



19. MUZ MURRAY

Muz Murray is a world-travelling mystic master with an international reputation, having given guidance for many years in his “SHARING THE QUEST” workshops—on Mantra Yoga, Mystical Awakening, Massage and Meditation—in the UK and Europe. He follows the way of the Universal Mystic—the Path of the Heart—embracing the essence of all traditions, but is attached to none.

Although endowed with the saffron robe and spiritual name of “Ramana Baba” in India, he sees himself neither as a ‘Swami’ nor a ‘New Age’ teacher, inclining rather to the notion of a ‘No Age’—seeking the teachings suitable for any age of the world, through attunement to the eternal verities. Thus his ‘Way of Unlearning’ is a simple “Sharing of the Inner Quest” warmly appreciated by those who seek trustworthy guidance without bondage to any form of cultism.

in his early twenties (during seven years of vagabondage around the world) an unlooked-for experience of spiritual awakening—known as ‘Cosmic Consciousness’—suddenly occurred, which was to transform the course of his life and consequently the lives of many others. Some months after this ‘Cosmic Initiation’ he came into contact with a spiritual Master who gave him his first ‘temporal initiation’ into a mantric form of meditation called Shabda Yoga (or the Mystical Sound Current.) This was later followed by association with masters of many traditions and subsequent initiations into many forms of arduous spiritual practice and esoteric experience.

In consequence, he became the Founder of a mystical community in London, known as “Gandalf’s Garden” which produced a world-distributed

esoteric magazine of the same name. The magazine and work of this community became a spiritual inspiration to many thousands in Britain and on the Continent during the 'Flower-Power' Era of the late Sixties and early Seventies. The centre hosted Gurus and teachers of every tradition from all over the world and pioneered the spirit of 'spiritual cross-fertilisation' between isolated esoteric groups, which resulted in many more universally-minded centres blossoming in its wake in several countries.

In 1972, Muz undertook a three-year pilgrimage to India and Nepal, travelling as a sadhu or mendicant monk. Besides following many spiritual disciplines, he deepened his investigations into Mantra (the Yoga of Sound) with Sufi (Dervish), Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Tibetan Masters.

On returning to Europe, while giving workshops in dynamic mantra, he also spent several years working with leading psychotherapists in modern regression techniques and founded "The Inner Garden"—a Healing, Retreat and Growth Centre in Suffolk, where individual therapy treatment was combined with spiritual guidance (as featured on BBC television in "Still Crazy After All These Years"). At the same time he became a founder-member of "The Open Centre" (a psychotherapists' collective) at the Community Health Foundation in London, where he led Mantra and Psychotherapy intensives for three years.

In 1980, after entering into the state of Samadhi (or the 'God-Conscious' condition) he removed himself to a hideaway in southern France for the next few years, consolidating his inner experience and writing his spiritual guide to survival in the modern world—Sharing the Quest (Element Books).

At the request of yoga groups, yoga teachers and yoga students all over Europe, he is now teaching the 'Mysteries of Mantra' and 'The Way of Sunconsciousness' in many countries, undertaking a regular mantra workshop tour of Britain during the summer months and also leading travelling workshops in India.

www.mantra-yoga.com

INTERVIEW

Q: Can you please tell me about your first teacher?

Muz Murray: His name was Ramamurti Mishra. He had an ashram in the Catskill Mountains in Monroe actually. That's New York. He was a brain surgeon and heart specialist. He was also a mantra yogi and he spoke Sanskrit with his family. His father was a judge and his mother was a guru. He came from the Himalayas. www.anandaashram.org/founder.html

Q: What tradition was he from?

Muz Murray: Udesin; it's a special group from the Bombay region I think.

Q: You said that he spoke Sanskrit, so did he teach from the Vedas or from Vedanta?

Muz Murray: No he taught mantra rather than traditional scripture and he sort of turned every scripture on its head. He taught the essence really, rather than the traditional teachings.

Q: And when he taught, did he also have some kind of a method? Did he use other forms of meditations?

Muz Murray: Well he used mantra as meditation, but he also came from the Rhada Swami tradition. He was initiated into one of the early grandmasters, a swami of Beas in the north of India. That's what we call Shabi yoga.

Q: That's to do with sound isn't it?

Muz Murray: It's to do with listening.

Q: What are your views on the aspects of charging for these teachings?

Muz Murray: All I know is that the economic climate these days is that few are coming to these workshops. (Laughs) I'm not sure where you are going with this question.

Q: Well, for example in the tradition of Advaita Vedanta, when someone goes to a guru, the teaching is usually given for free. And then the student would give them a gift or something like that and the same thing is done with Theravada Buddhism. But I've seen in other traditions that they charge for the teachings. What is your view on giving or charging a fee or donation or that sort of thing?

Muz Murray: Yes, right. When I came back from India, I wanted to give all the teachings away freely, or by donation because I had no money anyway. I had to live, but donations come in by 10 pence or half a crown and things, and I wasn't able to live on that so eventually and very reluctantly, I had to start asking for something. All my life I've asked for far less than anybody else has been asking, but people say in India they give away the teachings for free and they usually were, but they don't realize it in India

It is the householders' duty to support their spiritual teachers because it's good for them and it's good for the nation and it's good for the world. And so they bring gifts and money constantly to keep their spiritual teachers living. And we don't have that tradition in the West. People think that we live like beings in fairy tales and we don't need any money and we don't have to pay taxes, or have to pay a car license or whatever. So it's correct to have some recompense for the teachings or for workshops, but not for students who are sincere and who should be given the answers to their problems or ways to answer the problems for themselves because that is the nature of the heart of the guru who cannot but give those souls who are desperately seeking, and this is the natural way. The student must give something back in return and that's all for the good and quite often many.

These days students are pumping the teacher and just don't want to give anything back which is not very helpful for many people living in the West.

With mantra for example, the tradition is that when a pupil is ready for mantra instruction, he will be given a mantra and how to work with it. Just because a guru is able to ascertain the soul quality of the students and know the kind of students and know the sonic frequency that would be good for his particular spirit, but so many gurus go around the world, make

a circus of it and go around charging a lot of money that they have not potentized themselves and they have not worked for many years so they don't have the power of transmission to be able to pass on the energy of the mantra correctly. Even the great Maharishi, I met him the same night the Beatles met him. I was sitting five rows behind the Beatles and afterwards he went on stage behind the curtains and talked to the Beatles and their girlfriends and Donovan and his girlfriend and all that and then he came out and there was a little group and afterwards I said to Maharishi, this is not the way the mantra is given to their students, you are taking anybody off the street, asking a week's wages and giving them any old mantra between the ages of 25 and 30, 35 and 40, 45 and 50. They all get the same mantra even if it's not the right one for them or not. And he charges them a week's wages and I said why are you doing that and he went hehehe, with his famous little giggle, and he said, the Westerners do not appreciate anything unless they pay a lot of money for it. So I am asking them for a lot of money.

(laughter) That was the end of the Maharishi for me I'm afraid.

Q: But is there actually some truth in that, that people sometimes don't appreciate it unless they do pay for it. They tend to look at it as if it's not worth anything if you give it for free. (Laughs)

Muz Murray: Yes well he was right in a way, but I didn't feel that the approach was exactly correct.

Q: So at that point he actually gave all of the Beatles mantras. What about John Lennon and all of the others? I know he gave it to George Harrison.

Muz Murray: Yes he gave them what is called bija mantras, which are seed sounds which he gives to everybody and then he gave lists to the people that were doing it in his place when he wasn't there. And they gave the same mantra to just anybody at that age or this age and they hadn't potentized the mantra. You need to work many many years with a mantra before you get the energy of it and for the person you are giving it to, to give them the right frequency. And this was not happening and this is why I

didn't appreciate asking big sums of money for something that was farcical as far as I was concerned.

END OF INTERVIEW