

Freedom



Inside

A Newsletter For Prisoners
Based on the Conversations with God Material

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Issue # 31 January 2007

The Opportunity Named Saddam

First of all, let me start by wishing you all a wonderful 2007! I won't wish for Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All Men. I won't wish you all happiness and joy. I do wish for you the wisdom of recognizing each opportunity Life offers you to Be Who You Really Are. I believe THAT is how we will have peace on earth and goodwill to all men.....eventually!

And speaking of recognizing opportunities I have seen, as I'm sure many of you have, the video of Saddam Hussein's execution. It is such a extremely charged event; charged with emotions, beliefs, religious, moral, ethical, and political points of view. I doubt that there are many people in the world who know what happened and why and don't have an opinion about it.

So let me share mine with you, knowing it is but my own opinion, not the Truth in any way. Knowing it is based on a very limited understanding of the situation in Iraq, now or before the war. I share this opinion in no way to 'enlighten' you but more to try to enlighten myself. To en-Light-en my Self. To put

some of my soul's light in my heart when I think of this execution.

I do not believe in executions. For me, giving a death sentence to anyone is inefficient and downright bizarre. How can I kill someone, hoping by doing so I teach the lesson that killing is wrong? I find this way of thinking weird if not completely insane.

"I know there was a loving reason for him to have lived as he did and to have died as he did."

But even more than that, I believe that taking someone's life is also taking from them a golden opportunity to grow, to experience all they came here to experience. I wouldn't ever want to do that.

Having said that and knowing I had no control over this execution, outwardly at least, I know that there is nothing either right or wrong about it. I believe our souls leave our bodies when they are good and ready to. So I know Saddam had done all he came to do. And since his death had such an impact on the world, on me when I heard he had been sentenced to death and

when I saw the video, I know there was a loving reason for him to have lived as he did and to have died as he did.

So what could that reason be? I have obviously no way of knowing what answers Saddam would give. I have no way of knowing how you, my readers, would answer those questions. All I can do is find my own answers. Answers I will be at peace with. Answers that will help me define Who I Am when faced with this execution.

What is the opportunity named Saddam for me? What can I create for myself that would be loving and good in reaction to what I know about Saddam, the way he lived and the way he died? I've been trying to figure out what I feel, what I believe, Who I Am in the midst of all this.

So let's see what my beliefs are.

I believe we are here for a reason. I believe life as we live it on Earth is so full of emotions that we must be here in order to deal with them. There is love, hate, resentment, compassion, anger, jealousy, trust, the list could go on and on.

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The Opportunity Named Saddam
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Most humans seem to have to deal with many emotions during the course of a life (sometimes the course of a day!). This is why I believe experiencing emotions is one of the reasons we come to this life.

*I also believe we are Love.
I believe we are all One.*

I believe as Humans living in this relative world of ours, we need to experience the opposites in order to experience anything at all. We need to know hot in order to experience cold. We need to know unfairness in order to experience fairness. We need to know tall in order to experience short. We need to know bad, in order to experience good.

So what do I do with all the emotions I'm carrying with me, especially the ones I don't enjoy? What do I do with the anger I feel at injustice, abuse, disrespect, close-mindedness, short-sightedness, indifference and so much more?

Recently I find that almost all the books I'm reading talk about forgiveness in one way or another. I'm 'bombarded' with forgiveness thoughts and exercises. I figure there's a darn good reason for that. I need to put forgiveness in action.

But how to forgive someone who hurts others so shamelessly? How do I forgive anyone who hurts another? How do I forgive those who have hurt me, whether knowingly or not?

Where does Forgiveness and Justice intersect, if they ever do? Do I need to see someone punished before I can let go of the hurt?

Do I think the world is a better place now that Saddam Hussein has been killed?

I am surprised to say that, "Yes, I do" Let me explain.

I do not believe the world is a better place because "a bad man was

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The Skeptic's Corner

Hello to all my fellow prisoners out there!
Let me run something by you.

I almost had to hurt a man today. He came real close to forcing me to mess him up. And, it got me to thinking. I mean, why would I have been forced? I had another option: let him mess me up.

Let me explain briefly what happened. He apparently did not like where I'd chosen to seat myself in the dayroom, so he told me to move. He told him I was comfortable where I was. He told me that if I didn't move, he'd move me. I told him I don't like to be threatened and that he had two choices. He could either shut the hell up or get whooped and then shut the hell up. He chose not to attack me, and instead tried to convince other white boys to talk to me. They told him to whoop me or shut up. He shut up.

So, I wonder, why did I feel forced to defend myself and my seat? I could have moved. I could've tried to work out another solution altogether. But I felt like he was commanding me, so I felt forced to refuse. And then he threatened me. I must be getting older or more tolerant or something, because five years ago I wouldn't have said anything. I'd have knocked him out before he finished his threat.

Maybe I figured that if I moved, someone would always want me to move. Maybe if I let him "command" me once, he'd try it again. Or others would. Maybe I felt like my self-respect demanded that I not take any crap from that guy. Maybe I felt like I needed to maintain the respect of the others who were there. Maybe it was all of that.

But what is all that when looked at through the eyes of love? Bullshit, I suppose. Love doesn't think my ego is a good enough reason to deliver a beating. Love (God?) wouldn't approve, would it? Love would want me to offer my seat.

What about Self-love? Do I always have to be selfless?

I don't really know how the Next Highest Version of Who I Am would've reacted to that jackass, I know the last lowest version (me-five years ago) would have reacted, but I guess I'm not ready to be the Next Highest Version of myself yet. Maybe tomorrow, eh? Or the next day.

The male ego is a strange thing, more so even than the female ego I think (in general, of course). Why is it that men need to prove things all the time? That's really what my situation was about, wasn't it? I felt compelled to prove that I am good enough, strong enough, and capable enough to keep and defend my seat. I had to prove it not only to the jackass, but to the others nearby and to myself. My ego pushed my buttons as much as the jackass did, I think.

So here's the big question: Am I supposed to act with complete love toward everyone all the time, even at my own expense? Is that what God wants? I mean, there is no right and wrong, is there? If not, then why would I deny myself to appease a jackass's whims?

I don't think that the Next Highest Version of Who I Really Am is a chump. I don't think he's willing to allow others to mistreat him without attempting to protect myself.

I don't think that the Absolute Highest Version of Oneness (God) is a chump either.

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My name is Yann. I am French and have been living in France all my life. I am 36 years old. I was born with an incurable disease called myopathy. This disease strikes every muscle of my body; consequently, the only freedom I have is that of being able to use my computer. My passion is poetry.

My disease is a form of incarceration. I stopped walking at the age of seven. Then my body has deteriorated through the years to the extent that I am now completely dependent on others. Around the age of 15, I felt a strong attraction towards the image, the character, the symbol of the man Jesus-Christ. The greatest impact this story had on me was the rebel and free side of His personality, His independence and, above all, the importance He gave to the notion of Love.

For me, He symbolized what I had to do to "survive" my disease. By chance, I have always had a soft and dreamy nature, which brought about the fact that I did not take the evolution of my disease tragically. In addition, my disease being progressive and not brutal, the decrease of my physical abilities were not really visible for me but on a long-term basis.

Thanks to my parents, I have always been able to pursue my studies. Mandatory surgical operations, in order to live a better life, had an effect on my studies.

Around the age of 17, I started to read seriously. It is approximately at that age that I discovered Buddhism. I discovered the notion of compassion; a complement to the love of Christ. It is not the same but, for me, it is two sides of the same mountain: that of the Light. Buddhism enlightened me on the possible origins of my disease but, above all, it has taught me that my state of being would be negative only if I chose to let it be. Buddhism has taught me that I was in the best possible situation for my own personal growth. Probably due to my intuition, I recognized through this situation a positive truth that I unconsciously already had within me for a

long time.

My disease also affects my respiratory functions. A few months after discovering Buddhism, I had bronchitis which degenerated into a respiratory de-compensation. During this crisis, I had a Near Death experience. It happened as follows.

I was in the process of dying when the emergency aids arrived at my home. In the arms of my father, I came out of the house towards the ambulance. At that very moment, all around me disappeared: the trees, the houses, the people, the noises. Instead of it all, I found myself right in the middle of some sort of cloud/ocean of light, white and at the same time yellow. I literally was floating in softness, happiness and infinite Love.

If I define this as "infinite Love", it is because I wish to stress the fact that, even if we added all the love in the world, we would still have to multiply this love by an infinite number, to simply obtain a vague idea of the Love which I then experienced. There were only love and silence. Something was odd, I was the "cloud of love" itself while being different from it, all of this happening at the same time. Just like a drop of water in the ocean which knew that it was like the ocean while being simultaneously an individual drop of water. I believe it is so for a human being, with respect to the Light. A human being is an individual light in the ocean and he also is the light of "infinite Love".

This experience lasted for a few seconds, then everything reappeared as it was before: the scenery, the people, my difficulty in breathing.

My encounter with the Light brought about consequences only one year after this incident. In the meantime, I succeeded in obtaining my Ph.D., after finishing my studies through correspondence with the Faculty of History.

Then, one year after the encounter with the Light, on a Saturday morning, after I had finished my homework, I heard some form of

"intuitive voice" saying "Take a pen and paper and write". So, this is what I did and this is how poetry came into my life, as if my heart had opened thanks to the Light. Since then, I have never stopped writing. And I am now up to just about my 7000th poem.

Nevertheless, I must underline the fact that the revelation I had from the truth of the Light (up until then, I had considered this encounter somewhat as being a dream and I did not know at all what to do about this and how to decipher the meaning of this Light).

Then, the meaning of this Light came to me during a meeting with a young lady with long blond hair.

I was having dinner at her place and, at a particular moment, she went to pick up something. She turned around and, just then, the long blond hair on her back became a mirror which started to reflect the light of the chandelier. This light, or rather the reflections of this light on her hair, were exactly the same thing as the Light I had encountered a year before.

At that very moment, I knew that my experience with death had been real, I knew that the Light was real and, above all, that this Light was also shining on earth. As of that day and, as of the day when I wrote my first poem, the Light, the Woman, Love and poetry have become one for me.

My disease has continued to degenerate and, for the past 13 years, I have had a tracheotomy and am breathing thanks to an oxygen inhaling apparatus on a 24/7 basis. I also have urinary problems and other types of physical problems.

While writing my poems, while in the process of developing my "poetry path" and also through my readings, together with the limitations of my body, I have evolved spiritually towards some form of shamanism. It is a way for me to return to nature: the only freedom.

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I don't think God expects me to be a chump. I don't think God will be upset one way or the other. I think God has left the choice up to me to be a chump or not and that I'll be loved and welcomed either way.

So what will my Next Highest Version do when he's faced with a similar situation? I'm really not sure. I'll let you know when I get there, I guess. I'd like to think that that version of me will act with total love and perfect compassion, but this version of me isn't sure what that means yet. I'm still sorting it out.

For instance, say I give up my seat with a smile. Maybe I even clean it off as I leave. Then Mr. Jackass wants another chair from another guy (because he thinks he can get away with being a jackass) and a

fight breaks out. Maybe someone gets shanked or killed. Maybe if I'd stood my ground, Mr. Jackass wouldn't have tried to take a seat from the next guy. Maybe I need to think of the next guy when I decide how to show perfect compassion and total love. It's not so simple now, is it?

All I know for sure is that the Next Highest Version of me won't act because his ego wants him to. He may do the same thing as I did, but if he does, it'll be for a different reason. Like I said, I'll let you know when I get there.

Love and Respect,

J.M.

AZ

A.K.A. The Skeptic

Comments welcome.

Dear Skeptic,

Thank you so much for this contribution to FI. I'm sure many, many prisoners have had very similar experiences.

I will let them answer you from their own experiences.

I just wanted to welcome you back to FI. I've missed having a Skeptic's Corner. I'm glad to be able to have this one now.

With much love,

Janine

My Life's Journey

(continued from page 3)

Just like poetry does not exist without nature. If we want to communicate with the ocean of Light, we must communicate with nature. This can be done alone and this is why, while writing poems, I have put much effort in developing this solitary nomad way of living. Consequently, by developing these efforts towards solitary nomadism, I could practice this mentally as well as physically, through the imaginary rebuilding of my feelings.

Thus, thanks to this experience of the Light and thanks to poetry, I have become truly free, independent, autonomous mentally and spiritually. The only dependency I will always keep is that of the immeasurable Light of Women.

For the last couple of years, I have dedicated my days to knowledge by visiting the intelligence; that is the encyclopaedias, the writers, all of which give me the incentive to go forward, and, of course, poets, together with music and DVD films. I am presently learning two foreign languages; Japanese and Italian. When this will be done, I will learn Korean and Chinese.

I do my best in order to write approximately five poems a day. I do not have a really strict schedule on a daily basis; my schedule is a little

bit flexible. I keep a little freedom so as not to feel choked.

I do not fear death anymore; much to the contrary, I am rather impatient and I must control my impatience to die. For me, death is the most marvellous Woman of Light who will take me in her arms to bring me to the "Infinite Love" with her long hair made of stars...

I do not have any advice to give, I can only offer my life, not as an example, but as an individual path which comes from an incarceration of my body and moves towards a state of mental and spiritual freedom. Indeed, I do not have any advice to give but, what I can say is that life takes on its meaning when we start a life of creation, whether through writing, handcraft, sculpture, painting, etc. Life takes on all of its grandest meaning when we decide to walk on the path of knowledge and intelligence.

In my case, it is poetry which has developed my intuition; it has opened my heart, has made me a more peaceful human being, softer, more opened, more understanding; to sum up, more feminine perhaps, exactly the part which is missing in a man to make him truly free. Po-

etry has also made me more secluded. My totem is the wolf; it is the animal which corresponds to my way of being on this earth.

And finally, I belong only to the Light and to Women. And, if women did not exist on earth, I believe I would not be able to resist death... to return to the Light again.

I believe it is important to have a star before oneself, which reveals that the walls and bars of a jail are only illusions; freedom resides at the bottom of our hearts.

A few additional notes here. Above all, learn to know your true nature. Read a lot. Try to find a field of creativity through which you will be able to give what you, and you only, have within you and that nobody else will ever be able to give in your place. Be intelligent. Love knowledge. And, in the end, you will be free but also beautiful and radiating from the heart and the soul.

Keep your courage, you are on the path which brings you to only one place: the Light...

Yann

The Opportunity Named Saddam
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punished” as I’m sure many people believe.

I believe the world is a better place because I have put some very ‘good’ principles in action in my own world, within myself. And since We Are All One....there you have it!

I can look at Saddam’s actions and think, much as Jesus is quoted as saying while on the cross, “Forgive them for they know not what they do”. I can look at Bush’s reaction to 9/11 and think the very same thing.

I can think of the warring factions in Iraq and think the same thing.

I can look at prejudice, injustice, unfairness, cruelty, ambition, greed, selfishness and think the same thing.

I can even look at myself and think, “Forgive me for I don’t know what I’m doing”.

For I often don’t know what I am doing. I often act without thought, without consciousness, without awareness of the possible wide ranging consequences of my every thought and action. I often am so totally involved in my everyday life, the busyness of it all, that I sometimes find days and days going by without a thought as to Who I Really Am.

Forgiveness doesn’t mean what was

done was okay. Forgiveness does not mean it didn’t matter. Forgiveness means to let go of blame, to realize I am not a victim in my life, that everything that happens now, has ever happened and will ever happen is for a very loving reason.

I am the creator of my life.

I am here for a purpose, for a reason.

I am here to experience, to create Who I Really Am.

Everything else is a means to that end. Everything is an opportunity.

Saddam was a great example of that. He chose to come to this life and be a very important Symbol. Much as Jesus did, and Hitler, and Ghandi, and Bush.....

All those extraordinary symbols are opportunities I can choose to recognize or not. It is up to me.

Forgiveness is all very well. I have nothing against it, of course. But it is so totally unnecessary when I see All That Is as an opportunity.

How can I think of forgiving someone for hurting me when I created that situation, when I chose it for myself in order to experience my soul’s magnificence through the love I can give the person who hurt me? What do I have to forgive any-

one for?

Unless I can remember to forgive someone for giving me something I thought I wanted at the time—and that really sounds silly—I shouldn’t have to forgive someone who takes away something I thought I wanted.

It is my heartfelt desire to be a person who sees everyone with compassion, with understanding. It is my choice to listen more than I speak so that I completely understand the other’s point of view, even when it is the complete opposite of everything I believe and choose for myself.

This is what I choose to do with the opportunity Saddam brought into my life. He has brought so much peace in my life, deep in my Self that I recognize him there, within me.

And I am so very grateful to him for having been the perfect symbol he was for us.

I have nothing but love and gratitude for him and compassion for those who believe themselves his victims.

I wish them all Peace as I do you.

With love,

Janine

Sometimes it's easy to forget that everyone's just on their way home.

That you're all truly the best of friends.

And that this whole crazy thing kind of started as a dare - to see who might love the deepest, no matter how lost the others became.

Gosh, how you're missed.

from: theuniverse@tut.com

From the Mail Bag...

Dear Janine,

I get your newsletter here ... and thought since you spend so much time writing others, that I could take the time and write to you about happiness. It took me a while to get all my thoughts summed up in a short version of what I was trying to say. I think you'll understand where I'm coming from, I hope.

...
God bless

Happiness to many of us can come in a lot of different ways. But in those same shapes and forms it came in, it can also be taken away. A relationship could make someone happy, but only depending on how long it can last or how devoted the two people are to each other. My daughter makes me very happy. So happy I want to cry because I'm not there to watch her grow up. I'll have to watch through pictures and the once-in-a-great-while visit.

My old drug habit used to make me happy. Until I got involved in what gave me this life sentence and realized all the people I hurt and stepped on and stole from just to get high.

Now, after being in the same cell for almost a year, 24/7 practically, I've had a lot of time to think. Happiness used to be, for me, a search of an external source. A person, a drug, an entertainment. I think now it is more of an internal search. An on-going journey almost every hour of every day. It's being content with what I already have and being able to share that with those around me. Even if those around me are not my loved ones. It's not letting life's every day punches and blows knock me down and out. It's having that inner peace between God and myself. It's being humble enough to help others, in any way I can, get to where they are going while on my way to where I'm going. As opposed to just stepping on them on the way.

Happiness is felt better when

shared with those around you, regardless of who they are. Every day I search in myself ways to not let the little things bother me, and to deal with the big things as best as I can. It's not easy. But it can be done.

Life isn't about how many problems we've had and how many we now have. It's about us letting go and learning what we can from the problems we've had, and using that knowledge to deal with the problems we have and coming out a better person to deal with the problems to come. And helping others. Regardless of now rich we are or aren't. We are all rich in one way whether we realize it or not. That way is love. That is the one thing we can give and never run out of.

JMD
AZ

Dear JMD,

Thank you for taking the time to gather your thoughts and send them in to us. Many of us, if not all of us, have at one time thought, as you did, that happiness came from something outside ourselves. I believe true happiness is created from within. I believe it is a decision that affects how we react to outside circumstances not a reaction to perfect circumstances, relationships, loves, jobs or anything else.

I cannot express how happy (-) I am that you have found this answer for yourself.

With love and peace,

Janine

Dear Freedom Inside Staff,

My Dad, an abusive alcoholic, left when I was five. My Mom, just plain abusive, raised me and my

two sisters. Every day of my life, until she kicked me out at age fourteen, I was told, "You're evil, worthless, lazy. I wish you'd never been born." I never acted out, I was too afraid and shy, until she kicked me out of the house. Then I worked hard to fulfill her prophecy.

Something was wrong. Missing. I sure as hell didn't want the love I grew up with! I instinctively knew that, whatever "it" was, "it" would finally make me happy and whole. Trouble was, each time I discovered something that made me feel good, it broke and needed fixing, wore out and needed replacing, or it took more to satisfy me the next time. And there was always the "crash and burn" afterward where I always felt worse than I did before. These poor substitutes ranged from work, school, relationships, hobbies, sex and drugs.

My life was one pile of crap after another. I was truly evil, worthless and lazy.

In 1996 I hurt someone I loved.

No one knew a crime had been committed. But I did. I turned myself in. That's when, for the first time, I truly sought TRUTH. All I knew is that I didn't have a clue what TRUTH was. Only "God", whatever or whoever that was, could help me. A series of events, that can only be called miracles, plagued me and continue to.

White-knuckled acts of random kindness or performing your "duty" as a Christian, Muslim, or whatever faith you practice, may seem fake, but with just a little sincerity the believing can catch up to the living. You may actually become that which you seek. Love.

But the best way, in my experience, to discover TRUTH (and this can be combined with any religion, practice or belief system) is meditation. Begin by mustering a desire to KNOW. This implies you do not currently know. You must be will-ing to let go of everything you are or think you are, everything you believe or think you believe, everything you hold dear. Nothing can

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From the Mail Bag...

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be more important than KNOWING TRUTH. Be willing to give up your spouse, kids, job, X box, and yes, even your precious Bible, Quran or other such things.

Abraham desired a son above all else. When asked to sacrifice Isaac he did not hesitate. His desire for TRUTH was greater than even his love for his son. We need to do the same, place it all on the alter. Be willing to sacrifice everything. Maybe we'll be given a ram in Isaac's stead. Maybe we'll lose our Isaac. No matter. When the sacrificial fires die, whatever is left, small or great, is PURE GOLD and cannot be taken away. Whatever is taken was not in our best interest to keep. Don't mourn. Rejoice!

You can look here and there, high and low, "...but, lo, the Kingdom of Heaven is within you". In the kingdom is a throne and THE ONE on the throne. TRUTH is seldom found outside of ourselves. "Out there" we find what we seek, evidence to

prove previously held beliefs. Go within, sacrifice all of that and the TRUTH will be KNOWN.

How do I know I'm not deceived? How do I know TRUTH from truth? The test is simple. In TRUTH is humility. You can not be proud of TRUTH, berate others with it, be "holier-than-thou" because of it. It is TRUTH with or without you. You're grateful. It's accompanied by unconditional Love. Forgiveness becomes unnecessary because you gain understanding and compassion. If ego is involved you've missed it. Try again.

I'm not here to tell you what TRUTH is or is not. I'm only telling you how to find it and recognize it. But what do I know? I'm just an inmate....Right?

Namaste,
J.R.
NV

Dear J.R.

Of course you're not just an inmate....and I suspect you know that, at least I hope you do. There is much to ponder in your letter and I thank you for sending it in. I know it will make many readers think as it did me. Your quest for TRUTH is wonderful. It obviously is of great importance in your life and I am so happy for you that you found your purpose.

It is my belief that we all have our own purpose. Some will look for Love, some as you do, for TRUTH, some for Forgiveness, others look for Service, the purposes are as varied as there are people in the world. We know we found our true purpose when it fills us with joy, happiness and peace, regardless of the outcome.

The quest is the joy of it all.

*I wish you joy in your journey
And Love...and TRUTH
Janine*

The Poetry Corner

Do you have a poem that reflects the message in Freedom Inside?

If so, send it in, it just may be chosen for a future

Poetry Corner

No Thought

Floating in a suspended state
I'm hypnotized by my very own mind.
I'm in a place I don't recognize
A state neither bound by space or time.

It's tremendously unexpected
To obtain such an impersonal view
Reason doesn't matter
And my mind hasn't a clue.

Nothing to fight for
And nothing to oppose
Nothing to accept
And still nothing to reject.

It lasted but a moment
The confusion of peace finally came to an end
And all of a sudden, my mind started judging again.

The thoughts, they repeated themselves
Until no thought was left.
And then, only my true Self remained,
Now that's something, no words can explain

By: WPR
MD



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