

aMonday Night Class

Summertown, Tennessee, USA

From Stephen Gaskin,

Monday Night Class, Chapter 1 (Truth)

(Family Dog, 1969),

annotated by Stephen Gaskin in 1990

I want to talk a little about the way we're going to be. We can all be really stoned in here together. There are over a thousand of us, so there's a point of diminishing returns about how quiet you can make a whole lot of people be before it just starts making more tension. There's going to be a lot of things happening here this evening, because we brought this many heads together. Usually it takes, they say in tantric yoga, about twenty minutes for people's fields to completely merge. Like a man and a woman are making love, it takes about twenty minutes for their fields to really merge together into one. And it'll be that way here with us. We'll get stoneder and stoneder as we sit. The longer we sit here, the more our electrical energy will settle. Like [I didn't take this "like" out because it was used in the true hippy sense of "Consider this analogy"] if you stirred up the water a taste with all this many people coming in and moving around and all gathering here and bringing whatever we've all brought with us, and it takes a moment to settle. There's no telling what sort of thing we'll be into, because we're here and we're who we are

and this is what's happening with us here and now, and we'll probably fly around a little bit into one sort of emotional state or another. We should all notice that being here is like being stoned, and that the karma's very fast and any little idea you take off on will sort of go a little farther maybe than you think it will. When you think of questions and things, run them through your head and think, is this the kind of thing I would say if I was really stoned?<P>

If everybody sort of runs it through that sort system we'll all be able to maintain a higher thing. We can get high and have the kids and we can get high and have dogs around, and we can get high and have people coming in late, and that's cool. We can cover all that because this is such a massive vibration here, so heavy that it can sustain a lot of that kind of thing. We can even converse. As we get all more together and know each other more and get looser and easier and more relaxed and more stoned, this will become more and more conversational . So, that's the sort of thing that you're into now if this is your first time. <P>

I guess the first thing I want to get into is to tell you what happened when I was high Saturday night. I'd got into one of those low-energy places where I just had no energy. I tried to stand up but didn't have enough juice to do it and had to lay back down and get smarter. After a while I got a little smarter, and I started thinking about what Mahayana means. There's a heavy difference in Buddhism between Hinayana and Mahayana. Hina is small, in Sanscrit, and yana is boat, and maha is great and yana is boat, so it's the small boat and the great boat. <P>

Hinayana is that school that says, <P>

"It is so important for everyone for anyone to get enlightened that you should drop everything, never mind anybody else, just get Enlightened."<P>

Mahayana is the school that says, <P>

"There is no final and perfect Enlightenment for anyone until there is for everyone." Mahayana is the greater vehicle that includes everybody. That's what's so neat about it. It's the one that has room for everybody on it. You can kind of tell where that sort of idea's at if you've ever been in a group of people where everybody was together and then something happened that split them, and there was that cold feeling because somebody was outside of the energy circle. Then you do that thing that you have to do to get everybody included. That's the place where a lot of people realize that it's got to include everybody, because if it doesn't include everybody, you just can't get very high on it. <P>

That's why I decided that of the Buddhism strain, Mahayana Buddhism is the kind I like most. It's also tied together with some other things, too. Aldous Huxley referred to Zen Buddhism as a tantric Mahayana cult. There's an interesting idea, because in Hinayana, pretty much the major way to get yourself off is an

individual exercise of mind and body, but in tantric you get you and your old lady can off together, and it's already an inclusive thing, because it's got two people in the bubble for openers. I think you blow better bubbles on a Mahayana first cause than you do on Hinayana. When you start a bubble, it gets bigger and bigger and bigger, and if it includes everybody it can keep growing indefinitely. If it doesn't include everybody, it gets to a point where somebody says, I'm not in this bubble, man, and then Pop! There it goes. You always have to be sure that everybody's in them. Anyhow, this is the thought process I went through finding my way out of this sort of low energy place I found myself in. And I got high on it.<P>

Now I want to get into the idea of what is it about truth that makes truth important. There's something about truth that's really special. Let's think about what truth is and what it is that we're doing here and what it is about being a human. Like, one of the things about a human is that a human is the only animal that has a choice to make about truth. <P>

A cat doesn't lie to you. If cats like your vibes, they crawl right up on you. If they don't like your vibes, they're not too hot for you. I think God is trying to communicate with him/her/itsself, and there is, on this here planet, about three and a half billion transceivers [nearly five billion now] walking around, babbling to each other constantly, trying to carry the circuit load for the incredible conversation of God talking to God's-self. <P>

There's something that's trying to be said, too, and so we have to talk and we have to listen when we talk, as well as when we listen, in order to discover what it is that's being said around here. I think actually that all of us here on the planet are all talking about the same thing all the time, and the conversation ranges from Holy and peaceful to hellish and violent.<P>

We're all having that conversation, and sometimes when you're real high, if you just shut up and listen, you'll hear all of your thoughts worked out between the people around you who are talking. How many people have felt that experience? [A lot of hands raised] Yeah, isn't that far out?<P>

You hear all the people around you just talking it out, and all you have to do is just sit there, and listen, and they'll talk it out and sort it out for you, and you don't have to say a thing. Just pay attention and it happens for you. So that's kind of what God is doing.<P>

Well, we've got a couple of things going. Part of the thing with the conversation is that there's a little noise going here on the planet, too. There's a rather heavy noise-to-signal ration going on, because you have a lot of people who are trying to say the truth, and then you have a lot of people who think that talking doesn't matter.<P>

That's a funny idea that talking doesn't matter. Matter is that hard stuff like the floor there. Well, things that you say do matter, starting at the most basic possible level. That's a nice thing that the General Semanticists got into. They called it the semantic reaction, and it says that when you speak to someone, you can speak words to them that won't change them much, or you can speak words to them that will change them a great deal. It has to do with things like the amount of energy and the amount of information that are in the words. <P>

Purely conceptual questions can decide energy questions at the level of your brain. When somebody says something to you, you get some noises in your ear that are push-pull mechanical vibrations happening in the air, and they come up and rattle your eardrum a little bit, and it rattles some bones, and those bones rattle this other thing that's shaped like a snail and it has little filaments on it in graduated degrees of length, like a harp, that are little bitty cilia, little hairs like on little tiny microorganisms, and they vibrate in tune with about sixteen cycles a second to about twenty thousand cycles a second. <P>

That little harp is a very magical thing, because it transmutes that energy. and changes it from mechanical energy into electrical energy. And that electrical energy then goes to your brain. Understand that nothing's been translated yet. This is still noise happening, pure noise. Then it goes to your brain as electrical signal, coded. It has to be sort-systemed by a piece of your brain that takes that noise and says, This here word that goes n-o-w goes up against all of the words

that have ever been spoken of n-o-w. I make that noise and see how many times have I heard that. Then I see what happened when that was said and go back through that memory sort-system of that word, and know what it means. All of those connections that are going on in that sort-system are electrical. Then when we find out what the word means. If the word happens to have been something with a heavy emotional load to you, like, for instance, <P>

"You're busted", Wham, a little electrical discharge happens in your brain, sends another little electrical discharge down into your body, and then your stomach starts getting tight, and your muscles start getting tight, and you say, <P>

"Oh my God, I'm busted. What's going to happen now? What will my mother say. What'll my lawyer say, what'll my agent say? What'll my dealer say?" And you run through this whole tremendous bunch of electrical energy discharging itself and changing around in your head that has to do with the content of the thing that was said to you. It's a semantic reaction, and the word actually changes material things in your head. And, the way you have to balance your head to accept the word changes you.<P>

There are very funny things that can happen about words. Words are very, very heavy magic. Everything you say is true, on some level. You only can think you can lie, but you can't really. If you tell a lie on the material plane, your astral will

cop on you. You see? If there's anybody paying attention, you can't lie. You can only lie to people who don't feel vibes. But anybody who feels vibes -- when someone's telling a lie, it makes a certain vibration, and it says, "lie."

<P>

Here's an interesting thing about a lie. It has a strange energy relationship about it, because a lie is a piece of noise you make that doesn't really have anything connected to it. I once saw, when I was stoned and somebody was lying to me, the inside of his mouth was all black because there was no energy there. It was a low-energy place. A lot of what the colors of the auras are about is how much energy is there. Take the idea of somebody who's in a bad place having a black and red aura. To me the black part is just stone energy loss, absolute input, total ego and the red part is the little bit they're coming out that doppler-shifts a taste and gives them a little bit of red. That's about all you can get out of them is a little dull red glow, like a soldering iron that's going down.

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So, a lie is a funny thing. It's a no-energy transfer situation; nothing is transferred between the people. A lie then is just something that isn't. You don't put an emotional thing on a lie. You just look at it and see what it does.

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Truth is accurate information and a lie is inaccurate information. Considering what kind of thing is the nature of truth, no wonder we have such tremendous respect for truth. A liar's not a good thing to call somebody. One of the names

they call Satan is the Father of Lies. That's a heavy name. How come we care so much about that? I think one of the reasons we respect it is because of the high noise-to-signal ratio that we have here on the planet. <P>

Most of our conversation that goes on is about things that don't exist, because they're in the past or they're in the future. A lot of our conversation doesn't have to do with here and now. Truth is accurate information about the here and now in the here and now. I think that truth is the same as God. I think that love is also the same as God. Somebody said to me that it was like a pyramid that went up, and it only had one point at the top, and that point was God, and the sides are love and truth and beauty. True beauty is a heavy one, like love. True beauty doesn't have anything to do with what you look like. You just sit there and radiate it and be beautiful. It doesn't even matter what you're shaped like, not a speck. It's not on that sort-system. It's on another one. That's why beauty is so heavy in there. The nice thing about truth is that truth can be aspired to, that truth is the one that you can say, <P>

"Oh, I can do something about that one." It's kind of hard sometimes to find a handle for ourselves, to get ourselves high. I find that truth really works good. I find that if I'm sitting around somewhere and the energy is not as high as I like it to be that sometimes somebody's not telling the truth.<P>

The Catholic church does a thing about sins of omission and sins of commission. It's an interesting idea that there are things you can do that are wrong and there are things that you don't do that are wrong, too. <P>

Truth's like that. If you're sitting around with a group of people, and they're not copping to something....like maybe a couple of them really have something heavy against each other, and they're not going to say anything about it. They'll say, <P>

"Well, this isn't the time to do that." So they sit there and they look at each other and they know what they think, and they rev that together, and the other people in the room wonder how come the vibes are so weird. You have to look around and find out what it is. Well, that's truth. That's a truth trip, too, because you have to say it. Sometimes you can just find something in the environment that'll help you out. Once I saw a trip where there was a young man living with a young lady, and she was a high energy girl and put out a lot of juice all the time. He was the other way. He had so many holes in his bucket that it was nearly empty but he could stay on pretty good hanging on to her, until he started running her down. After a while he started running down her battery from leeching off her juice all the time. She started getting where she wasn't so pretty as she used to be from getting too much juice run off of her. <P>

I was trying to hip them to it, and it was that question, because they both said they were sensitive, and they both said they knew what was going on, and he said it wasn't happening and she said it was. There it was, and we were trying to figure it out. <P>

About that time, the cat, which had been out on the floor, crawled up and lay down with those two people who were sitting there in such a way that the cat had its hindquarters draped across her lap and its forequarters draped across his lap, and there was this flesh conduit between them, there. There was so much energy flow between those that the cat went and lay down in the arc of it, because it felt so good. I could point to that and say, <P>

"See what the cat says, man, see what the cat says?"<P>

You can find something in the environment many times that will illustrate your point. One time there was a lady at my house who sat on the couch with her arm on the back and grabbed the bottom of a painting, and she was waving this five-foot mandala in extreme psychedelic colors back and forth a couple of inches. Everyone in the room was distracted. To her, that was subtle. Apparently, nobody she knew was sensitive enough to notice anything like that, because she had been getting away with that for years. She was there really copping the attention, waving a five foot giant flag in the middle of the room. There was so much difference between where her subtle plane was and where the ordinary

one we had going in the room was that I had enough elbow room that I could collect everyone's attention in the room without her noticing and point at that thing until everybody saw it. <P>

Then when everybody saw it, I hipped her to it. It was heavy for a minute, because it was a subconscious act. She didn't consciously know she was doing that. She just had a piece of her head on automatic pilot to forage for energy and that was what it had found on this occasion to get a little. It blew her mind to hear about it. She didn't say much the rest of the day. She just looked thoughtful. <P>

Q The question is, How do you get planetary? <P>

All right, is that meaningful? How many people is that meaningful to? How do you become planetary? What I mean by "How do you become planetary?" is how do you reach the point where you know that you're responsible sometimes for the welfare of mankind, and that's heavy enough for you that it makes you straighten up all the time. I think that's what the real flash is. By planetary status, I mean feeling your responsibility for this chunk of it here. I don't know how many other star systems with inhabited worlds there are. I don't put any limits on it, because the universe is infinite in dimensions and directions forever. You can't put any limits on that, but planetary means that you'll buy in at the level of the vow of the Bodhisattva which is responsibility for this planet. <P>

A lot of people have a planetary vision one time, and they say, Hot dog, I've been planetary once. Better get somebody to go get the hammer and nails. [This was intended as a jest about all the acid people who thought they were Christ or Buddha. Maybe it was in questionable taste but I still think it's funny.] But that isn't where it's at at all. It's time to settle down and get serious. When we're at that place where we know that we are plugged into the universe, then it is that time and that place to say, <P>

"Now is the time to ask for the sake of humankind. When you ask for the sake of humankind, then we know what to ask. We know what the material plane has and what the world has. We know it's one person, one karma, we're all born and we all die. We know we have a few wars going around on this planet, and there is no such thing as a just war.<P>

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Q: Trying to live truth is really a gas. It's a stoner. That is to say that if you want to live truth, you can say, "Okay then I'm going to be a movie camera."
<P>

You're one of the cameras for the akashic record. You're recording the history of mankind here on this planet, as it's seen through your eyes. You're also the narrator for that film you're filming. If you let things happen that aren't true, if

somebody says something around you that's a lie and you know it is and you don't say anything about it, then it's your lie, too. You just bought it, and that lie belongs to you, too. Once you buy a lie, it's in your subconscious, and you're stuck with it until you work it out, until you do something about it. The only thing you can do to keep from buying that lie is to say, <P>

"Well, I don't think that's the way that is, and for my opinion in this meeting that's being filmed through these eyes I want to have it go on the record that I don't think that's the case." Or whatever words you need to use. They don't have to be something like, <P>

"You're a liar," because that will just get you punched in the mouth. But you can straighten the record, and it's really incumbent on all of us to keep the record straight. Every time you let a lie go down in your presence, your truth has been diminished.<P>

Many people's truth starts or stops at the point of the social difficulty of truth, which you can have sometimes. Telling the truth is not easy. It's easier than the alternative, but it's not easy. <P>

Sometimes I call it the psychedelic choke-chain. That's like you have this little leash around your neck with a choke chain on it, like they put on big dogs? And

you're cool. But if you start telling a lie, you're running out against the end of the leash, and when it catches up with you, it says, <P>

"Oh, that sounds awful, man. "And it brings you up short, and then you get used to it, and you learn how long the chain is, and you don't hit the end of it quite so hard. It's really a truth machine, as far as that goes, because it really sounds funny to hear yourself tell a lie when you're listening.<P>

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Q: The question is why is it necessary that you speak of it when you see it? Why can't you just notice the truth and not cop to it and go ahead? <P>

Well, the thing is that a lie is communication breakdown. Whenever any of us get together, no matter whether it's only two of us or whether it's a whole gang, there is a quorum, a minyan. There is a meeting happening here on the island among the monkeys. A meeting is only capable of as much truth as is copped to.[In this context, "Copped to" means "to admit the existence of."] That's why you have to cop to it. <P>

I don't know too many people who do much small talk because I don't do much myself. You can break down the idea of truth and lie and put it on a long continuum so you can have percentages. You can see some people who don't

exactly lie, but they get down into a forty-ninth percentile sometimes, and they seldom get much above fifty-one and just hang around where some of it's true and some of it ain't, and some of it doesn't matter, because they're just shooting the shit for a while. <P>

It's a hard thing to say, but I'm not a social creature, and I don't have any manners, because I find that manners hide vibes too much and that social things hide vibes too much. [I have to say that when I talk with our neighbors, I have manners. I also do small talk so I can talk with people without having to get heavy all the time. You need to be able to speak socially to smooth the ways of the world. Give your parents and friends a break sometimes.] That's that hard thing about how you have to come up and do it, how you have to come up and say it to somebody, because that's how much truth is going to be in the meeting.<P>

<P>

Q: The question is, do I think every person is capable of knowing the truth. <P>

Yes. I do think that every person is capable of knowing the truth.<P>

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Q: Can people think they know the truth and speak lies, feel they know the truth and speak lies? I'll tell you, you can listen to people talk and you can hear it ring when it rings. It goes r-i-n-g-g-g..or it says t-r-u-u-t-h...you can tell what way really good. Truth is so heavy that you don't even need to say it loud very much.<P>

Q: <P>

No, there's no difference between the truth and the facts of the matter. That's exactly the point. There is no difference between the truth and the facts of the matter.<P>

Q:<P>

That's opinion. The facts of the matter as you know them are technically called opinion. Here's the reason why. We're now getting down to the nitty-gritty of the thing. Here's how truth is so heavy. Questions like that, what are the facts of the matter, who knows the facts of the matter, how can anybody say...That's why you have a bunch of monkeys sit around and they talk about it, man, they talk about it and pass the word around, what they really see. That's the time when truth is really important. That's when truth is really heavy, because when somebody's trying to find out what's happening they really want to know the truth. Sometimes I ask the question, is such and such in the car yet? And somebody says, No, it

might be there in a little while. Then I say, Wait a minute, I'm not into a value judgment about why it isn't there if it isn't. I'm not going to pound a back about it being there if it is. All I want is the information. Is it or not? Because I need the information for my computer. My computer doesn't care about the extenuating circumstances. It just wants the piece of information.<P>

So when you're sitting around trying to find out what is the truth, then that's the time that everybody should try real hard for the truth. Sometimes the truth might be back up in your head hidden behind a few layers of lie, and you might have to excavate to find it. But you can tell when you find it. You can really tell when you find it, because everything turns golden and light, and it gets pretty, and everybody gets beautiful, and there is the smell of nice incense. That's what truth is like when you experience it. <P>

The way truth is like when you be it is that you make every action the truth. Every action is a truth. When we were all saying O-O-O-M-M-M, we were speaking truth. That was really good. It was a non-content communication, and it said, I'm here, I hear you, I'm here, I hear you, I'm here, I hear you...we're here. we're here. we're here. Very simple. A communication doesn't have to be complicated to be heavy. The communication that can mean that a person has achieved satori can be no more than a wink of the eye. That sort of thing happens with the Japanese. They're so austere that sometimes a cat can get on and know he's on, and betray it by nothing but a wink, and never cop. Just bang, I'm there, and then

go ahead and be there, hang on it and be there. A cartoon I saw once showed a couple of old Zen masters sitting somewhere, and one of them said, "Sheer existence itself is such a gas I can hardly stand it."

Q:

You can't come on to people very much about telling them what their astral looks like, because I find that anyone who is pressed on a truth question tends to quit copping to the existence of the astral plane. They just say, I don't believe in all that. It's unprofitable to believe in it if you're a liar; it's hard on you. But you have to like to do it. You have to pay closer attention and find where...if somebody's messing around in the thought, astral plane, telepathic, all that kind of jazz plane. Some people do subtle-plane cruelty to each other, which is a trip that people do on that level sometimes. If it's happening, somewhere it will manifest on the material plane. So you watch very closely, and sooner or later you'll see it manifest on the material plane. Then you say, "Look at that." Preferably try to get everybody's attention at the same time, so a whole bunch of people will look at that while it's still there, whatever it is. Then when a bunch of people have seen it, then you can talk about it. That's what I do a lot of the time. Don't necessarily try to call someone by yourself, if you're the only one that saw what happened, because then it turns into one against one, and that's ego confrontation, and then you start generating so much ego you can't tell what the truth was anymore.

But this is where it's really at. It's a one thing, and it includes everybody all the time. That's the real thing. That's the Mahayana, the greater vehicle, the big boat. The Hinayana I think can be like a liferaft or a dinghy for the Mahayana, to get people to it sometimes, but the old Mahayana is the one that does it.<P>

Q: <P>

No, it's not a duality to say there is truth and then there are lies, because truth and lies are the ends of a continuum, and the continuum is one continuum. So it's not a duality. But you must discriminate about the order of the facts. When you say truth and lying are a duality, I think you're thinking in terms of a kind of emotional idea of the truth, and an emotional idea of lying. But we're not interested in emotional ideas of life, because that isn't real. It doesn't have anything to do with us getting it together. What we're talking about is accurate information given from one monkey to another monkey in order that God may talk to himself accurately.<P>

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