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## A Hindu Swami's Description of his Experience of Level V

I want to quote some accounts, provided by the Hindu swami Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952), of his experience of self-realization, because I believe there are many similarities between these and the abstract descriptions, provided by Dabrowski, of secondary integration. And I suspect these will be of interest to students of the theory of positive disintegration, as well as to researchers who employ the theory, since personal descriptions of secondary integration are relatively rare. All of the citations are from a collection of public talks given by the swami between 1930 and 1943. I have used as subtitles for the various quotations, the categories found in Part Two (i.e., the "Levels of functions" section) of Volume I of **Theory of levels of emotional development**, and have indicated in parentheses the page on which Dabrowski describes the function at level V. I have also included two citations in which Yogananda describes his advanced meditational ability.

Gradient of empathy (pp.110-111)

None I behold as stranger. I rejoice to love all with the God-given pure feeling of human attachment. I care not how many holy men howl, "Be attached to no one!" I am attached to all. Nonattachment is necessary if one's love encompasses only one or a few, excluding all others. Never could my attachment be exclusive, omitting any from my circle of love! (Yogananda, 1986:369)

Immortality (pp.141-142)

Experiencing the bliss of God, you see that there is no such thing as time, and know you shall never die. Everyday I enjoy that consciousness. (Yogananda, 1986:424)

Intuition (p.152)

In my own experience, I find mortal memory fading away; the divine consciousness of my eternal omnipresent soul-nature has become prominent. In this consciousness all knowledge and perception comes to me, not through mental processes or memory, but as intuitive experiences. (Yogananda, 1986:151)

Enthusiasm (p.164)

It would not be understood by many here. People in India understand these things more. Many times there, in ecstasy, my body has fallen as I lost

awareness of this world in the great inner bliss of God. But if that happened here in America, some would say, "What is going on?" (Yogananda, 1986:382)

Solitude (p.171)

Seclusion is the price of greatness. To realize God, to see Jesus and the great ones, you must have time to be by yourself. You cannot have divine communion if you mix with people all of the time. But once you have achieved God-contact, then no matter where you are or with whom, you will be drunk with the presence of the Lord. (Yogananda, 1986:381)

Attitude toward death (p.173)

For me there is no longer any veil between life and death, so death doesn't frighten me at all. (Yogananda, 1986:389)

Aggression (p.198)

I try never to antagonize anyone, and within my heart I know I have done my utmost to be kind to all. But I care not about man's opinion, whether praise or condemnation. God is with me, and I am with Him.

It isn't a boast, but I have experienced in my own consciousness the great joy of the sure feeling in my soul that no one can provoke me to revenge. I would rather slap myself than be mean to anyone. (Yogananda, 1986:388)

Religion (p.217)

I see Him [i.e., God] with my eyes closed in meditation, and I see Him with my eyes open. That eternal freedom you too must find. You shall, if you make the effort. It is better to enter into life maimed -- having cut off all lesser desires -- than to live without God. Awaken yourself! Be anchored in the spirit of God, in the realization of the Infinite Being that flows like an ocean through all creation. It is worthwhile in this short season of life to make the effort to gain God-realization. Joy will flow constantly. I feel this great Ocean of Life and I say, "O God, this little being Thou hast blessed with Thy joy. And I know now why Jesus was willing to bleed for all, and to give his life: He was anchored in that joy in Thee." (Yogananda, 1986:401)

Yogananda's meditational ability

I can say, "God, God, God," and go into the state of ecstasy. I can enter that state by meditation, or by seeing beautiful scenery, or by looking at someone whose countenance shines with the presence of God. When you have mastered the steps by which you reach the highest **nirbikalpa samadhi** state, you can return to it at will by any method. (Yogananda, 1986:366)

All I have to do is open my spiritual eye, and the earth is gone and another world appears. In that land I behold the infinite God. This state comes through a balance between activity and meditation. Tremendous activity is

necessary; not with a desire to serve oneself, but with a desire to serve God. And equally necessary is daily effort to realize Him through deep meditation. (Yogananda, 1986:390)

#### Reference

Yogananda, Paramahansa. **The Divine Romance**. Los Angeles: Self-Realization Fellowship, 1986.

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