re-think and re-feel our orientation to reality. One of my most highly respected friends and fellow experimentalists said to me once during the height of my clinical rationalism, "You know, the system has the monopoly of power over the physical plain, so doesn't that mean the only way we can destroy it is to master what lies beyond?"

Somewhere between Yoda and Yoga I think we may find some astonishing wellsprings of power and peace that should be precious to those who believe in the spirit of total resistance.

The aptly titled eco-feminist anthology "Re-weaving the world" illustrates the concept of holism as a call to action. We must re-weave the world faster than it is being violently unraveled. To do this we must harvest fibers that lie beyond our knowledge and sometimes perception. The clarity, strength, and resolve that such a project will entail will come from holistic approaches to our health, our diet, our thought-scape, our land-base, our communities, and all our relations.

As eco and health conscious anarcho-punks we stock our energy efficient freezers with vegan Tofutti Cuties from the local co-op or corp-op. We love mock meat brands, Braggs aminos, Dr. Bronners soap, and many other now mainstream fruits of the commercialized holistic movement. But what about the fruits of holism that manifest more as practices than products?

The sophistication of holistic lifeways is lost on most anarcho-punks. When was the last time you saw a Myspace bulletin about chakra balancing or vermiculture? Thanks to some of my heroes such as Mike Antipathy, Sasha Scatter, Jeremy Clark, Oi Polloi, Ayahuasca, and Submission Hold, not all is lost for our subculture. But much more awaits to be gained.

I'd like to continue this column as a digest of my inquiries into these colorful inner and outer realms of thought and practice. My hope is to establish a trend of interest in and integration of a vast array of beneficial holistic memes.

Break on through!

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