



Avatar Adi Da

# NORTHWEST ADIDAM ADVOCATE

February - March 2006

## ***The One for Whom All Beings Have Been Praying*** ***A story of finding Avatar Adi Da by Tony Lewis***

*Tony Lewis is a businessman and professional drummer who lives in Los Angeles. For many years, Tony has toured with the singer Smokey Robinson. This is the story of Tony's search for God and his discovery of Avatar Adi Da.*

TONY: I grew up in a loving, black middle-class family in Los Angeles. We attended a Pentecostal church and church life was central to our lives. The Pentecostal church is very vital, expressive, and ecstatic; and the congregation is encouraged feel into the energies of life that are beyond those that most people are comfortable feeling. And, so, the Pentecostal church is characterized by what are called "kriyas" in some other traditions—spontaneous movements, "shouting" (ecstatic dancing), and speaking in tongues.

In the midst of all this, as a boy and then a teenager, I was trying to understand what religion is all about—by trying to participate in it fully. I wanted to prove its authenticity to myself, and I wanted to understand religion clearly and experience God truly!

During church services, the preacher would often make an "altar call"—or invite the members of the congregation to either be baptized with water or to "tarry for the holy ghost", which is to chant continuously until the individual begins to speak in tongues—proof that the holy ghost has descended. Many of my family and friends had said that they had received this holy ghost or holy spirit; and so for years after I was baptized at the age of nine, I would go down to the altar and engage the tarrying process, hoping to receive the holy ghost and so prove its existence to myself. I was not willing to "fake it" by babbling or "shouting".

Late one night when I was fourteen, I was praying to God to let me experience this holy ghost, if it was real. I remember telling God that I wanted to have it, even if I had to die right after I got it. In other words, I was willing to give up everything for a genuine experience of the holy

spirit. I got out of bed and got on my knees, and, after a short period of tarrying, I started speaking in tongues and feeling a strong Presence in and around me. I had finally gotten it—and it was definitely real. But to my dismay, I found that it was not enough.

Nothing really changed after this experience. It felt good to have it. The experience of this new and Spiritual dimension of life did give me some evidence that there is something greater or God-ward, but my heart needed the way to final freedom. So, my search continued.

A few years later, while I was still in high school, I discovered "Transcendental Meditation" as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. I took the initiation and began to enjoy the calm and relaxation generated by the meditation practice. I was fascinated by the possibility of attaining the higher states of awareness they described, such as God-Consciousness or Cosmic Consciousness.

At twenty-two, I married, soon fathered two children, and began my Spiritual search in even greater earnest, all the while supporting my family with my music. One day, I was in the racquetball court at the health club. I looked at the box of white walls and ceiling that surrounded me, and in that instant that "box" was profoundly felt by me as the reality of my entire existence. I saw and felt that I was caged—trapped in a life of suffering and futility. I was overcome by fear and despair, and I understood and felt my destiny as death. For a period of time after that, I was acutely aware of the suffering of others and of my own inevitable suffering and death.

I began to study and meditate for many hours each day. First, I read metaphysics. I studied Emmet Fox, Ernest Holmes, Joseph Murphy, and Thomas Toward, and learned about the relationship between mind, or thinking, and experience. Next, I found authors such as Alan Watts, who were more interested in the connection to God beyond the

*See our winter calendar of events inside.*

mechanics of the mind-world connection, and eventually I began to read the works of great Indian saints and learned about the Guru-devotee relationship, the transmission of Spiritual experience, and devotion to the Guru. I read Yogananda, Ramakrishna, and Vivekananda. It was apparent to me that these were extraordinary beings who were on to something very great. I took courses from Self-Realization Fellowship and later approached a Swami in San Diego, hoping to become his devotee—but he told me to come back to him in a year. Before that year was up, I happened upon an Adidam Bookstore in Los Angeles and purchased a book by Avatar Adi Da.

After reading only a few sentences of the book, I knew that He embodied what He was talking about. He wasn't simply talking about a tradition. He wasn't speculating about anything. He spoke with the Wisdom and Spiritual Authority of One Who has "Arrived". He was obviously an Enlightened or Liberated Being. I read everything I could find that Avatar Adi Da had ever written. I was now twenty-seven years old, and I knew I had finally found my Guru.

The search was finally over. I knew that, at last, I now had the real starting place and the way to God.

In His writings Adi Da Samraj clearly and simply explained what beings are doing to shut off God, or the Divine Reality, and what must be done in order to heal this human fault.

I started feeling a flow of bliss in my body. I could feel that these frequent experiences were due to my exposure to Avatar Adi Da. There was a characteristic sensation of my head being larger, as if my head extended out further than my skull. When I felt the blisses, I would try to feel them more—and then they would recede to a place just beyond my reach because of my grasping for them!

One day in the late '80s, while touring, I was sitting in my hotel room feeling the pain and fear and emptiness of the ego to the max. I was listening to a tape of my Guru. One of His points was that His devotees were only talking, thinking, and imagining God—as if God were not already perfectly Present and Alive. I fell into doubt. If the people Avatar Adi Da was talking to, the people he was intimately working with, were not Realizing God, how could I, who had not yet even seen Avatar Adi Da, expect to Realize? I thought about the other guys in the band—downstairs eating, drinking, and enjoying each other's company, while I sat alone in my room, trying to practice what I thought was Spiritual life, and feeling only isolated, fearful, and contracted.

Frustrated and also depressed and disturbed—and looking for an excuse to explore more self-indulgent options—I decided then and there to "loosen up" and take a break from this earnest, serious, and even uptight life I had been living and join the "fun". But after a few years of this, I realized what I had known in my heart all along:

that I had already found the purpose of life. I had already understood Avatar Adi Da's message that life is to be used for the purpose of Realizing true and permanent Happiness and not wasted in the search for temporary consolations.

I had already traveled the world and had already seen and experienced more of life as a teenager than most people do in a lifetime. I had gone on my first world tour with Michael Jackson when I was nineteen, and I knew what the world had to offer me. I knew I had to embrace for real the precious Gift that had been Revealed to me.

Although I had never stopped studying Avatar Adi Da's Word, I began to much more seriously apply myself to my approach to Him. In 1998 I took a formal vow as His devotee.

One day—again, in a hotel room—I began to look at the photograph of Beloved Adi Da I always travel with. His Face began to change. At first, I saw Him as He had looked at various stages of His Lifetime.

Then, His Face Appeared as the face of everyone who has ever been. His Face was "flashing" everybody's face. I began to weep and cry aloud with every imaginable emotion. I knew that I was looking at the great Divine Lord God Himself. I was being given the gift of seeing and recognizing the Form of the Divine Lord as every being on this planet and the countless other beings in all worlds. It was an overwhelming and, truly, indescribable experience.

Then, at last, I had my first sighting ("darshan") of my Beloved Guru in His human Form. I left Los Angeles on the last day of October, 1998, for the Mountain Of Attention Sanctuary in northern California. The next day, I was invited to sit in a large meditation hall, where we chanted songs of devotion in preparation for Avatar Adi Da's arrival. When He entered the room, I raised my hands and beheld my Guru for the first time in person. Moving gracefully, He took His seat, then Gazed into the eyes of each of His devotees. I gazed back at Him, noticing the Descent of His Presence through my head. I was in awe.

A day or two later, I played with a trio of jazz musicians as part of an offering of sacred music for Avatar Adi Da. It was the most exquisite presentation of devotion through music that I have ever experienced. Even during my brief solo I felt no self-consciousness. It was obvious that Avatar Adi Da already knew me completely, so there was nothing to prove. I allowed the free flow of feeling to be expressed through the music and I could feel that whatever was expressed was fully and freely received and accepted by Avatar Adi Da.

All my life I had been looking for this Being. Avatar Adi Da is the One for Whom I had longed all my life and the One for Whom beings have always prayed. I know Him as the Source of Life and Happiness and Joy that I had intuited at the most primal level of my being as a child.

## Late January, February & March Events

### Saturday, January 28

#### *Seminar: Becoming Fully Human – Preparing for Real Spiritual Life*

1:00 – 5:00 pm

\$35 at the door, \$30 with pre-registration

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

Join us for a provocative seminar with Richard Silk, a long time devotee of Adi Da Samraj. This seminar will explore questions about what it means to be prepared for a spiritual life, the critical unseen dynamics that inhibit human growth and how to move beyond these limits, and the process that Avatar Adi Da offers to understand and mature in life.

### Wednesday, February 8

#### *Free Invitational Evening: Awaken to Brightness Explore the True World-Religion of Adidam*

7:30 – 9:00 pm

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

A local devotee will speak about the Life and Teaching of Avatar Adi Da. The evening includes recent video footage of Adi Da.

### Friday through Sunday, February 17 to 19

#### *Spiritual Awakening and the Master-Disciple Relationship in a Time of Global Crisis:*

#### *Special Weekend Retreat on Lopez Island*

Learn more about The Way of the Heart as Taught by Adi Da Samraj. Retreat presenter is longtime devotee Anthony Costabile.

- Discover how true Spiritual life begins with the heart's desire for that which is greater than all ordinary human possibilities.
- Explore the most intelligent, "radical" and complete Revelation of Divine Truth ever given to humankind.
- Hear about the secret advantage of the Guru-devotee relationship.
- Watch recent discourses and video footage of Adi Da Samraj.

\$195 (includes food and lodging) Space is limited. For information or registration, call 206.527.2751 or visit [www.adidam.org](http://www.adidam.org).

*Please let us know if you would prefer to be notified about upcoming events via e-mail (and give us your e-mail address) or if you would like to be removed from our distribution list.*

### Friday, February 24

#### *FREE Film Series – Transcend the Self-Knot of Fear*

7:30 – 9:30 pm

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

In this recent discourse, Avatar Adi Da Explains that the root of fear is the same as the root of all suffering: the "self-contraction". Rather than avoiding the fear inherent in the body, Adi Da Calls us to understand and transcend the self-knot in the Divine Condition.

### Wednesday, March 8

#### *FREE Invitational Evening: Awaken to Brightness Explore the True World-Religion of Adidam*

7:30 – 9:00 pm

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

A local devotee will speak about the Life and Teaching of Avatar Adi Da. The evening includes recent video footage of Adi Da.

### Friday, March 17

#### *FREE Film Series – The Divine Is Not the Cause*

7:30 – 9:30 pm

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

In His recent discourse, Adi Da Speaks of the self-confinement of human beings (in contrast to non-humans as natural contemplatives), the effort to trace any experience to its Source, and the Divine Reality as the True Condition of all things (not the "cause of any thing").

#### *Introductory Class based on Avatar Adi Da's Biography*

7:30 - 9:00 pm \$150 for 6 weeks or \$25 per class (includes study materials)

Adidam Spiritual Center & Bookstore

This in-depth examination of Adi Da's Life is based on the authorized biography, *Adi Da—The Promised God-Man Is Here*, by Carolyn Lee, PhD. Call the bookstore for more information.

### Bookstore Hours

TWTH 6 – 8 pm

F 12 – 8 pm

Sat 10 am – 8 pm

Sun 12 – 5 pm

***Come visit us!***

**Adidam**

5600 11th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98105

*The heart has a question,  
The heart must be Satisfied.  
Without that Satisfaction—Which is necessarily Spiritual in Nature—there is no Real Happiness.*

*The contraction of the heart is what you are suffering.  
It is the ego.  
The egoic life is search—founded upon (and initiated by) the self-contraction of the total body-mind.  
The egoic life is a self-caused search to be relieved of the distress of self-reduced, self-diminished, even utterly  
self-destroyed Love-Bliss.  
Love-Bliss, gone, non-existent, unknown—just this pumping, agitated, psycho-physical thing.*

*The ego “I” does not know What It Is That Is Happening.  
You are just “hanging out” for a while, until “it” drops dead.  
It is not good enough.  
Therefore, I Advise you to begin to be profoundly religious and not waste any time about it.*

*You must Realize the Spiritual Condition of Existence Itself....  
You cannot be sane if you think there is only flesh, only materiality, only grossness.  
Such thinking is not fully “natural”, not enough  
There is “Something” you are not accounting for.  
Be open to “Whatever” That Is.  
You must look into this.*

—Avatar Adi Da, from *Hridaya Rosary*