



# DR. MARC GAFNI: ONE LOVE

Keynote at the Integral Spiritual Experience 2

## Transcript of the Keynote 'One Love' by Dr. Marc Gafni

*TRT: 89:52*

### Speakers

Sally Kempton  
Marc Gafni

Sally So let me say a little bit, not to introduce our speaker, because he needs no introduction, but really to honor him. It's a great privilege to be able to honor your friends and really to speak on behalf of all of us on the Integral Spiritual Experience team and for all of us in this room, just to recognize the place that Marc Gafni holds for us.

He is, as I said before, the Master of the Revels – revels, not rebels, although there is that as well in the heart of all great heart masters. He is the intellectual center of Integral Spiritual Experience. He is the one who has held the vision of this event, which we can't call a conference, this extraordinary space between the worlds that we occupy here. And he is also a cutting edge spiritual teacher. As Tami Simon, his publisher says, he's a visionary genius love muffin.

He's one of the most brilliant Integral evolutionary philosophers around. Like Ken and Deepak, he has that capacity to see through into the patterns of existence, and he has the courage and audacity to speak the new paradigms. Last summer I was having lunch with Marc and Michael Murphy, the founder of Esalen, who's also one of the cutting edge prophets or heart master evolutionary theorists, Integral theorists of his generation, and he said, "Very rarely do you meet someone who changes the game. Marc," he said, "you're changing the game."

And part of what we are experiencing here in this evolution through the three stages of love, which is the conversation that he has brought into the Integral discourse in the past year, as he brought the conversation on Unique Self into the Integral conversation in the years before, so with all that, the deepest truth that I experience about Marc, as Diane said this morning, is that he does really have the most robust heart of anyone I know.

I come from a lineage of heart masters and I pride myself on being able to recognize one when I see one. So when I tell you, or, that is, when I tell you, as I think you already know, that Marc is a heart master, I know what I'm talking about. So I'd like you to join me in welcoming our heart master, Marc Gafni.

Marc Thank you very much. Thank you very, very much. And it's good to get that ovation out of the way when we begin, so then we don't have to worry about the rest of the time. Hey, good evening, everyone. Good evening, good evening. And I want to thank Sally and spend the first minute actually in doing something a little bit out of place, because we didn't get to do it before. I actually want to do two introductions as well. We're kind of in introduction mode.

[asides]

So, first, I want to introduce really two people, both deep, deep, deep partners, and it's the web of love between us that really created in many, many ways, along with many, many other people, this event on the design team. And I want to introduce a great, great teacher of Zen, of Integral, a fearless, courageous *bodhisattva*, one that you've come to know well in her audacity, in her sassiness, in her penetrating insight. A big, big, huge hand for Diane Musho Hamilton, everyone.

[applause]

And, in alphabetical order, to introduce someone who's a deeply, profoundly cooked being whose been on the path for many, many years, who's filled with penetrating insight, a huge range of knowing and understanding, holding from her place with her audacity and with her understated but fearless courage, one of the great teachers, as Di, of our generation, Sally Kempton.

[applause]

Thank you, everyone, thank you. Okay. So what we'd like to try and do in the time that we have – and I'm watching it carefully and precisely when the clock strikes 12 on the East Coast we'll be saying a New Year's toast and bringing it in – we're in the three stations where, as Sally said, we finished this beautiful day which began with this stunning talk by Warren, and then this incredible Integral view which just wove it all together when you felt, as we felt yesterday, the falling in love, not the falling in love yesterday of kind of romantic falling in love, which is kind of this biological process, but the *practice* of falling in love, falling in love on every level as a constant and ongoing practice.

We today felt this other energy, the energy of differentiation, of what the Baal Shem Tov calls the second station separation/dis-identification. And we heard these heartrending, opening, beautiful insights and vignettes about what that means, what that separation is. And just to take a moment, just to gather in my heart the shattered pieces, and to gather all the broken hearts in the room that were really open today in this place of separation, and to really hold them, and we can just hold them together and let them be, and in that holding the beginning of healing takes place.

So as we move from the place of the broken heart, we transcend and include, we end the trance of the broken heart – we don't let it rule us or dominate us – and we take it with us as we move towards the third station, which Sally will open up for us tomorrow morning, *hamtaka*, sweetness: sweetness which is not saccharine, sweetness which is not joy and bliss, sweetness which is this much more nuanced third station that we'll hear about tomorrow.

And now we're in the liminal space before New Year. We're in this space in between, and it's in that space that I want to ask for the grace of God in the first-person, second-person and third-person that we should be able in the next few minutes to unfold a new chapter in Integral Evolutionary understanding, that we should be able to enter the source code of All-That-Is and weave a fabric together which will begin to let us see something of the patterns that connect that we all yearn

so deeply to see, which form the undergirding structure of meaning and love in which we're held in the lap of God. So that's our intention.

The particular topic or door we're going to go through is the relationship between the sexual and the erotic, Eros and the sexual, and I use 'Eros' here not in the way that David was using it this morning, beautifully, as a kind of one of a fourfold expression of love emerging out of that great tradition, but I use Eros in its more general sense to include all of the four. And I want to talk to you about the relationship between the sexual and the erotic as a way of entering into this new unfolding chapter about Integral evolutionary sexuality, love and Eros. So I'm going to begin in the way of the study hall with a series of questions. Ready? Are we good? That wasn't a lot of noise there.

[Audience response]

Are we good? Are we awake? Are we alive? Are we happy? We're good. Okay, here we go.

### **Part 1**

Raiders of the Lost Ark, let it stay lost. Why do we need it? Well, is anyone looking? Oh my god! What am I going to do this morning? We can't find the Ark. Ooh, this is going to be a difficult day to get through. Raiders of the Lost Ark, who cares? Why are we interested in raiding the lost Ark? And what Ark are they talking about anyways?

They're talking about the Ark of the Covenant, not Noah's ark. It's about the Ark of the Covenant, which is the Ark in the Jerusalem Temple of Solomon, the great heart master. And in that Ark there is a set of tablets, and somehow above the tablets there are these two cherubs, and we seem to be very interested in finding that lost Ark with its Ark and cherubs on top of it. Why? Who cares?

The Grail Quest, the Quest for the Holy Grail, which is the great spiritual journey in the Western esoteric literature. The Knight of the Round Table with his lance, his circle, his masculine, his lance which is his phallic masculine, sitting around the table, saving the damsel. Quests for the Holy Grail, but why? What's the Holy Grail? What are we looking for? Do we really need that chalice?

The Da Vinci Code, a kind of extra-graduate, Dan Brown popularization of this kind of Grail Quest idea that talks about the bloodline of Jesus through Jesus and Mary Magdalene. What's that about? And why are we interested in that? Masons and Templars, what's that about?

These are our essential myths. They're at the core of our spirit and yet we've lost them. Remember Thucydides in the Peloponnesian wars? When words lose their meaning, culture collapses. So why are we raiding the lost Ark, and what's this Grail Quest, and what's this Da Vinci Code? I would wager – I'll take a look out – how many people here read "The Da Vinci Code"? Right, almost the entire place. What was it about? It was a great read. Tom Hanks: not bad in the movie. What was it

about? What's the excitement? What's the gripping? What are these Templars and Masons about? So let's begin.

Two images, just to frame our question. What's in that Ark? So, in that Ark in the Jerusalem Temple, above it are these two cherubs, but the cherubs, paradoxically, are not of the Hallmark variety. The cherubs are masculine and feminine. It might have been a gay or a straight masculine and feminine, in my slight revisioning of that myth. They're masculine and feminine and they're radically locked in sexual embrace. That is what the major image was in the Holy of Holies of the Jerusalem Temple. Well, why?

And, in case you missed the point, in Solomon's Temple there was also a freestanding pair of cherubs locked in sexual embrace. And in case you didn't quite get it, according to a number of texts in the Book of Kings, the actual walls of the temple had the images of the sexually intertwined cherubs on them. Why? I mean, even the most progressive minister might lose her job for redesigning the temple while the board was away. "Wow, did a lot of work here, Mr. Minister. You're fired." What does that mean? What's that image?

Two, I'm going to cite you a text, and we'll do the text together just so you see the problematic, and we'll return to the text a bit later. This is a famous text that 20-30 of us have studied together in different contexts and it's about the temple in Jerusalem. The text is a kind of legal conversation about the following case.

And those of you who have studied with me these kinds of sacred texts, you know that you need what we did the other day, you need Jewish yoga in order to do it, and I've mentioned Jewish yoga before. It's a lot easier, as I've mentioned, than cobra, downward-facing dog, upward-facing dog. We can't quite do that when we're Jewish, but when you're Jewish if you want to ski you buy ski clothes and then you're done. It's easy.

So we've simplified this whole great yogic discipline just to make it a little easier on us. So if you can just put your left hand – whatever hand you like – put your left hand out. Now extend your thumb. I don't know what that means either, but that's what yoga teachers say, things like that. You never know what they mean. Extend your thumb. As Sofia said today, drop your shoulder blades. Ready? Yeah, ready, let's do it. Yeah, no, let's go. Yeah, and then you deftly extend the other hand and you do the same thing. Yeah, and then you switch. Yeah, let's go. Yeah, that's it. That's it, okay.

So, yeah, the Talmud asks the following question. It cites a legal case and this is the case. A man was on a business trip and he came home early and his wife didn't hear him until he was walking up the stairs. And he walks in on his wife. And this appears in two places in the Talmud. If you want to check it, it's Tract 8, Sanhedrin, page 75a, and if it's not there I'll give you \$5,000. This is an exact case cited in Aramaic text. And he walks into his wife's bedroom and she's naked on the bed and there are these beautiful cookies next to the bed. He's surprised that she's there to greet him with such openness and he reaches to eat the cookies. And a voice comes out from the closet, "Don't eat the cookies, they're poison." And out tumbles his best friend, also naked.

So the Talmud asks the following legal question in two Talmudic passages, “Do we, based on the available evidence, believe that his best friend is an adulterer or not?” This is what they study in yeshiva. You’ve got to put sublimation somewhere. So, the first opinion in the Talmud says he’s definitely not an adulterer, because if he was an adulterer he’d want the woman. So if the man – the husband – ate the poison cookies he’d be dead, and he’d have the woman. And with a Yiddishe kop it’s therefore clear he’s not an adulterer, first major opinion in the Talmud.

And they’re about to shut the case and a voice emerges from the back of the study hall and says, “Wait.” There’s a second opinion, and the second opinion is of course he’s an adulterer. But then they ask, “But if he’s an adulterer, he wants the woman, so he should have the husband eat the poison cookies to get the woman.” And the first opinion says, “No, he only wants the woman if she’s married.”

And then the Talmud concludes this is what we mean when we say that the temple in Jerusalem fell, because the Gemara says, *[Text 17:24]*. From the day the temple in Jerusalem fell, the radical Eros taste, the taste of poignant, passionate, wild sexuality that makes you alive, willing to risk everything for that moment is much more easily available in boundary-breaking sexuality, and in the context of committed, regular relationship is much harder to find. That, says the Talmud, is the expression in our world of the fall of the temple. What does that mean? What does the temple have to do with it? The end of our questions.

## **Part 2**

Our basic esoteric teaching/thesis/understanding is that the temple is actually not the proto-Hefnerian Playboy mansion, with all due respect to Mr. Hefner, who’ll be joining us tomorrow to give a keynote. The temple is actually not about, at its core, the sexual. The temple is about Eros. It’s about the erotic. And in the original texts, the temple is the place of the Shekhina. The Shekhina is the feminine goddess divine. And in the original texts, the goddess divine rests *bein ha’k’ruvim*, between the cherubs. Which cherubs? The sexually interlocked cherubs as they’re interlocked in passionate embrace. And that space between them, *v’no’adti lcha m’bein shnei kruvim*, the voice of Divinity, of All-That-Is speaks, the Shekhina speaks from between the cherubs.

What’s the Shekhina? The Shekhina is Eros. Shekhina is actually, if you read the close texts carefully, you see that in the original play in Hebrew and Aramaic, Shekhina is much like what we would call Eros. So the temple, which is called in Hebrew the *migdash*, the holy place – and let’s create together a field of meaning, let’s weave a field of meaning – the temple, which is the holy place, is the place of the Shekhina which equals Eros. So holy equals erotic. The holy is Eros. And therefore the fall of the temple, which is called in the original texts the exile of the Shekhina, is the exile of the erotic.

So the fall of the temple means mythically, symbolically, archetypally the fall of the temple is the fall of Eros. The original texts say when the temple falls, the Shekhina

– the erotic – is exiled. So that’s the image of the temple. The temple is the place of Eros.

### **Part 3**

What is Eros? What is it in its deepest, broadest sense? That’s the place we want to enter now. A few years ago – and I told you a little bit of the story last year, so I won’t tell it again – but a few years ago I had the occasion to spend some time with the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala. He was delightful, but as delightful, sometimes even more, was this awesome man named Achuk Rinpoche. He was the head of the Tibetan Library who I met him at the Synthesis Dialogues in Castelgandolfo in Rome where a number of us here actually met.

And Achuk Rinpoche told me then this awesome story. Or maybe he didn’t. Maybe I’m just attributing it to him just because it sounds better, I’m not sure. But he told this story that weaves around – somebody told me there in Dharamsala – about the Dalai Lama. Is it true? Is it mythical? I don’t exactly know, but I’ll tell you this story.

The way they tell it in Dharamsala is that when the Dalai Lama was 10, in Potala, the great palace... All of the Dalai Lamas, as you know, there are four major Tibetan lineages and this lineage, that of the Dalai Lama, is also the political lineage. It’s the lineage of rulership. This was the time when the Chinese were beginning to move towards Tibet and it was about 8-9 years before the decimation of Tibet which took place when the Dalai Lama was 18 or 19. And apparently China had sent this very, very furious, fury-filled and violent kung fu master from China to challenge the Dalai Lama’s monks, many of them who were well-trained in the martial arts.

And he’s kind of roaming through the Tibetan countryside, meeting groups of monks and literally pulverizing, never killing them, just leaving them broken-boned on the side. And he makes his way, literally a swathe of destruction moving towards the Dalai Lama’s palace in Potala. And at some point he strides into the palace, dressed apparently, the way they described, in tight-fitting black leather, muscles rippling, filled with a kind of presence, the incarnation of Shiva Nataraj in his destructive aspects, strides up to the Dalai Lama and says, “I’m here.” The Dalai Lama says, “Well, come forward.” He comes forward. And he says, “Well, give me a demonstration of what you can do.”

And the kung fu master says, “I already have. And actually the flicker you felt at your genitals was me passing by, not crushing them like I could have. And then that slight wind you felt at your neck would have been your neck breaking had I not had mercy on you, young boy.” And he went on to describe what he had already done so quickly, so awesomely that the Dalai Lama and all the assembled monks hadn’t even seen it.

So the Dalai Lama looks at him and he says, “Okay. You know, I have a master who can best you.” And all the monks shrink back, hoping he’s not talking about them. And the place is silent and he says, “Call the old dancing master of Tibet.” There’s a gasp, the old dancing master of Tibet? And he’s called. They hadn’t seen him for

several years. And he slowly walks in, and he looks and he sees the kung fu master. He looks at the Dalai Lama and he bows and he says, “I am happy to meet the challenge.”

And the kung fu master looks at him and he says, “I am not deceived. My master was like you. It took me years to kill him, but in the end I did a year and a half ago, with a swat on the ear that crushed him. So here’s what we’ll do. You hit me any way you want with anything you have, and when you’re done I’ll finish you.” And he bows with great respect.

And the dancing master begins to move and his hands, they flit across the eyelids of the kung fu master, and his eyes are opened to see, and he sees for the first time and the colors – where does color come from, said Deepak – are so beautiful and so open. And then his other hand kind of moves and he traces and just barely flutters across his nostrils, and his nostrils are opened and he smells the pungent taste of buttered bread below and he’s filled with this extravagant, gorgeous, sensual...

And then the dancing master lifts his leg and just brushes across his genitals and this beautiful desire pulsates through him and they begin to dance. And they dance together, each stripping off their clothes, for three days and three nights. And everyone from around Potala comes in to witness this great dance of Eros, a dance unlike that had ever been seen.

And when three days and three nights are over of dance, the Dalai Lama, sitting the entire time, drinking only water, more and more people packing the entire area, when that’s over they both fall down on the floor exhausted. And the kung fu master brings the dancing master into his arm and brings into him the last breaths of life of the dancing master. And the dancing master smiles, because he’s found his successor.

That’s the dance of Eros. It’s the dance of the inside of the inside. And when we dance from the place of Eros then we’re able to avoid all of the destruction. When we actually dance through then we dance to the end of love. Then we actually are able to transcend the dances of destruction and the dances of addiction and the dances of desperation and the a-void-dances we do to dance around the void with all the forms of pseudo-Eros that invite us and destroy us – the dance of Eros. And it’s that dance that, with your permission, I’d like to invite you to in the next period of time. Let’s talk about, together, the faces of Eros. What is the nature of Eros on the inside of the inside?

#### **Part 4**

Eros has two fundamental faces, and each one has two expressions. When we talk about Eros, which is the pulsating rhythm of Divinity, animating All-That-Is, it’s the love-intelligence, the love-beauty that is the Kosmos erotically unfolding, what we’re talking about is what the mystics called in Kabbalah [Text 27:43], and [Text] means the answer to the mystical question. The mystic doesn’t ask, “What’s God about?” The mystic doesn’t ask about via negativa. The mystic doesn’t ask how, what, where? The mystic just asks, “Tell me how God feels.” “What’s the taste of

the Divine,” says Aquinas. What’s the feeling of God? How does God feel inside in the interior face of the Kosmos?

And in the interior face of the Kosmos in every great tradition, whether it’s Hinduism which is about *Nirguna Brahman* or *Saguna Brahman*, whether it’s Whitehead talking about being and becoming, whether it’s Hebrew mysticism talking about *yesh* and *ayin*, we talk not of one taste, we talk of two tastes.

The first taste of the Divine is the one we’re used to hearing about. It’s the taste of bliss. It’s quiet, but it’s actually even before quiet, because quiet is only the opposite of noise. It’s the unmanifest. It’s the uncreated. It’s your original face before your mother and father were born. It’s before the *Ein Sof*, before the Infinite discloses itself in any way. It’s the Ground of Being itself. It *is* being. It’s the face of being. And the face of being is exquisite. It’s the place you can take refuge in. You take refuge in the Buddha, because all of the change is so painful that you want to find a place underneath your personality where you can actually rest in the spacious Ground of Being which is your original identity of emptiness which is form. It’s being. It’s beautiful. It’s one face of Divinity.

But that’s only a partial truth. And true but partial, you all know what that means. True but partial is critical, but when a part pretends to be a whole then we pathologize. A part can be a part, but it can’t hijack the whole. There’s a second taste, and the second taste in all the great traditions takes place in one way or the other, however they’re telling the story, and what we would call in a modern evolutionary context the Big Bang... the Big Bang, the explosion in which for some mysterious meaning nothing, which is no thing, which is beyond all thing, decides to become something. And in mysterious tremendum, nothing decides to unfold into something. The Big Bang emerges and the entire evolutionary process is set into motion.

And that Big Bang is not quiet. It’s not blissful. It’s a Big Bang and it’s noisy and it’s tumultuous and it’s ever changing and it’s dynamic and it’s always transforming in every moment and it’s urgent. It’s what one friend of ours calls ecstatic urgency, a beautiful way to capture the Hassidic or Sufi or Spandakara’s understanding of the unfolding of the evolutionary impulse that De Chardin and Aurobindo wrote about so gorgeously, that evolutionary impulse which is *hitlahavut* which is ecstasy needing to unfold itself dramatically, passionately, ever changing, always emerging.

So if when we relate to being we’re invited to merge and we’re gripped by the urge to merge, when we go to the face, the taste of becoming, it’s not the urge to merge, it’s the urge to emerge, to evolve, and those are both tastes of the Divine, and these are the faces of the erotic, the inner face, the inner quality of Eros. And each one of these faces has two facets.

So first let’s talk about the two facets of being. The first face of Eros under the quality of being is interiority, to be on the inside, to live on the inside of reality, and indeed the Holy of Holies in the temple is called *lifnai v’lifnim*, the inside of the inside. And the temple in the Book of Leviticus is called *p’nima*, the inside place. The temple which is holy which is Eros is the inside place, because to be in Eros is to be on the inside.

There's an old beautiful Zen story which kind of captures what this is about. It's about two mountain climbers, one young, one old, who are each climbing, ascending a mountain. And as they climb and ascend, there's the young and the old, and it's this archetypal story. You know the story, right? The young kind of darts up the mountain and he's wearing Reeboks like people always do in Zen stories, and he's dressed really beautifully, and he's strong and he's athletic. And he moves past the old – the tortoise and the hare – moves past the old man, a just beautiful burst of energy and presence and vitality.

And you know what happened, right? It's about three o'clock in the afternoon and the old man's moving up the mountain, and he passes this young man who's exhausted, spent, can barely move, on the side of the mountain. And as they pass each other in this archetypal exchange between the young man and the old wise one, the young man says to the old man, he says, "*Vas tut zikh?*" which is Yiddish, which sometimes also appears in Zen stories. He says, "What's going on? What do you know that I don't know? How are you doing it?" And the old man says to him with the most gentle smile of compassion, he says, "The difference between you and me is you come to conquer the mountain, and the mountain's always stronger than you, and the mountain conquers you. I come to merge with the mountain, so the mountain embraces me and lifts me up."

That's Eros. Eros is to be on the inside. It's the opposite of alienation. The result of non-erotic living is you've got to watch your back, because non-erotic living is not face to face. Face to face is Eros. And the two cherubs in the original tradition of the Templars are in the temple in Jerusalem, *panim el panim*, face to face in play with the spell of the sensuous with me.

The word *panim* in Hebrew means face, but it has two other meanings. It means 'inside' and it means 'before'. So, for example – and follow this – when the high priest one day a year on Yom Kippur would enter into the inside of the inside, which is the Holy of Holies, he would be described in the sacred texts as being *lifnai Adonai*, before the Divine, the same as *panim*, as face, *lifnai*, before the Divine. That's how all the English texts translate the original Hebrew: He comes to the temple, he's before the Divine. So in that image, I'm here and I'm before the Divine, and the Divine is over there. I kneel before the Divine.

But listen to it more deeply. The original Hebrew, the word 'before', *p'nai*, is the same word as 'face' and the same word as *p'nimi*, as 'inside'. So actually what the text invites us to is not to be before God, but it literally means to be on the inside of God's face. Can you feel the difference? Wow! That's Eros. Eros is to be on the inside of God's face.

My lineage master, Mordechai Leiner of Izbica said if you're speaking and you can hear yourself talking, sit down, because the word, which is the Shekhina, is in exile, because the word's been separated from the voice, and when the word and the voice separate, Eros is in exile. Stop speaking. Speak only when words emerge from the silence, never when words emerge from words.

Last image. When they try in the holy texts to talk about what Eros is, they talk about the holy stitcher of stitches who was the [Text 36:06], the great unifier, who Tsvi Hirsh of Zhitomir, the enlightened master, said, was the holiest tailor in the town of Zhitomir. And when he was asked, “How does this tailor stitch unifications,” because he told his Hasidim that he stitches the highest unifications that unite the upper waters and the lower waters, Shiva and Shakti, Shekhinta and [inaudible 36:31], the masculine and feminine. Everything is united when he stitches. So the Hasidim said, “So when he stitches, does he know all of the sacred intentions? Is he a great hidden esoteric master?” And their teacher said, “No. When he stitches he’s fully inside of every stitch.” That’s Eros. It’s the face of interiority, the first quality of the erotic.

The second quality of the erotic within the aspect of being is not interiority, but it’s fullness of presence. Fullness of presence doesn’t require that you enter the inside. When you enter the inside you’re lost. You’re in an erotic conversation. What’s an erotic conversation? You can’t dial an erotic conversation. It doesn’t work. An erotic conversation means you sit down to talk to someone, and six hours go by and you thought it was 45 minutes, because you’ve entered into the inside.

Eros means – the face of interiority – you’re jogging. Remember when you used to be able to jog, but now you can’t jog anymore, because anything you want to do in the world, they tell you why it’s bad for you? It’s bad for your knees, they hit the pavement... You can’t do anything. But it used to be that we used to jog before they told us we couldn’t jog. So when you go jogging – I used to jog – I would hate in the morning to get up and jog. I used to jog across Jerusalem every day. It’s a small city, don’t worry. So you get up, you put on your jogging clothes, and usually that’s enough, as I told you, for Jews, but I have a kind of universalist tendency, world spirituality, so I figured I should do a little jogging also.

So you start jogging. You’re kind of annoyed. “I should be doing work. I should be writing. I should be reading. Why am I jogging?” And you kind of start running, you know, things going through your mind. Then something happens, right? Anyone here who’s a runner? Something happens. At some point, if I can date myself by 25 years, I remember the movie, what was it called, Marathon Man, remember with Dustin Hoffman? There’s this moment at which you break through. It’s no longer you jogging in your clothes. It’s you and the wind and the pavement and the running and it all literally merges into this larger one as you step into the very inside of reality and you’re on the other side. That’s Eros. That’s the first face of Eros, the face of interiority.

The second face, fullness of presence, is very different. The second face is about simply showing up and staying in the emptiness until it fills. It’s huge. Because, you see, what happens is we meet the emptiness – I don’t mean here the Buddhist emptiness, I mean simple emptiness – we meet the emptiness and we’re so pained by it that we move as quickly as we possibly can to cover it with anything we can cover it with, with words, with sex that we don’t want to be having, with food we don’t want to be eating, with comfort conversation and gossip, which makes us feel like we’re somehow okay. Because when we don’t access genuine Eros, what we do is we reach for pseudo-Eros which is another name for addiction.

So when I meet someone, we sit down, we have a conversation. We have nothing real to say to each other. We can't find our way into the inside. So what we do is, what do we do? We begin gossiping, often negatively, about a third person. Why? Because we can't find our way into the inside, so what we do is we create a pseudo-inside. By placing a third person outside we have the illusion that we're creating a space inside. That's precisely pseudo-Eros. Pseudo-Eros is the illusion of the erotic.

So fullness of presence, the second quality of the erotic, is the ability to be present, to stay in the emptiness. And if you but stay in the emptiness and you are willing to suspend the a-void-dance, the dance around the void which is the dance of destruction and addiction that we all know personally so well in the first-person, no one excepted in the room, then what we're able to do is be in the emptiness. We're present. We show up in it. And it fills. And it fills with our True Self. And it fills with our Unique Self. And when we're unable to stay in it then we fill it with all manners of dance which lead to all those conclusions. And so the second face of the erotic is what we might call fullness of presence.

Now we move to the second dimension of Eros, becoming. Not being, but becoming. Not bliss, but that kind of ecstatic urgency. And the third face of Eros that someone talked about this morning, the path of longing, the third face of Eros under the aspect of becoming is yearning itself. It's desire. The Kashmir Shaivists like to say desire is a divine stir within the infinite, and Sally quotes it often in teaching. Diane says Buddha didn't say he's against desire, Buddha said, "Have few desires, but have great ones." Wow!

The inside of desire, and my lineage teacher, Mordechai Leiner of Izbica, he says, "*Tshuka zu elohut*," desire *is* divinity. Wow! Detachment, that image of detachment, detachment is from superficial desire that emerges from the clinging, grasping Separate Self. I trance-end *that* desire in order to access the desire, the yearning that is the very beating heart of the Kosmos emerging, desiring desperately to emerge, to emerge from nothing to something as the evolutionary impulse itself beating in my heart. That's desire. That's yearning. It's the yearning of divinity of All-That-Is to emerge, to unfold, to evolve.

And let's feel into this yearning which is the inside of the initiating energy of the Kosmos. This yearning is the inside quality, not because I'm claiming it as dogma, because so it's described in my own experience, so it's described in the experience of all the great realized beings, the most subtle and speculative minds and hearts, viewed and experienced through the eye of the spirit and the eye of the heart. The inner face of the Kosmos yearning to emerge is this desire, is this passionate yearning. That is itself the evolutionary impulse. The evolutionary impulse is the Eros of becoming.

And let's feel into it. Let's feel into its quality as we look at the faces of Eros, because it's that yearning inside of you which caused the Big Bang, because from a non-dual perspective, who else was there to do it but you? So that yearning inside of you which brings you to want to be with me and me to want to be with you, that yearning inside of us is that which initiated the movement from nothing to something, from being to becoming, is the ecstatic urgently emerging in us, seeking desperately to unfold and to become. So let's look for a couple of minutes at what it

is, what's the nature of this third face of Eros, the face of yearning, the movement of the evolutionary impulse described, again, so gorgeously by Abraham Kook, by De Chardin, by Aurobindo.

So, a number of things and this is all actually important. Let's do some kind of reweaving of the *dharma*, of the understanding of this evolutionary impulse. In any number of teachers, some modern, some a hundred years ago, the evolutionary impulse is assumed to be impersonal. And actually to awaken to the impersonal nature of the evolutionary impulse is seen and understood to be enlightenment, but actually, when you think about it more deeply, it would be more true to say that the evolutionary impulse is beyond the personality, beyond the Separate Self, but not beyond the personal. And to evolve beyond ego is to align with the evolutionary process.

Yes, that's true. That's a partial truth, but that process itself is not merely an impersonal impulse, because to describe the evolutionary impulse as a merely impersonal energy is to limit your realization and experience of the evolutionary process to a third-person perspective. You follow that? In other words, if I experience the evolutionary process as impersonal, that's the third-person perspective or experience – which is legitimate, it's valid – of the evolutionary impulse, but if I move from third to first then the evolutionary impulse is the evolution not of process and growing complexity, it's the evolution of consciousness. And if I move from first to second then I begin to realize that the inner fabric of the evolutionary impulse is no less than love, no less than love.

And that's how we began on Wednesday night, and that's how we began the Future of Love series, and that's what we've been talking about all year, in the first and last dialogue of the Future of Love series with Ken. That's what we mean when we say that on the outside of reality, in the third-person, reality moment to moment is an evolving meshwork of Its. In the first-person it's the growing from proto-I-ness to expanded and expanded I until I realize *tat tvam asi*, thou art that, I am in Supreme Identity with All-That-Is. And in second person the inside of the evolutionary impulse *is* higher and higher levels, increasing movement towards higher recognition, union and embrace, ever expanding circles of caring and compassion. The evolutionary impulse is ultimately personal. It's personal love which is an expression of the impersonal love that drives the Eros of evolution.

And let's see what that means, because that's exactly what Ken was talking about in the very beginning of the conversation. It's exactly what Peirce is talking about in his 1893 essay, Evolutionary Love. It's exactly what Aurobindo talks about. It's what Kook talks about. It's what De Chardin talks about. What they're really saying, which *is* the lineage transmission of the great traditions that we were never able to validate, however, on the very cellular level of reality, and from an Integral perspective we take the great traditions, we merge them with our understanding of evolutionary unfolding, and what emerges in this higher Integral evolutionary embrace is so stunning and so shattering in the most gorgeous way, and so changing of the paradigm in which we live that we've got to stop and take notice. So let's look at it for a second. Let's review.

Quarks hanging around, separate, fragmented, and at some moment something in them moves them to come together and they form an atom. They move towards union. Atoms come together, separate, distinct, unique, and they form a molecule. Molecules, again – this is the theme, the through-line – molecules come together, several dozen of them, all particular, peculiar and distinct. There's nothing that should bring them together at all. The chances of their coming together are not billions to one, they're billions and billions and billions and billions. As Ken said when we were talking about it, no fucking chance.

And they come together, these molecules, driven by love, by the movement to be together, to form a union, and they're driven by this love, this Eros that moves them to come together, and that love itself births life, because those molecules come together and create a cell, and that cell is alive, birthed by love, by the drive of Eros that comes awake from matter to life. And then that single cellular – wow, that still exists today in viruses and mitochondria – then emerges up the evolutionary ladder and becomes multi-cellular. And then multi-cellular emerges and then you get to plants and you have this emerging complexity, the inside of which is consciousness. Then we move to early mammals and later mammals, and it moves up and it gets more and more complex to neural nets and neural cords till we get to the triune brain of human beings.

And as we move up this evolutionary scale, the ability to first early symbols, then concepts, then to be aware of concepts, and, when we get to the triune brain, the ability to create complex rules. What happens at each stage of this unfolding evolutionary process ascending to higher and higher levels of complexity is greater and greater movement to higher and higher recognition, union and embrace. So in third-person it's the emergent of meshworks of Its in relation described by chaos theory, complexity theory, systems theory, and that's legitimate, that's important.

It's what Stuart Kauffman talks about or Eric Jantsch in the book "The Self-Organizing Universe." It's the inherent quality in matter to self-organize, to rise above its chaotic states to higher and greater levels of union, recognition and embrace. And that quality in matter is the animating Eros, love, moving the entire evolutionary process until you get all the way up to human beings, from the cellular level till the human level.

And then, as Ken described, based on the fabulous research at the Harvard School of Education and seven other or eight other places around the world, within the human being there's this natural movement in which the feeling of selfhood gradually expands from egocentric, just me and my immediate people I need for security. And then my feeling extends to ethnocentric. I actually feel identified – and Americans have a hard time with this, because they actually don't feel ethnocentrically identified, but it's actually beautiful – I extend my feeling to the entire field of my people, and I actually feel for them, and if they hurt, I hurt. And I'm a patriot and I'm willing to stake my life on this larger community.

And then it ascends again to worldcentric, sympathy with all human beings in the world, this beautiful worldcentric perspective in which racist jokes, as Ken said, are offensive, or gender jokes that undermine one half of gender violate our sensibility. And then we jump again to Kosmocentric in which we feel genuine identity with all

sentient beings. We stop eating hamburgers which are based on non-free-range eating and animals raised in virtual concentration camp conditions. If we're really Kosmocentric, well, actually, let's check, should we eat free range? How are the animals raised? We actually have sympathy, identity with all sentient beings. And then we jump even further and we realize the Supreme Identity with Divinity. We're actually identified, we're seeing the world from a Kosmic Divine perspective.

And in each one of these there's an ascension of greater and greater recognition, union, ever-expanding identity and embrace, meaning deeper, ever-expanding love. So this movement of love is all the way up and all the way down, from the very cellular level to the height of human emergence. Now, just think about what that means. Paul Johnson writes in his book on the last century one of the two reigning metaphors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Neo-Darwinism, not Darwin. Darwin is actually nuanced and complex when you read him. Evolution, one thousand percent. Evolutionary and Integral are the same word. The evolutionary developmental perspective on all levels, biosphere, noosphere, physiosphere, is something we understand as a given of reality. Evolution, one thousand percent, we embrace it with delight, but Neo-Darwinism? Absolutely not.

The Neo-Darwinists, not Darwin, but what the scientism of Neo-Darwinists claim is essentially a fundamentalist claim. That's the best way to describe it. I've described it that way for years and I was utterly delighted in the last dialogue when Ken spontaneously described it the exact same way. It's a fundamentalism. It's a fundamentalism which says that this entire process of emerging complexity can only be understood from a third-person perspective, and it happens driven by chance. And our response to that is, "No chance, no chance, doesn't happen." The possibility of that happening is impossible, but fundamentalisms always claim impossibility because they're only willing to look at the world from a particular lens, the eye of the mind, the eye of the flesh, a Flatland perspective which, as Mumford said, disqualifies the universe.

And so, as Paul Johnson points out, the reigning metaphor of the 20<sup>th</sup> century becomes the bloody claw of brutal competition in which the survival of the fittest driven by random mutation and chance unfolds reality. What a world to live in? Is it any shock that the 20<sup>th</sup> century had a 100 million people die brutally and unnecessarily at each other's hands when the reigning metaphor is the bloody claw of a fundamentalist Neo-Darwinism?

And imagine what happens when an emergent world spirituality moves with grace and humility to shift something in the very source code of reality and says we embrace evolution and the yearning force of Eros which is the evolutionary impulse, but we understand that the third-person perspective, the evolution of complexity is driven not by chance, but the interior face of that complexity, seen through the eye of the spirit as consciousness, and the inner face of consciousness, *sat chit ananda* – *chit* (consciousness), *ananda* (love-bliss). The inner face of consciousness is no less than love itself and what drives the evolutionary process is love.

In the popular mind there's no split between evolution and Neo-Darwinism, so to make that split is everything. When I make that split what I realize is, A, the animating Eros of evolution is love driven to higher levels of recognition, union and

embrace. I realize that evolution has a direction, it's going somewhere. It just changes everything. And, just to feel this together, I realize as well that there's no split between relative and absolute love. So many suggestions say there's relative love. That's just the stuff that happens between human beings. It's weak. It's pallid. But impersonal, Kosmic love, that's where the realization is.

The entire essence of this teaching is one love. It's what we said on Wednesday night, one love. There's absolutely no split on the inside of the inside between the love that drives the Kosmos, Dante's the love that moves the sun and the stars, evolution as the gentle persuasion towards God by the gentle movement of love. There's no split between the impersonal love beating in the heart of the Kosmos and the love which is ultimately personal and intimate, beating in your heart and mind. It's one love, all the way up and all the way down. That is the third face of Eros. It's the face of yearning.

And just to say it the last way – De Chardin – love is the infinity which links and draws together the elements of the world. Love is in fact the agent of universal synthesis. Love alone can unite living beings so as to complete them and fulfill them, for it alone joins them by what is deepest in them. Our most urgent need is to imagine our ability to love developing until it embraces the totality of all beings on earth. And if you know the original quote, yes, I changed it a little bit. Some day, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for – and as God, we add on – for and as God the energies of love and then for a second time in the history of the world, man, woman, human being will have discovered fire.

Let's link it all together from the beginning to where we are today. In every single moment, aware of it or not – that's how we began the Future of Love Dialogues – you're drenched in the Kosmic love that animates the Kosmos, which is alive in and as All-That-Is. Love is not hard to find. Love is not difficult to achieve. Rather love is impossible to avoid, at the very cellular level, all the way up and all the way down.

So that is, my friends, the third face of the erotic. And, finally, the fourth face of Eros under the aspect of becoming is the face of wholeness, of inner connectivity which is the realization that the world is filled with invisible lines of connection. It's the interconnectivity of the All with the All in which parts become wholes, which become parts, which becomes wholes, the face of wholeness which is, again, evolution moving and wholifying towards its highest realization. So these are the faces of the erotic.

So now we breathe together and we again put out a hand with a thumb. Let's do it. Here we go. Yeah, let's do it again. Oh yeah, let's try it again. Yeah, so if the whole point of the temple in Jerusalem is Eros and that's the Knights Templar and that's the Masons and that's the Raiders of the Lost Ark, so why don't we have above the temple in Jerusalem Dustin Hoffman jogging, breaking through in Marathon Man, or a painter involved deep in art, or people involved in the Eros of conversation? Why do we pick a sexual image as the image of Eros? If Eros is everything we've described it to be – it's being and becoming, it's interiority, it's the interconnectivity of the All and the All, it's participating in the very yearning force of being, it's

fullness of presence – so let's take an image associated with any one of those four faces of Eros and let it be above the Ark in the Holy of Holies, on the inside of the inside in the temple in Jerusalem. Instead we have two fucking cherubs. Why?

And so this becomes the essence of the story. And now we unfold this gorgeous esoteric play which is at the center of the Lost Ark. It is, I believe, the center of the Mary Magdalene mystery. And Cynthia, who I hope is here, who wrote a book on it, will be actually giving a session tomorrow with Sally which will talk about it.

So here it is. Let's pull it together. Why do we have this sexual image in the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem? Something like this. Sex is the great mystery. How do we understand it? There are actually a number of core approaches. If I had to summarize them in a second, I would say the Freudian libertines and the moralists. The moralists basically say sex is bad news. It's dangerous and it needs to be controlled. It's the major movement of the church, but it's really the major movement in Plato.

Although Huston Smith and Ken have emphasized the Seventh Epistle of Plato which has a descending current, but the overwhelming movement in Plato is ascending and, as most scholars point out, correctly. There's this Platonic split between matter and spirit. Sex is the most dangerous of all. It's caused more train wrecks than we can imagine. And if we would do a little sharing now, we'd have seven people come and share their sex train wrecks. It would get interesting. But we're not going to do that, because someone might ask me to share, which would be bad. So that's one approach.

The second approach is the Freudian approach, which is a kind of closeted, subtle libertine approach, which says something like if you achieve equilibrium in your sexuality and you have kind of an even balance and you can kind of let off steam appropriately, that equilibrium creates a healthy, functioning human being. Now, Freud slightly confused human beings and steam engines, which was problematic as the reigning metaphor of his day. As Riesman said, sex is the final frontier. We've crossed it and found it wanting.

So what is the mystery of the sexual? So, deep in the esoteric tradition, five centuries before the Common Era, we have what's called in scattered Aramaic texts *Sod Hakeruvim*, the Secret of the Cherubs, and this was the essence of the Solomon teaching. And the Secret of the Cherubs says as follows. The sexual is not the erotic. The sexual models the erotic. Sex is the answer, because if sex isn't the answer then the Divine is a sadist schmuck who places sexuality in the center of reality and says, "Look, this is going to mess you up and I'm going to watch. This is fun." Or, alternative possibility, embedded within the sexual is the model of all that's holy. The sexual models the erotic, which is the holy.

What does that mean? It means where do you experience the yearning force of being most available, most accessibly? You experience it in the rush of the sexual, in the ecstatic urgency of the sexual, in the yearning to merge and to emerge and to play in that way and to move beyond my Separate Self and to join with other, sometimes risking everything for that joining, which is why the sexual is so powerful, because the sexual approximates, tastes of, is part of that very evolutionary impulse moving

through you. But the sexual is not the erotic, it's not Eros. It models the erotic. The sexual is the place where I can experience – on a good day – being on the inside of the inside, participating in the yearning force of being, fullness of presence, the invisible lines of connection. The sexual models the erotic.

Now, stay with me. Then the temple falls, mythically the temple falls. What's the fall of the temple? The exile of Eros. Remember, the fall of the temple is the fall of Eros. It's the exile of Eros. So let me ask you a question. When Eros is exiled, where does it go, to New Jersey? What happens? It's exiled. Where? We're looking for it. So it's so beautiful, it's so deep, it's so just obvious. The erotic is exiled into the sexual. You hear that? The exile of the Shekhina in the esoteric teaching is the exile of the erotic, which is the exile of the erotic into the sexual, meaning the place that we easily access Eros is the sexual.

And then what happens is we exile Eros and we ask the sexual to fulfill all of our erotic needs, and then the sexual collapses under the weight of a burden it can't possibly bear, because the sexual, in its best moment, can model the erotic, it can fulfill our sexual needs, but it's not Eros. Eros is to live erotically in all of the non-sexual dimensions of living. It's to live erotically when you garden, when you walk, when you write, when you engage, when you do business, when we raise our children, when we argue, when we fight, in both the place of sweetness and separation, and in all those places we want to live filled with Eros.

So the fall of the temple is this mythic experience in which Eros becomes limited and available tragically exiled to the bedroom, or on a good day the kitchen table, but nonetheless relegated to – don't add places now, okay – relegated to the sexual. So look what happens, and just kind of feel into it for a second, okay? So the fall of the temple is the fall of Eros. So the exile of the Shekhina – let's weave our field and our tapestry of meaning as we begin to see the patterns that connect – the exile of the Shekhina is the exile of Eros. Where is Eros exiled to? The sexual.

Now, what happens? When Eros is exiled to the sexual, what happens is I seek to fulfill my core erotic needs in the sexual itself, and, as we just said, the sexual collapses under the weight of a burden it can't bear. So what do we do? We keep upping the ante on the sexual and we keep demanding more and more of it, until we can only taste the full taste of Eros, not only just in the sexual, but only in boundary-breaking sexuality.

You begin to understand the text. From the day the temple was destroyed, the taste of Eros, [Text 1:07:32] is only available in boundary-breaking sexuality about which the Talmud says, citing Proverbs, “*Mayim genuvim yimtaku, velechem setarim yin'am.*” Stolen waters are sweet. Wow, so now we understand our original text. He only wants her when she's married, because he can only access Eros in the sexual, but then it's an exile within an exile. I can only access Eros, not just in the sexual, but in boundary-breaking sexuality itself. So to liberate Eros is to begin to access the erotic in every field of reality beyond the merely sexual. That's powerful.

Let's just image it for a second, just feel what it means. So Freud said the whole world is just a metaphor for sex. What kind of move is that? Reductionist – reduce it all to sex. The Kabbalists, the Secret of the Cherubs says sex is a metaphor for

everything else. The sexual models the erotic, it doesn't exhaust the erotic. And when Akiva says about the Song of Songs, which is the biblical book that allegorizes divinity and human relationship in terms of raw passion and sexuality, it's read by 2,000 years of Christian and Jewish tradition as an allegory, meaning it's not really talking about the sexual, it's an allegory for true spiritual love. Bad reading, 2,000 years of bad reading. The word *mashal* in the original Hebrew isn't 'allegory', it's 'model' or 'symbol'. *Shir ha-Shirim*, the erotic Song of Songs, the sexual Song of Songs, models the holy.

So along comes one sage, Akiva, fighting against a huge movement in the rabbinic community to exclude the sexual Song of Songs from the canon of holy books, because how could it be there, right? And he says, "[Text 1:09:41] *kodesh*." He says, "All the holy books, they're holy," but *Shir ha-Shirim*, the sexual Song of Songs, "*Kodesh Kodoshim*," Holy of Holies, the inside of the inside. Now, if you know how to sense an esoteric text, what does he mean? The Secret of the Cherubs, Holy of Holies, the Ark, the cherubs above the Ark, the Secret of the Cherubs. The sexual models the erotic. It doesn't exhaust the erotic.

And let's just in our last few minutes, let's begin to kind of take this home and see how this plays. So I want to share with you two last images of what it means that the sexual models the erotic, and what it means to redeem Eros and then to make it the fabric of our lives in all of the non-sexual dimensions of being, which is the Secret of the Cherubs, which is Eros as we need it to be. So let's feel it for a second. Here we go.

Here's an example, giving and receiving. In our usual lives, you go to the bank and you withdraw money. So you take money from the bank. You say to the teller, "Hey, instead of debiting my account, do me a favor, credit my account." So the teller looks at you and says, "That's a little strange." If you're a well-heeled client they laugh for a second, but if you keep insisting, they throw you out of the bank. Why? Because either you're receiving money from your account or you're giving money into your account, because we know that the entire structure of everything that exists in the world, in the political economic world of discourse is based on the essential dualistic and correct split between giving and receiving.

But the sexual is subversive. It models the Eros which is holy. Remember, the erotic and the holy are one. The sexual models Eros. Where does the split in duality between giving and receiving collapse? In the sexual. It's called in Kabbalah *sod haneshikin*, the secret of the kiss, in which giving and receiving become one. There's no split. We've transcended the duality and entered into a different realm, a different order of being – Eros, the holy, modeled by the sexual.

So I want to share with you just an image in terms of giving and receiving of really the most erotic moment that I've seen in many, many years. If you've ever been in Israel, you know that in Israel there's a food called falafel, and it's quite bad in my estimate. It's a very greasy ball cooked in a particular way, in way too much oil, stuffed in a large pita with bad beans that don't really taste that well, and it's the major Israeli food which is probably the source of most of the problems in the Middle East. And I don't like falafel. I actually have quite an aversion to falafel, which is why I left Israel, among other reasons.

So, anyway, so there I am and I'm dropping off my sons, Eytan and Yair, at a summer camp in Hadera. And I'm with my friend Cary and she says, "Hey, let's go across the street. There's this great falafel stand." And I kind of get a little annoyed, I have to say. I'm like, "Honey, falafel? You know I don't like falafel. Why do we want to eat falafel if I don't...?" "No, no, no, let's go get falafel." So we cross the street. And as we get to this falafel stand there's this old Moroccan man, you know, 80 years old. He's just sitting there and he somehow had this kind of Yoda sense. He was just kind of graceful.

Okay, so I order a falafel, not excited – that's a major understatement – about the possibility. So I take the falafel, I put it in my mouth. Wow! It was literally the taste of the Garden of Eden. And I look at him again and I realize, oh my god, this is the high priest. It's *mamash*, it's the high priest. And he's just sitting there, doing the ritual of the temple, making falafel. And I eat this falafel in literally erotic, orgiastic, undulating ecstasy, quietly, not moving.

And I finish it and I move to pay him. And in Israel a falafel is like 20 shekel. I said, "*Nu, kama ze ole?*" How much is it? And he says, "Seven shekel." I say, "Seven shekel?" I say, "[Text 1:13:56]?" How could that be? He says, "[Text 1:13:58]." That's what I need. For him, on the inside of the inside, all of the love in the world, all of the union and all of the embrace was poured into that falafel. The high priest – giving and receiving became one. He lived erotically in the Holy of Holies, on the inside of the inside.

And let me give you one last image, the last arena in which the sexual models the erotic, it doesn't exhaust the erotic. And we're going to finish exactly on time as the clock strikes 12. The sexual models the erotic, it doesn't exhaust the erotic. In the old holy texts, both in Kashmir Shaivism and Kabbalah and Sufism – and I'll give you the Aramaic version – they say *Shekhinta* – the Shekhina, Eros – [Text 1:14:57], meaning the Shekhina is imagination. What does that mean? Eros is imagination. Now, remember Eros is in exile. So what the text suggests is that imagination or fantasy is in exile. So what does that mean?

So just picture it for a second. Many of you have probably been to a kind of New Age spiritual event in which they do visualizations, and visualizations are actually a sacred practice in Tibetan, Kashmir Shaivism, Kabbalah, but they've kind of been hijacked a little bit in the New Age world. So you're kind of in a room with 300 people and you shut your eyes, and you've never done visualization before, and someone walks you through and all 300 people are seeing 10,000 lotus petals falling on them as their mother emerges, and there's Pinocchio, right? And most of the people are lying, because actually visualization's a practice and it's not an easy practice. But we actually feel somehow if we can't access the fantasy or imagination of spiritual practice we're kind of embarrassed, because imagination/fantasy is in exile. Where is Eros in exile? In the sexual.

Imagine – I'll say this to the masculine in the room and to the feminine in the room in a different way. So to the men, not to the masculine, to the men, imagine you're now going to become a master of visualization. You're standing. There's a woman across the room. She slowly unbuttons... and let's say I went on for an hour and

gave you a detailed description, do you think you could follow me? I'll bet you could, because imagination is exiled, the Eros, which is imagination, is exiled in the sexual. Or the feminine in its sexual fantasy which often has a lot to do with primal yearning, with raw sexuality and with communication and with relationship, and if I unfolded your best fantasy, could you follow it? Perfectly, for a full hour, never lose the thread, because the power of erotic imagination is exiled in the sexual. Should it be there? Of course, bless it, but we need to actually liberate Eros from the merely sexual in all of its gorgeousness and reclaim the Eros of imagination, of fantasy as a core dimension of what we are, because otherwise imagination is in exile.

And if you think God's a figment of your imagination, it's worth remembering that your imagination is a figment of God. Imagination is [\[Text 1:17:43\]](#) *adameh*. It's the power to reimagine reality. And most of the pain of the brutality of the 20 million children who die of hunger every year, of the rapes that are happening within the period of this talk, according to the best statistics 2,000 at least, the amount of children who died during the period of this talk of malnutrition on a planet on which there's resources available for every single child to be well fed is a crisis, not of resources, but a crisis of imagination. It's an inability to reimagine our world differently than it is. We're trapped in old paradigms. And to be able to erotically reimagine reality is to change everything. It's to change everything.

And as we move towards New Year in the next seven or eight minutes, let's access the power of imagination. Deepak yesterday talked about possibility as he unfolded the levels of consciousness which were the levels of love in ever unfolding realities. And if you would summarize everything in the first part of his talk, which I'll do with a Kabbalistic image, we would say that the Divine is the possibility of possibility. Divinity/Eros is the possibility of possibility itself. And idolatry with its images is a freezing of imagination.

So we need to reclaim fantasy. Imagination is in exile. We need a politics of love. We need a politics of Eros in which we can reimagine the essential outcomes of the world, which we've given up. In a beautiful dialogue in the Future of Love series with Robb Smith and John Mackey, John said at the end of the dialogue, "Stop, I've got to say something else," and you could feel, he just needed to say it, and he said it beautifully. He's the head of Whole Foods. He said, "Love isn't weak. Love is strong."

That's absolutely true. Love is the strongest force of the universe, Eros, the evolutionary impulse unfolding, Eros which is imagination, which is our ability to actually reimagine everything. Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire. You will what you imagine. You create what you will. That's the whole story.

Here's an image as we move towards our closing and begin the New Year's toast, and it's these two images which for me kind of drove in my heart this whole story, this whole politics of Eros, this politics of love, this Integral evolutionary embrace which re-shifts the reigning metaphor in the internal source code of reality from a blind chance-driven Neo-Darwinian fundamentalism to a world animated by Eros and love, love's direction, ever higher levels of inclusion, embrace and recognition. Here are the images.

Do you remember The Twilight Zone, anyone? So, when I was nine years old I saw The Twilight Zone, and it was one of the most powerful things that I've ever seen. On my nine-year-old brain it was imprinted, and if you've seen it just hold it. It was about a little boy whose father was a boxer. And he's in the ring and he's in a match that he can't win. And the match is going on, it's going through all the rounds, and his son is crying and devastated as his father's getting pummeled and beaten. And for a son who wants the blessing of the father, to see his father humiliated and disgraced is a tragedy.

And, by the way, parentheses, in Israel, the country with which I'm madly in love and ultimately my home and my heart, in Israel, whatever the issue is with Palestinians and Israelis which is a huge topic, one of the great tragedies is that Israel has to have check posts, and at these check posts, which you have to have because you have terrorists wanting to blow buses up... I've seen a bus blow up with schoolchildren. So you have to have check posts. But the tragedy, the insoluble tragedy of the check posts is that you see Palestinian men searched by Israeli soldiers and humiliated daily in front of their children. So what do you do? The Israelis say, "We have no choice. What can we possibly do? We can't have school buses blowing up." And they're right. And the Palestinians say, "This is an ultimate humiliation and disgrace. It's a dishonoring which in the Arabic world is the ultimate violation."

But it's a crisis of imagination. Here's my invitation to my own Israel. Let's take the best soldiers we have, not the rough border guard. Let's train them. Let's set up at every check post juice stands, rituals, little massage stands, places and ways of honor. We should have a ritual in which we bow and ask forgiveness before we do the search, and give infinite honor to the person we're forced to search. The search is accomplished, the children protected, and honor upheld. Peace comes when we move through the crisis of imagination that stultifies us.

So, imagine this. This little boy imagines his father, as he sees him being pummeled, he imagines and he prays. He imagines he enters into the inside of the inside, into the interior face of the Kosmos, and he wills a different outcome, and in that different outcome his father wins. His father comes home. The son tells his father what happened. He says, "Dad, you lost, but I love you so much I re-imagined the entire thing and I made it happen differently. You won." And the father looks at him. And he says, "Dad, you've got to believe that it could happen, because if you don't believe it, it's going to reverse back to what happened the first time." And he desperately pleads with his father, and his father, he doesn't understand. He doesn't understand, "I do believe in fairies, I do, I do." His father can't do it. And so the scene is replayed a third time and the father loses, pummeled and destroyed in front of his son.

Let me share with you the image that was the reigning image of my youth, a story I heard a thousand times from my mother. My mother was born in Stanislaw. Stanislaw is in Poland. And she was raised in a Christian family who actually saved her from the concentration camps. At some point – it's a long and terrible story – the Gestapo came and raided the house, looking for her, that she was in, and killed everyone there. And she was hiding in a tree overlooking the carnage. And then two

Gestapo men came out with a bay and they took the baby and I can hear my mother saying it, and she said, “Like a wishbone,” they ripped the baby apart.” And that was the reigning image of my mother’s life and it was the story she told me again and again and again and again.

And at some point, 10 years ago, writing on the inside of the inside, I realized, oh my god, in some mystical, mythic, crazy way, I thought, oh my god, is that me? What can I do? And I realized only now that the only thing we can do is to reimagine the story. And if we can actually enter at this moment, if you understand the physics that Deepak was talking about last night, and you put Deepak’s keynote last night about the physics and the infinite possibility inherent in the karma, the karma that creates reality right now in all the worlds backwards and forwards, past and future, reconfiguring everything that ever happened, if you understand that and you understand love as the animating Eros of evolution, the evolutionary impulse itself addressing us personally, living as the beating heart of the Kosmos in our compassion, if we could, at this moment now as we go into the New Year, reimagine that story, if we could reimagine and have those two Gestapo men come out and be moved and have their hearts open at this baby who had survived the massacre, and I can see one of them in this moment picking up the baby and holding the baby in his arms and bringing the baby home and raising the baby as his, if that could but happen... and it can.

So I want to invite you, as we go into the New Year, to imagine that with me together, to move beyond the crisis of imagination that locks us in our egocentric predicament as pain abounds around us, that we can actually trance-end that stupor of egocentricity and reimagine the pain, reimagine the separation, the differentiation and feel into and become that Gestapo man, taking that baby into his arms and being aroused by the beauty of the baby – like when I look at Zion and I say, oh my god, he’s so beautiful – and feel his heart opening as our heart opens together with him. And as we reimagine a world in which resources are distributed in a way that 20 million children don’t die every year of malnutrition, that 17 million women aren’t brutally enslaved in labor or sexual slavery. That’s what New Year’s is about.

So I want to ask you to raise your cup in a toast, raise our cups in a toast and toast to the power of imagination, to the power of fantasy. Let’s fantasize together about the future of love. Let’s fantasize together and let that fantasy rip, explicit, pornographically, exquisitely beautiful in the pornography of kindness, of love, of embrace, and then let there be a billion-dollar industry all over the world with men particularly downloading images of kindness. Oh my god, I’ve got to see that new website, wow! And with the feminine, and together we’re going to reimagine our reality and step into it. We have our brush. We have our colors. Let’s paint paradise and in we go. Thank you.

[applause]

Happy New Year! Midnight in New York! Let it be. Thank you everyone. The future of love is us. Thank you. Beautiful!