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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and that is the single most significant fact in my life. The journey from my southern Baptist roots in the coal fields of West Virginia to the life of a Rajneeshian in central Oregon has taken 41 years. That journey is significant because it represents an intense search for 'Something' that shifted from my narrow focus which was only absorbed in my Christian training, college education, career in teaching, ownership of a business, marriage, and family to being in the presence of an Enlightened Master which included all this and much more.

When, at the age of 37, I came into

contact with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his teachings, I realized that I had found the 'Something' for which I had been searching all these years. That 'something' can be called spiritual fulfillment, inner peace, contentment, happiness, balance, and harmony. It is deep spiritual nourishment, love, and acceptance.

My background was fundamentalist Southern Baptist. In 1960, I studied veterinary medicine at West Virginia University. Then I enlisted in the Air Force for a period of 4 years.

While in the Air Force, I attended Indiana University Language Technical School where I studied Arabic. I became a language specialist in the Air Force Security Service. Upon completion of my tour of duty in Greece, I received an Honorable

Discharge from the Air Force and returned to Texas to re-enter college.

Concurrently, for a period of 3 years, I managed a restaurant at night and completed a B.A. in Secondary Education. I then married and 1 year later my first and only son was born.

For the next 10 years I taught special education classes and was a counselor at the junior and senior high school level. I also completed degree requirements for an M.Ed. in Counseling and Guidance and licensing requirements for Associate Psychologist. During the summer months, I established a part-time remodeling contracting business that eventually developed into a full-scale company.

From 1971 to 1978, I purchased

remodeled, and sold residential houses and in partnership with a friend, established an arabian horse-breeding enterprise called Colorado arabians.

as far as the material world was concerned, I had more than enough, with a home, two cars, a boat, horses, a dog, etc. Economically, I had a good-paying, secure teaching position with more than adequate savings and investments. Socially, I had a circle of friends whom I had known for years. Physically, I was healthy, exercised regularly, jogged, played tennis, and swam 3-4 days each week.

But spiritually and emotionally there was a void in my life and I began to realize that more of any of the above would not fill that void. I also realized that those things in my life that were supposed to bring harmony and peace did not.

I spent several years searching for what I felt was missing, and in August of 1978, the search ended with my first contact with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.

The contact came in the form of a taped discourse a friend played for me. The impact of the message on that tape was so incredibly clear, so full of Truth, that for me there was no question that here was the Teacher, Guide, Source, for whom I had been searching these many years.

Less than a year later, I became a Rajneeshite. Bhagwan became, for me, my Master. Since then, I have experienced continuing transformation in my life. There's a greater sense of joy in

and appreciation for the richness of life. And I definitely feel more open, loving, and accepting of myself and others. An example of what I'm saying can be illustrated by the change in attitude toward teaching I experienced and by my approach to teaching after I became a Rajneesh.

Through listening to Bhagwan's view of education, His trust in the intelligence of children, and His emphasis on allowing the child to explore the world around him, I began to alter my whole approach to students. We dropped punitive measures and focused on self-discipline and responsibility for one's actions. Classwork was evaluated by teacher and student jointly with the student being

asked to evaluate the quality of what was produced. We placed more emphasis on relating and communicating our feelings to one another as well as accepting individual differences in ability and levels of functioning.

In short, we spent months building up trust in one another so we could relax and enjoy learning. All of these ideas and many more came directly from Bhagwan's inspiration.

During the two years I taught as a Kājñeshee, I saw students blossom in ways I never thought possible. These students were not the typical public school students. These were hard-core street kids, who had been expelled from public school and had few, if any, options except residential placement. I saw them transform,

thru my work with them. It was because of Bhagwan's inspiration that I was able to see the beauty in them.

In the business world, much the same thing happened. As stated earlier, I managed a restaurant for three years while going to college. Now I work in Zorba the Buddha Restaurants at Rajneeshpuram and in Portland. The difference in these experiences has been quite amazing.

Before becoming a Rajneeshite, my whole focus was survival - i.e. succeeding, gaining status, and outproducing other managers in a spirit of competition. Thru Bhagwan, I can see that all work is sacred. I can see this concretely in my work, now. When I pour myself into my work, without judging it, without judging others, then something truly beautiful is created. And in an actual sense, that creation

ceases to be work. It becomes worship.
It becomes play. It becomes fun.
and the compensations are many, including
material, psychological, economic and
especially spiritual. Now, I don't
have to compete for points with the
boss. My co-workers are open with
me and each other. It is very rare
that any negativity is directed toward
another. In fact, laughter is the norm.
When customers come in, I can be
there for them totally rather than
being worried about how much they
will spend. The examples are
numerous but the fact is that through
Bhagwan's view of the world of work,
I am learning to accept whatever
work I do as a gift - an opportunity
to go deeper into myself. I can
also be as creative as I want
in providing services to our cust-
omers that are special, unique,

and not available elsewhere.

There is so much more that I could say about my Master, Bhagwan, and yet words can only provide a glimpse into the precious and unique Being which He is for me. For deeper understanding, He must be experienced.

I feel extremely blessed and fortunate to live in His Presence. To be in the Presence of a Living Master is a rare, beautiful gift, a priceless and immeasurable experience.

Sincerely

David G. Hendricks B.A.,
M.Ed.