

U. G. Krishnamurti



Courage to Stand Alone

U. G. Krishnamurti

Courage to Stand Alone



Published by Good Press, 2022

goodpress@okpublishing.info

EAN 4064066435783

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Cover](#)

[Titlepage](#)

[Text](#)

FOREWORD

[Table of Contents](#)

When I heard from my friend, Julie Thayer, that the 1982 audio series of "Give Up" are going to be put in print I was much pleased and I immediately agreed to the proposal. She called me from New York and asked me if I could write a note on how these tapes came about. I gratefully answered. When U.G. invited me in July 1978 to come to Bangalore, where he stayed in his friends' house and from where he arranged his Indian travels in those times, my immediate answer was, "Yes Sir, I would like to." At the same time I reminded him of my invitation to him a year before to come to Amsterdam: "Many people there are waiting to see you, Sir." After five years, U.G. finally came to Amsterdam in 1982, and stayed, much to his own surprise, for 21 days in a beautiful house offered by some former Rajnishis. My own house at that time was neither big enough nor suitable otherwise, as, for one thing, Valentine ("my traveling companion," -- as U.G. calls her), was still accompanying U.G. in all his travels.

U.G. fell in love -- as most foreign visitors do -- with Amsterdam and its beautiful canals and flowers. The city must have affected him, as could be seen in his clear and powerful talks. Many visitors came to see and talk to him. Among them were psychologists and publishers, spiritual journalists and sannyasins, hashish-smoking freaks and 'flower' people. One of them was a well-known poet who just won an award for "talking without a break for 24 hours."

(U.G. silenced him with one sentence!) So, they were quite a mixed bag. Still, I would say they were 'ordinary' people.

These tapes were a gist of U.G.'s dialogues in Amsterdam. Fortunately we had installed a tape recorder, and with U.G.'s permission, almost all his talks (some 24 hours of material) were recorded. I did the recording with great enthusiasm and delight. After U.G.'s visit was over, it occurred to me that I could easily produce an audiotape out of that material, primarily for the use of friends. But there was more material than could be fitted into one tape. So the effort ended up in the "Give Up" series of three cassettes, of altogether four and a half hours duration.

I edited the tapes around September and October of 1982. I felt great and full of gratitude while I was editing the tapes. Since then many copies of these tapes found their way around the globe. People called me from Germany, France, Austria, Australia, Italy and so on -- altogether from more than 14 countries. Many copies were also made in India. And every year after that, whenever we met, U.G. made the remark, "It seems you have done something tremendous: everyone is praising your tapes, wherever I go." In this printed version the title of the series is now changed to The Courage to Stand Alone.

"It is nice of you to come here, but you have come to the wrong place -- because you want an answer, and you think that my answer will be your answer. But that is not so. I may have found my answer, but that is not your answer. You have to find out for yourself and by yourself the way in which you are functioning in this world, and that will be your answer." I hope these words of U.G. which he once said to

his visitors, while sitting leisurely outside his chalet in Gstaad in Switzerland, will find you as a `listener' (now a reader) who will have the "the courage to stand on your own solid feet."

Henk Schonewille
Amsterdam, Holland
July, 1995

A Note on U.G. Jeffrey M. Masson

Neti neti was the way the old Upanishads characterized wisdom: "Not this, not that." You could not characterize it. So it is with U.G. Krishnamurti: try having a dialogue with somebody about him, and watch the trouble you get into.

Friend: I heard you went to visit U.G. Krishnamurti last night. I don't really know who he is. Can you tell me?

Me: (The minute I try to tell people about him, I realize I am doing a terrible job of describing him.) He is an anti-guru guru. Well, not really. A man totally opposed to teaching.

Friend: What does he do?

Me: Well, he teaches. No, that's not it. He sits around in other people's homes.

Friend: So he lives off other people?

Me: No. He is independently wealthy. Well, not wealthy. Just independent.

Friend: And what does he sit around doing?

Me: Talking. About gurus, and how much he hates them, and what phonies they all are, every one of them.

Friend: Who listens to him?

Me: A group of people. I know what you are thinking, but no, they are not disciples at all. They are anti-disciples.

Friend: How does that show?

Me: Well, they make fun of him, they argue with him, they insult him. They do everything but treat him as a guru. And if they do (and some attempt it) he becomes abusive, angry, contemptuous. He genuinely does not like it.

Friend: But he seems to have something of the same format as the guru: he travels to countries where people hear about him and they come to listen to him speak. he speaks. He preaches, or rather he anti-preaches.

Me: You are right. Everything he does is the mirror-image of what the guru does, in reverse. He turns everything upside down. This is part of the attraction for people.

He is fascinating to watch. I have seen my own father, a guru seeker for the last 60 years, sit mesmerized in front of him, resisting with all his strength U.G.'s resistance against making him a guru. My father wants him to be a guru, longs for him to be a guru, but paradoxically winds up admiring him a la folie precisely for not being a guru. So much so, though, that U.G. is his guru.

The same is true, I feel for Julie, the marvelous Julie. She runs to him. He smacks her (figuratively speaking; that is, he insults her). Julie flies to Bangalore to be with him. "Get away from me," he tells her, "your worship nauseates me." He means it. She looks for the Zen koan in his comment. He wants her to stop. She insists he is teaching her via parable, paradox. Instruction by insult. But he is also fond of her, he can't help himself. Everybody is. But she won't let go. She is wealthy and offers him a house, an apartment, an income.

He scorns her. He is genuinely disgusted, angry. He doesn't need it, and if he did, he wouldn't take it. Yet she keeps coming back. And he keeps letting her back. The same dance with a hundred different steps with other "friends" (the only term he will accept).

He is compelling, no question of it. And me? Where do I stand in all of this? I like him, as who would not. He is fun, he is entirely human, he is deliciously unspiritual. He is smart and quick and affectionate. A friend. But why, when I go to see this friend, do I find myself talking so much about gurus, and anti-gurus, and the whole phenomenon? Why is he so interested in this topic too? He repeats himself. I repeat myself. He comes to California, I go to visit him. We both talk about how many phonies there are in the world of gurus. Is this a subtle way of saying that he is not one of those phonies? No, it is a genuine comment, an observation. But he makes it in a thousand different ways, over and over, ad nauseam And yet it is never boring. It is infinitely fascinating.

The main reason for this fascination is the person in front of me, U.G. Krishnamurti himself. For while he abjures every single attribute of the guru, he also speaks of a strange life. Bizarre things have happened to him that have not happened to other ordinary people (but are strangely parallel to mystic experiences in reverse): he had a "catastrophe" that nearly killed him physically. He speaks of it obscurely. Other mystics are "illuminated". he is anti-illuminated, powerfully. Everything he is is calculated to be as unlike the traditional guru as possible. And yet, even if for the opposite reason, he, too, has no desires, he does not

sleep, he does not dream, he eats no meat. There is some compelling purity about him, some way in which he captures a kind of longing that we all seem to have for a genuinely wise human being. I would not be afraid to characterize U.G. as a man of wisdom, not quite like the one described in the Bhagavadgita (the Sthitaprajña) but not entirely unlike him either. A paradox, a wonder, a marvel, a fine human being.

Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.
November 1995.

Jeffrey M. Masson is the author of *Final Analysis: The Making and Unmaking of a Psychoanalyst*, *Against Therapy*, *The Oceanic Feeling: The Origins of Religious Sentiment in Ancient India*, *My Father's Guru: A Journey through Spirituality and Disillusion*, etc.

The Courage to Stand Alone
Introduction

By Ellen Chrystal

Let's see, where was I when U.G. was having these conversations in Amsterdam in 1982? I was living in California in the "spiritual community" of Da Free John. It was three years later, in 1985, that I left. I found myself, after 10 years of "practice" in that community, out on my ass -- no money, no home, no relationship to family and

friends -- and with a lot of unfinished business of my own, such as three children whom I had left in order to go "realize enlightenment". Anyone who has been involved in a religious cult, and then left, will understand.

Although I tried in many ways to fill the spiritual void that my years of participation with Da Free John had filled, I sensed by this time that all of these attempts to find religious and spiritual meaning in life were somehow false -- an imposition on the very simple fact of nature itself. Yet seeking had become such a habit, I could not stop.

In 1987 I went on a three day retreat with Bernadette Roberts (an ex-Carmelite nun, who claims to be in a state of "no self"). She sounded to me like the real thing. During the retreat, I felt thoroughly refreshed by Bernadette's wisdom, simplicity and humor. And as the retreat was nearing its end, an old friend of mine (another Da Free John "divorcée," as U.G. calls us) gave a book to Bernadette called "The Mystique of Enlightenment." It was by U.G. Krishnamurti. I had vaguely remembered seeing this book before. Bernadette handed it back to my friend, and I quickly said, "If you don't mind, I would like to read that."

With the book in hand, I withdrew to my cabin. The first thing I noticed was U.G.'s droll disclaimer at the beginning of the book: "This book has no copyright..." (this was quite exhilarating after having spent the past 10 years with a man who claimed a perpetual copyright on every word he uttered).

During the last few hours of the retreat I read the book from cover-to-cover. I was reading what I felt to be true on an intuitive level, yet I was completely unable to do a thing

about it. Actually, for that matter, it was the beginning of the end of doing anything about enlightenment at all.

The book was published in India. I wrote to the publisher, inquiring about U.G.'s whereabouts and whether I could meet him. After weeks, rather months, I received a letter from a man named Chandrasekhar. U.G. was travelling. I could contact Julie Thayer, who just happened to live a few blocks from me on the upper West side of New York City.

I called Julie. She immediately invited me over to her apartment, and I immediately went. Julie had just completed a round-the-world trip with U.G. and had taken video footage of him everywhere they went. There were about 100 hours of unedited tapes. For several weeks I went to Julie's apartment every day and sat mesmerized, watching this odd man as he wandered around the world, meeting and conversing with an eclectic assortment of people. Soon after that, U.G. came to the United States and I flew to San Rafael, California to meet him for the first time.

"Why have you wasted your money?" he asked me when we first met. "I wanted to meet you," I answered. "You won't get anything here," he told me, adding, "if you got anything at all from my books you wouldn't be here." What could I say. Something was going on, but it was certainly nothing I could know, explain or make use of. I had no frame of reference for this guy. All my guru-worship lessons from the past were of no use here. But, at the same time, he was clearly no ordinary man.

All one can do when they first meet U.G. is observe how he functions. After years of bowing and scraping at the feet of Da Free John, it was quite refreshing to sit around with