

"Your complete, total, final, and absolute freedom lies in the vast realm of the unknown. To enter the unknown you must leave everything that you've accumulated, including the wonderful peacefulness of the present, which in the end is just one more experience, just one more construction of the mind."

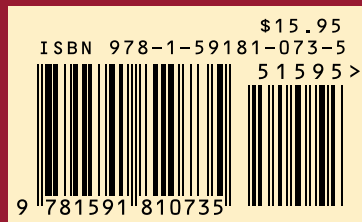
—Steven Harrison, *The Love of Uncertainty*

Steven Harrison is one of the most discerning contemporary voices engaging the issues of mind, consciousness, and society. In his international dialogues, he encourages participants to deconstruct their belief systems, examine their actual experience, and explore what is authentic in life. This book provides readers a unique window into these talks, which have invited so many to a life of inquiry.

In wrestling with the questions foremost in our lives, Harrison suggests that ideas once regarded as useful can give way to an honest exploration in which openness to the questions themselves becomes more vital than any answers. This fascinating collection of talks delves into extraordinarily thorny areas of investigation, including the nature of creativity, non-existence, exformation, group intelligence, positive confusion, the dynamic nature of not understanding, and the genesis of reality itself.

Steven Harrison, whose seminal work, *Doing Nothing: Coming to the End of the Spiritual Search*, helped guide spiritual seekers to the experience of the present without practices, has written seven other books on mind-consciousness inquiry and the post-spiritual life.

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THE LOVE OF UNCERTAINTY

HARRISON



The Love of UNCERTAINTY

STEVEN HARRISON



THE LOVE OF
UNCERTAINTY

SAMPLE TEXT

THE LOVE OF
UNCERTAINTY

Steven Harrison



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FOREWORD

For the past ten years Steven Harrison has been holding dialogue groups around the world. They were an experiment, an exploration of the potential for accessing more than the limited point of view of the self. They had no set agenda—just the intention to express what was alive, vital, passionate, and true in the interactions of the participants. They took place in private homes, retreat centers, schools, bookstores, and auditoriums in the U.S, Europe, Africa, and India. At any one meeting, there could be only a handful, or hundreds of people in attendance.

What happens when a group comes together with no clearly defined purpose, no one shaping the experience, no shared belief system, and not even a yardstick for measuring success in the experiment? This may sound like chaos, and there were times when the dialogues were very lively and unformed. There were also times of boredom, argumentation, drama, laughter, and serene stillness. Just like life.

The dialogues were an attempt to do away with a prescribed form—or at least to make the form as transparent as possible—and let the movement of life create something new. And at times the individuals in the dialogue group stepped out of the way and allowed that to occur. In those moments the inquiry could move into extraordinarily thorny areas,

including the nature of creativity, non-existence, exformation, group intelligence, positive confusion, the dynamic nature of not understanding, and the genesis of reality itself.

The intention behind this book was to give some of the flavor of that experiment, some of the liveliness of the interchange. But instead of a format with various people speaking, we decided to present the author's words, with the questions and comments of others occasionally folded into them for clarity's sake. The dialogues were group experiments and yet Steven Harrison was the one initiating, facilitating, and providing the strong impetus for those experiments. It is the wisdom of his words, eliciting and responding to the questions and comments of other participants, that you will find in these pages.

This is spoken language, albeit spoken by a very articulate person, so it carries a different character than written language. He often speaks in the first person to illustrate a point. In most cases, these illustrative first-person scenarios should not be taken to be autobiographical—they are simply a tool of expression.

A lot is packed into these short chapters, and they carry a perspective that our rational minds can find difficult to entertain. A slow reading is probably the best approach. It is my hope as editor that this book will convey something of the deep feeling underlying those meetings, and that readers will be moved by what they find here.

—*Connie Shaw*

PREFACE

When Connie Shaw brought up the notion of creating a book from talks and dialogs I have done over the past years, I found resistance to the idea. I felt that the words I had spoken in the discovery of what occurs at unformatted gatherings could not be taken out of the context of that meeting and those individuals. But much as I explore in this book, resistance is part and parcel of the creative movement, and I began to see that the transcripts were useful, not so much in their content, which is often imprecise and imperfect, but in the taste and feeling of inquiry. We stumble often as we look into the areas of life that are unfamiliar, and it is the willingness to continue on despite the impediments of unknowing that is portrayed here.

Do not look for a tight philosophical treatise in these pages, you will find only a partial record of the spontaneous exploration of the origins of our reality. Perhaps for you, this text will engender a deeper inspection of what you know about the world, and perhaps more interesting, what you can never know.

There are many co-creators of this book. My deep and heartfelt thanks to all those who have gathered over the years, taking the risk of creativity by stepping into an unknown space with me. Thanks, too, to those who organized

PREFACE

the dialogs and brought me to all corners of the earth with no promise from me and no conditions placed on me. This book would not have occurred without the dogged insistence of Connie Shaw, along with her skilled editing, the relentless transcription of Adam Schnitzmeier, and Sentient Publications' dedication to publishing works of inquiry. And lastly, thanks to you the reader, for seeking this book and delving into this investigation of mind, consciousness, and reality.

—*Steven Harrison*

THE LOVE OF
UNCERTAINTY

WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

We seek creativity, the appearance of something that we haven't seen before. Yet what we see is described by what we have already seen. We encapsulate what we see into an experience based on what we already know, what we've already done. I wonder if we can have an experience that is not from the past, an experience that we have never had before.

If what you're experiencing now is known, then you know something about it—whether it's good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable. But if it's truly unknown, then what's also unknown is the knower: *who* you are, *where* you are, and *what* you are. You come into this moment presuming some things—that you're the body, you're the mind, you're the accumulation of experiences you've had, you're the future that you worry about. Or maybe you have the idea that you're none of those things, because you've read some books

and had some experiences and you have the idea that you're consciousness, stillness, awareness or silence.

But in fact, if you have no idea *who* you are or *where* you are or *what* you are, then you can actually begin. That beginning is the point of creativity. It doesn't draw on what you know, it doesn't draw on what you are or your experience or skills. It's not located in you and it's not located in me. So *where* is it and *what* is it? Is creativity a feeling of flow, or a feeling of connection, a feeling of expression?

Let's look at how we *do* experience what's happening to us, and then let's see how we *don't* experience it. The way I experience a room I'm in is through information. I see the door, I see the windows. I see the look on the face of the other person in the room with me and I relate that look to other people who have looked like that in the past, and I bundle it all up into a "how's it going?" kind of feeling that tells me whether I should be more *this* or less *that*. That experience is happening both in a conceptual framework and in the body—the feeling of anticipation, the feeling of caution, tightness.

All very interesting, but I also notice that there's the rest of the universe. There's *my* experience, this little piece of it that is the *information*, but there's also the *exformation*, *everything else*, which has been eliminated in that information. The exformation is much broader, bigger, more intense, and inclusive than my information. Once I see that, then I have a challenge, which is to look *around* the information to get at what's happening. The information just tells me a piece of what *did* happen, it doesn't tell me what *is* happening. I have to look at the exformation—the space around the information—to understand what's actually going on.

Is it possible to have an experience of what is around what we normally call experience, which is what we know?

Is some other kind of experience possible? Not in theory, but happening here and now.

I'm not interested in what *my* experience is. I'm really interested in what *our* experience, the *whole* experience is. I notice that I can't get to the whole experience through my experience. I'm intensely tired of my experience, as I hope you are. It's just been going around and around in circles. But how do I access *her* or *his* or *your* experience—the space around my particular historic, ideated experience?

All I know is the experience-gathering story, and that's repeating itself. Expectation is the prediction that experience gives us: "This is what happened *last* time, so this is what probably *will* happen." What stops the experiencer, ready or not, from encapsulating *everything* into more of the same? I prepare myself. I do my spiritual practices or my *post*-spiritual practices or my *non*-practice or my silence or whatever it is that I do—because I'm pretty good at doing *something*—and I'm prepared, and then something happens. That *something* automatically becomes experience.

But if we're not going for experience—whether we're ready or not—there's no way to even know what occurs. We know how to get ready for an experience, but if we're not interested in the realm of experience anymore, then how do we know anything about anything? How do we know what to *do* with that? This is the edge of what we know, and we sit on that edge, play on that edge. If everything on the edge is known, then I guess we have to unknow.

How do we recognize newness? How do we get from the repeating pattern that I call me and am so proud of, so defensive about, so aggressive with, and so in love with? This thing called me—wonderful, awful, whether with high self-esteem or low self-esteem—how do we get from that to *newness*?

Creativity comes out of the other side of destruction. Without destruction, nothing is created. There's just the past, repeating. We *apply* the past to the new, and cover it over. Our belief in the experientially referenced selves will be vaporized if we're actually *living* creatively, not just *talking* about living creatively.

What is creativity if I include the exformation? Here I am having my little subjective informational creativity when I notice that the whole experience is collapsing. Then a new experience emerges, and I think, "*That* is creativity." Now I have that little bubble of creativity that I've made, and there's the rest of the universe going on. Let's include information and exformation, and put it all together into something *total*. What's the creative movement then?

Perhaps we can be happy with a quasi-Buddhist description of thought arising and creating the universe, and that's it—we're pretty much done. We can just go practice watching or manifesting and that's it, because that's all there is. But if we're creating this little something out of nothing, then we're living in a subset of totality. Is that it? Is there any way to access a *total* quality *and* for that to be creative?

What human beings have recognized so far is that we cause experience out of totality, and that's all we can get to. Is there any other possibility? Can we function from something else besides that little experience machine, and even something other than the meta-level of the *recognition* of that experience machine? We not only have the experience, we also recognize that we're generating the experience, so we have our little awareness as the watcher of that experience.

The important question is *what* is creating wholeness and the expression of wholeness, and where do you sit in relation to that? Mostly where we sit is "I'm in a fragment having this

experience of wholeness. And that's pretty darn good, because I *had* that experience, I *have* that experience, and I *will have* that experience, and that gives me something to hang my hat on—the experience of wholeness.” But now we see that the experience is actually generated by the fragment arising and stripping out a piece of it, and the experience is just a little piece pretending to be the experience of the whole.

But is that true and is it creative and are we content to go about our apparently separate creative lives with this labyrinthine explanation?

It looks very much like we at least have the *idea* of separate doership. We certainly have a culture of separation; we express ourselves as separate beings. We all have our own driver's license or our bus pass, our personal possessions, our history, and all the rest of it. We seem to be expressing ourselves as if we're separate doers.

Then we have our spirituality, which is about generating an experience of the meta-level, a level of transcendence or God or connection. That meta-level is something we like to dabble in as an experience. We do our drug thing, our religious thing, or meditation thing or post-spirituality or *non-spirituality*, and we have that hit, our experience of the non-dual or the connected state. But it doesn't look like we want to *live* in that, to manifest from that, to express culture from that.

We're really good at manifesting something about *me* or *me and you*. We can get these small subsets going. I have the wife and the kid and the house and the job and that all works and I'm transcendent and hip. But it leaves out the other six and a half billion people, because I don't really care about them. They're not in my subset. What about the *whole*? What about manifesting something that is accessible, hip, interesting, transformative, and expressive of the *whole*?

PUSHING THE RIVER

I don't mind pushing the river. I know that's not spiritually correct and I should be sitting and *watching* the river. Maybe I just need to revert to my former spiritual self who was able to just watch the river and think, "That's very cool." Sort of a Zen-like thing.

But what if I'm sitting by the river, appreciating the beauty of it, and in that Zen-like sensibility, I, the rock I'm sitting on, and the river all start to look like they're pretty much the same thing? Now does pushing the river take on a different characteristic than if I'm sitting *looking* at the object called *river*? If I *am* the river, don't I have the absolute universal right to push myself?

Shall we push the river? Why don't you and I, as parts of that river, *push* the damn thing? Why not? Is that a possible creative movement? Can life, the whole, the river, push itself?

Are we *interested* in pushing it? Otherwise we're just going to rationalize the life that we're already living. We go to Wal-Mart and we buy something and we feel good and substantial, our kid gets a report card, good and substantial, and we continue on in our life. But what if we think, "I am about to die" (which we could do literally or figuratively)? Now something completely new is about to emerge—molecular change—which *might* mean pushing whatever the river is.

Speaking as the river, and speaking as the one sitting and looking at the river—and anything else you want to name in that viewpoint—I feel like pushing the river.

Now what do I *do* with that? I could push those around me, which is my habit, my personality. But, I'm not really that interested in my habits anymore. I *am* interested in pushing the river.

Do you see the meta-level here? Do you absolutely think you are the location you've been assigned in this life that you're busy supporting? Are you really convinced that's true?

Can we just acknowledge we're the river, and then get on with what the river wants to create? That's a very interesting question, but we can't get there if we think we're sitting here watching the river.

I'm asking you to check in and see where you actually *are* located. If we think we're these locations, these subsets, then we'll be *that* I suppose. But we've been deconstructing the location thing for years now. At what point do we stop and say, "Okay, I'm not the location, I'm something unknown—the exformation and the information—so let's find out what the hell I'm going to *do* with *that*"?

Perhaps you feel that we're not pushing each other or

trying to push a metaphoric river, but we're just engaged in a process.

I am very suspicious of the word *process*.

Process implies time, which is a really interesting trap that we're constantly falling into. Time gives definition and location, and then we're in information. Time and information are the same thing. If we're in process, then we're in a location in the subset, and we can find out what that is. But if we're done with location and time, then all we really have to work with is manifestation—not then, and not before, but *currently*.

It's not going to be *me* pushing the river, it's *us*—the river—pushing, birthing, creating. I have no idea if this is the moment in which that occurs in some kind of spontaneous action, without any preconditions, including the idea that we must rid ourselves of our ideas.

The game of the ego is to have the idea of its own substance, and then it sets about destroying itself—analyzing itself, helping itself, rejecting itself. There's no ego to destroy. Sorry. If there's no ego to destroy, then the ego is the expression of the whole. Now you're the river—in your arrogance, in your stupidity, in your foolhardiness. That's the river.

We're not experiencing newness because we have the hazy illusion that we're individuals working on ourselves in time and process. But there is just manifestation. And you're it. And the you is not you, the you is we. That's all fine. Now I'm manifesting and you're manifesting, but is that *it*? The push is what I'm calling the creative expression. It's not pushing out of *you* though, it's pushing out of some broader base, because the push that is your habit doesn't have any energy anymore.

Perhaps you feel that your particular habits are safe, and

that an expression that is not habitual may involve doing things you don't want to do.

Creativity might mean doing *everything*, what you like and what you don't like.

Or maybe even worse, doing everything exactly the *same* as you now do it. There are no guarantees about the unknown.

If you look at the structures out of which we're functioning and habitually moving, as if there's just me and everything I collect around me for my particular enhancement, you see that, collectively and socially, the structures are tired out. They're not working. Look at the world and the way it's configuring itself. It's consuming itself in the individual search for security. That is expressing itself in the form of thought arising all the time, trying to collect security for each individual as if each individual can have security when the person next to them doesn't. On whatever level you want to view it, what's happening is the exhaustion of the manifest form that we've collectively and individually taken on.

If that's exhausting itself and fear arises—if *terror* arises—I say *that* energy *is* the creativity we're looking for. But what we call creativity is often a code word for feeling good—feeling the flow, or feeling like I'm doing something that's valued by myself or society. I'm saying creativity is *everything that expresses itself*, not just what feels good. When fear and terror starts coming up, that's it too. It means you're touching into the space that we're trying to explore and we can actually begin to explore it. We have all heard the advice on what to do with fear—breathe into it and so on. I have no *idea* what to do with it. I know what the habit is: pull back from fear and try to protect myself. But what I'm protecting myself from is energy, the creative force.

The exformation is *always* going to be overwhelming. It's always going to be experienced by this *information* as fear, because it's always going to be vastly greater than the information. We could say that fear is a portal to the exformation, the vastness, which is washing downriver and pushing. And what we tend to do, what the thought structure does, is try to cover our heads and hold back the flow.

We've all gotten quite enamored of energetically cool spaces. We've become very comfortable in awareness and silence. But they've become spaces; they've become experiences that we practice. The nature of life is that it breaks down all experience, because experience is always inaccurate. The crush of exformation is always pushing in against the information, and that's transformation. That's how change happens. Otherwise we would just have our information, it would repeat itself endlessly, and that would be that. It would be a static universe. But obviously it's a dynamic universe and change is occurring. How does change occur? Well originally we were in agitated states and we found peace. Okay, that's a change. Now that we've found peace and it's really nice, we can sit around and talk about it and know what we're talking about. We can create it, and special people have it—everything we call spirituality follows from that.

What we feel as a push is agitation, whether we call it an internal or external push, whether I'm manifesting that push and it's irritating *you* because you don't like to be pushed, or you are irritating *me* because I don't like someone telling me that I'm pushing them. It's all the agitation of change. It's destroying something and creating something. I have to make myself available to that even if it means that my persona—well-developed and well-positioned as it is—will be destroyed. Because the hunger is for the creative movement

that comes through that destruction; and it's not two things, it's really one.

It's not that we need destructive energy or that we need fear or that we need anything in particular. But what *does* actually happen? When we come to the exposure of the exformation do we go with the moving energy or do we try to hold the river back? What happens? I find *that* fascinating—what actually happens.

Can we destroy ourselves and create ourselves? Are we here for that movement? And can we live like that? Maybe a better question is, *will* we live like that? Will we encounter each other like that? Or do we try to control the energy so that it has certain qualities, so that we have nice relationships, feel good, feel useful? Can we actually explore the full spectrum of the energy of life? Isn't that exploration creativity?

THE DINOSAUR AND THE COMET

As we attempt to communicate—which we usually think of as sending information back and forth between ourselves—it’s interesting to look at the space around that information. What communicates is not information, it’s ex-formation—the space around the information. What *doesn’t* happen is the essential element of communication.

I don’t know how we step into what we call creativity or whether creativity is just another idea, but the invitation is to step into that question. Do we mean by creativity something that *I* create and then transfer to *you*? Is it something like singing or dancing, or is it a whole thing, expressed in the whole space? Often the investigation of creativity gets translated into something like grabbing a guitar and singing

a song, which is a kind of creativity, but one that we've already experienced.

Can we actualize from that large energetic space? I don't know what that means particularly, but I know it isn't going to come just from *me*. That would be like a personal creative edge—my limitation and expression—and I can try to enhance that particular expression. But when the comet hits earth and wipes out the dinosaurs, what is the value of being on the edge of dinosaur creativity? When the comet hits the earth, do you want to be understanding and actualizing on the dinosaur level or the universal level? As humans we have to ask, is it the human potential to step into the larger space, or are we already in it?

Let's go into the metaphor of the dinosaur and the cataclysmic comet. If the dinosaur is information and the cataclysm is exformation, does the dinosaur have the capacity to be greater than a dinosaur? Or is it only when it's stuck in information that it is limited by its structure? Are we stuck with the information called *me*, the separate self, because we believe in it? Is it because we have this stickiness to the information, rather than the recognition of the exformation, the whole, which is the exformation and the information together? The whole responds to the cataclysm by evolving life forms that can live in the new climate, but can the dinosaur change with such intelligence? Can we change with the intelligence of the whole?

It's not necessarily that I *can't* step into the whole, it's that I *don't* do it. This is what I notice. *I* don't do it, *you* don't do it, *we* don't do it. We all believe in the information that we have called *me* that I'm going to transfer to *you*, which you may or may not take into *your* information. And now we can say that we are in relationship and we can be creative

together, play music together, we can talk—but it's still an informational relationship.

I'm suggesting that information is a byproduct of the whole. The information—I—poses myself as being essential and important. But in fact the information I know is so tiny and meaningless a fragment of the whole that it's a ridiculous assumption. I live in that assumption, and now I'm going to become creative in that assumption. This is where we all are—wondering how to become more creative as a meaningless fragment of a byproduct of the whole.

I don't really *know* anything, and if I don't know anything *in fact*, what happens? What's the exploration then? When the dinosaur looks up and sees the comet coming down, it doesn't help much to think, "I'm a dinosaur and I'm eating my leaves very creatively and that's a pretty bright thing up in the sky." Is there a space that includes *all* those things, and then how does the dinosaur live creatively in that space?

If we understand that it's not a *me and you* universe, if we discard that information, we then step into the exformation plus the information—the whole. Then what is created in that?

It's the exformation that is most interesting to me, the part that we'll never see and never know, that's not measurable. Do we have access to that *now* or are we the pieces, the dinosaurs saying, "That's a pretty interesting comet"? Does everybody have access to the cosmos, which includes the comet and the dinosaur—the space in which each of us sits? If so, then we can communicate it. Bring it forward. Energize it. Reveal it. *Do* something with it. Give some form to it.

The individual trying to understand or create is an individual neurosis. But I also suggest that something is happening in the space, in the silence itself, in the totality. And that

itself is moving, it's dynamic. When I notice *that*, I see that this individual is a very incomplete and fragmentary reflection of that, which I know is not going to be more than a neurotic expression, however creative I can be. But the dynamic movement of the whole, that's really interesting. It is not just a frozen universe where we're all one. How do I explore the dynamic nature, how do I give expression to it? What are we going to *do* with it? What's the action?

You have to discard a lot of information to get to the exformation. The information, such as what my name is, suggests a huge amount of exformation, that is, all the names that I don't have. We use information to navigate, but we've discarded huge amounts of the universe to have the information that we use. We've built a whole society out of information.

Can we live and function and express using something that is more inclusive or greater than the information we currently function with? Do we live as the energy or do we live as the fragment, who recognizes the energy only because the energy blasts through us occasionally?

We may feel we have a choice about this, but the energy is making the choice and *we're* choiceless. The fragment is choiceless. The energy is what's choosing. This piece has the idea that it's making choices, but in fact it's a mechanical process. The choice is happening energetically, a quantum occurrence.

What shall we explore—how this mechanical thing has the illusion that it's making choices and maybe we could have a better mechanical thing going on? Or shall we explore the nature of the energy? We can't ask that question from the mechanical piece; we have to ask the question from the energy. We've spent far too many hours asking that question from the fragment, asking that question more or less intellectually

or perceptually. Can we ask that question energetically? Can the energy ask that question? Or is it just “It’s a manifest world, what manifests is what it is, energy does that, we’re just the manifestation, and we can just relax and watch TV or whatever it is we like to do. People live and die, and I have nothing to do with any of that”?

Like you, I’m *always* trying to locate myself in time and space. Always. Absolutely. And my *failure* to do that successfully and consistently is my only blessing in life.

I’m aware and all that, *and* I notice that the universe doesn’t give a damn about any of my experiences, because who cares about my silence and bliss but me? Only *I* care about that. Everyone else cares about *their* experience, their security, their family; and we can build some contracts with each other and say that we sort of care about each other unless you get in the way of what *I* care about, and then we break the contract.

People often tell me there’s nothing to do, we shouldn’t do anything, because we’re choiceless and life is doing everything. I usually notice that we’re doing something anyway. If life is in us then why can’t I say *I’m* doing it? If I’m here then *I’m* doing it. We’re playing this game that *it’s* God and God’s making me do it, and then I get to drop out of my own life.

Perhaps you’re thinking you can’t be operating from the Godhead because you’ve never had the experience of enlightenment. Nobody *does* have it, nobody *will* have it, and nobody *can* have it. All we can do is *talk* about enlightenment. We can conceptualize it based on our conditioning, which is sometimes beautiful conditioning, sometimes expansive conditioning, and so on. But there is no experience of enlightenment. When you stop qualifying what is happening—the energy that’s occurring—as experience, then you just have

energy. And you can't call that good, bad, or anything.

But are we there now? Otherwise we're talking hypothetically and it's just one more description, one more experience that we're filing in the conceptual file as the thing that I think about when I think about creativity. If we're truly going to explore what creativity is, then we have to *be* with that, to be in the energy without qualifications and see what happens.

But just as a warning, the Godhead may not be a beautiful place. It may not be the place that we imagined. If you're on that plane to the land of the virgins you may or may not get there. We'll find out the next second where you end up. We can't imagine the space that is acausal, amoral, without any consideration of qualities.

There's no *you* there in the place that you're defining as your collection of experiences, of your qualifications, of how you characterize the energy of life into something that is knowable, that you can recognize. If you don't qualify all that energy, then what's there?

There's no way to answer this question, because how would you *see* it, how would you *know* it? How would you know a quality that isn't characterized as good or bad? There's no way to know it.

The fact that qualities keep showing up is an expression of the dynamic nature of life—life isn't a static thing, it isn't "oneness." We don't get there. It isn't fixed. Stuff keeps spewing out of universal oneness.

We think information is important, but that's within a context of *another* idea. If we're talking about *my* building a business, *my* being an employee, *my* leaving my handprint on this side of the cave, then information is *very* useful. But if you break down that kind of thinking about information, unfortunately you will end up with information being

meaningless, including the information that suggested information is useful. This is *all* within a context that is a belief system. This is hard for us to see because we're so information-bound, we're so enamored with our information—from our big information, "God is (fill in the blank)," to our little information, "I paid my utility bill the other day." Information is what we structure our whole reality around, and what we're talking about is not the possibility that information stops happening, because information and exformation *are* the totality, so it's going to keep going.

We're not trying to get rid of information, but we're looking at whether there's a different way to relate to the spewing of stuff by the universe. If you try to use information to access exformation, are you just converting that into *new* information? The question "Is that true?" simply converts the *old* information into *new* information, so that now I have a deeper understanding or a broader understanding. And now I've got the big understanding and you have the little understanding. Is that what we're doing with all this?

What if we just honestly recognize that this stuff *is* happening? That includes the big space and the little space—so-called meaning and our idea that it *is* meaning *and* our idea that it's *not* meaning. All this is just the stuff of the universe, it's happening as it happens. We don't have to organize it. Nobody has to be different. They don't have to be less neurotic or more enlightened; no deep understanding of an enlightenment experience is necessary, it's just what it is, *and* is there anything to do creatively in that space?

It's tempting to suggest that our biological machinery is set up to side-track ourselves into certain kinds of experiences. We can survive better feeling connected to each other; but that feeling of connection is actually just synaptic discharge,

which we then take to be something special and grand because we build a conceptual framework around it.

For example, helping people makes you feel good, or sitting in meditation makes you feel oceanic. These are biological states—certain areas of the brain are lighting up. If you don't do anything at all you feel sad and disconnected, and that part of the brain lights up. Your impulse to do something comes out of the desire to have a better feeling, in the biological sense.

We're inside our synaptic system *imagining* that we're outside of it. This is why I'm deeply suspicious of experience, of *every* kind, because experience is what our brains are creating all the time.

I can convert whatever is taking place into an experienter, in which case it's completely subjective. It's the bio-machinery, it's synaptic material. That's what I'm used to doing because it allows me to characterize what's out there and be able to manipulate it, to move through it, to survive in my life, which is presumably what the thought mechanism is about in our biological history.

The neurotic mind seems to just keep going, it keeps characterizing, keeps trying to understand. The height of the spiritual ideal is that I'm going to make some effort to stop the neurotic mind—stop, stop, stop, pound my head against the wall, sit on a cushion, and then finally... But that's also in a space—the space of *not* doing. I'm not going to do *anything* about the movement of mind. That spiritual non-doing is going on *and* the space of totality, which is outside of my doing or non-doing, is going on. There isn't any mechanism that makes an experience out of that whole. There's no language for it, no obvious way to utilize it.

Is that *it*? Are we just an experience machine encapsulated

in protoplasm? Is there any quality of intelligence?

The individual human biology is generally not very interested in the energetic space. It's interested in *its* survival, *its* ideas. What is fascinating to me is that I've lost interest in that individual space and yet the individual space keeps churning away. It's not creative, and this engenders a different kind of consideration. There may be a few other people who have also lost interest in that individual conversion of everything into a fixed space, and perhaps we can explore something about the energetic space without creating a new cult, religion, or story.

To really explore means you have to *leave* the fixed space, which means stepping into a connected life, which is at best terrifying. It's something that we talk about but seldom actually *do*.

There never will be an explanation for that interconnected life. That's why it can never take the form of what we see in society, of a religion or a philosophy or a political movement or anything like that. It can never have that form. You can never hold on to it, you can only completely *live* it. It's paying attention to the space between the forms, the exformation as well as the information. It's the quality of total engagement.

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Steven Harrison is the author of:

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The Question to Life's Answers

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