

My Spiritual Journey: Milestones

by Jeff Krock

Introduction

For the last 34 years I have been living a journey of conscious evolution, and have arrived at a point where I am able to give to others what were only a wish and a dream 25 years ago. At 63 years of age I feel that my life is just beginning. It's time for me to share some interesting details.

The story I'm telling here is primarily about three life-changing awakenings that—coupled with my ongoing learning—provide the foundation for all aspects of my life: businessman, husband, father, grandfather, teacher, public figure, human being. I hope my story helps ignite your passion to pursue the life you most want to be living and the learning that's inherent to this grand adventure.

My learning is rooted in my search to understand and internalize what it takes to live our higher states of consciousness in the world. (If we are to thrive in the 21st century, we need these levels awake and integrated.) Helping clients awaken these states underlies all my work. I also convey techniques and perspectives that enable others to live this consciousness in all aspects of their lives. Central to what I teach is a simple practice that is used throughout the day. In using this practice, students and clients learn how to live with greater joy, love, creativity, and ease, and experience how their own learning and integration elevates their contribution to the lives of others and to the world.

I come from a particularly tough beginning, which has served me very well. For my first 30 years I was anything but mystical, religious, or introspective; I was unusually separate

and distant from life. Frankly, I don't remember even using the word "spiritual" until after the first of three life-changing events that happened to me, and which I describe in this personal report. In the process of getting back to my Self, I have gained a great deal of technical knowledge about how the human separate self is made, and about how all of our levels of consciousness (which I call "fundamental parts"¹) fit together.

When I work with people, I'm working with them in all those levels simultaneously, which helps all these parts awaken and come together as one. The many steps I have taken to become an awake, connected, integrated human being are part of what I am offering to you.

Until now I have told very few people about the events I'm about to share with you. Staying as objective as possible, I describe exactly what happened. In this writing I have come forward with some deeply personal aspects of my life. We live in incredibly difficult times. Today's world demands that those of us who can offer a new level of useful perspective must show up and give what we've got.

Jeff Krock, Apopka, Florida, March, 2007

¹ Our fundamental parts: mind, body and spirit (energy, life force, chi), ego, Heart, Soul, unity, and God-realization.

**First Awakening, 1972:
Waking Up to My Soul**

The initial part of this first event was very painful and frightening. Perhaps, because I was so lost, I needed a shock of incredible magnitude to "wake up" to a life far greater than I ever imagined. Fear is so fundamental to my first awakening and how it came about, I feel I need to first give you my history and relationship to fear.

My father was a workaholic, always on the go, rarely at home. As a young child, I was aware of *his* immense fear and felt frightened when hearing my mother's litany: "Slow down, Ralph, you are going to have a heart attack." I didn't know what a heart attack was but I lived in fear of my father or even myself having one.

I was seven years old in 1949, the year my fear became too much for me to handle. It happened in the following way: My father was in the den holding his chest, in pain. I was too terrified to say or do anything. My mother and sister were there, but they didn't say or do anything either. So I sat there, panic-stricken, while my father clutched his chest off and on for about two hours. I thought he was having a heart attack, sure that he would die. Amazingly, no one took any action, but I suppose we were all immobilized by our fear. The next morning, as usual, my father went off to work, and I went numb to my fear. It was completely suppressed for many years.

I did not consciously feel fear again until my mid-twenties. It drifted back into my life as an intense, almost neurotic fear of death. I truly believed that I might be dying. Although after a while I was able to suppress that fear, it was only for two years or so. It was 1969; I was happily married, in my last year of graduate school, and only a few months away from receiving a Master of Fine Arts

degree in sculpture. My life was good and I was creating things in school that excited me. Then out of nowhere this fear broke through again. I really didn't know what was happening, except that I was so consumed by it that I had absolutely no idea what to do. I felt out of control, paralyzed, terrified that it would get worse.

At the university infirmary where I went to get help, a psychiatrist asked me a few questions before prescribing Thorazine. I took the drug and spent the next four days in my living room in a dull cloud of drug-induced fearlessness. Although the fear subsided, I felt dead, separate, lost. I realized that I couldn't live like that either. I had to try something else. Despite my fear of the fear, I stopped taking the Thorazine. I completed my last semester of school, received my degree, and began the next stage of my life.

For the next three years I managed to keep the lid on my fear-driven emotion. (At the time, I didn't actually know how I was able to do this.) My fear was just below the conscious level. When it would occasionally surface, I was somehow able to push it back down again.

But one evening in 1972—seemingly with no provocation—the lid blew apart; fear exploded into my conscious world and hurled me into extreme fright.

"I'm having a heart attack." "I'm going to die." I began to think many thoughts about my fear, thoughts that only produced more fear. My chest burned. I sweated profusely. Feeling as if I was floating farther and farther away from myself, I experienced more desperate thoughts: "I'm losing my mind." "I don't know what's happening." Fires of fear were burning inside of me. I went farther from my body. "I'm going insane." "I'm going to need to go to the state psychiatric hospital."

It was about 10 p.m. and I was in hell, hanging on to my sanity by a fragile thread. My wife and I lived in rural Massachusetts, three miles from the main country road. In this remote location, people did not drop in on friends at that hour. On this very evening, however, a long-time friend had been driving nearby. Even though it was quite late, and out of her way, she decided to pay a visit. For the next hour, her calm presence kept me from going over the edge. Through the waves of darkness and terror I could barely follow her words, although I did hear her say: *This experience has a purpose. It will somehow help you.* Some unknown part of me recognized that truth.

At the time, I didn't know anything about personal growth or ideas such as "difficult circumstances have a purpose." I did know that I had to understand what was happening to me and how to get back from where I was. I knew I needed help, something I had not felt since I was a very young child.

The following morning I went to see a psychotherapist whom I had known as a friend in graduate school, and who had worked with students during the turbulent 1960s. During our first session his steady presence calmed me down, somewhat, assuring me that I would be OK. I went to see him again the following day. And in the course of our session, one of his seemingly simple questions sparked an experience that dramatically changed the course of my life.

"What about the spiritual part of you?" he asked.

Within moments of hearing his question, my world changed. Although I was still in the same room with the therapist, something extraordinary was added. Suddenly the light in the room was magnified—perhaps by 20 times. I was

actually seeing each speck of light radiating all the colors of the rainbow. The sparkle and brilliance of this multi-colored light were beyond anything I could ever have imagined I would see. While simultaneously being in my familiar world with the therapist, I was immersed in this light.

After a few moments I saw, and could "feel," a gold cord of about five inches in diameter in front of me. The radiant light of the cord was not separate from all the other brilliance in the room. The cord seemed to extend infinitely below me and above me. There was a sense that I had been living in one very contracted world and I had simply added on another infinitely expanding "world."

Something within me said: *"Grab the cord."* And I did.

Instantly, my life was transformed. There was an immediate "shift"—I had a better mind, body, spirit, and Heart. I was infused with the knowledge that life is for learning, a daily adventure of discovery, healing past conditioning, and becoming more and more alive. I knew, without doubt, that my life would become dedicated to that journey. And from then on all of my decisions and actions would serve that journey. All of me was vastly rearranged to fully serve this new purpose.

I was in this "altered state" for about 30 seconds. When I shared my experience with the therapist, we both knew that I had physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually experienced the answer to his question. I never needed to see him again.

Although I went back to my daily life, my inner world was improved in a way I never could have conceived. Deep within my chest was a repeating phrase: *I want to love all.* Over the next few days I recognized that this was a truth

spoken by a new voice, a voice more important than the familiar one found in my head. I “knew” that these words were my truest voice, and that I simply needed to listen and follow them.

Day by day, love, inspiration, and hope washed away years of uncertainty and desperation. Although I did not at the time have the language, my Soul² had been awakened.

From everything, from every moment, I began to learn. Because I grew up dyslexic, I had not been much of a reader. But now I was reading books on Eastern mysticism, various religions, and meditation. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism excited me. The language and images of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam deeply touched and inspired me, as did such everyday things as flowers, stones, and the light of day. Everything was vastly alive to me.

I became a dedicated learner. I truly wanted the love, trust, and peace that the “1960s” had voiced, and that I was reading about in the spiritual books. I wanted a quiet mind in the world of activity. And I wanted to be certain that fear would never take control of my life again.

I developed a keen interest in the “how-to” of spirituality and consciousness. The skeptical part of me was eager to try techniques and evaluate them through the lens of my own experience. With daily practice and instinct I recognized the techniques that actually helped me, and I grew to trust my way with them. If needed, I changed the techniques to be more effective so that they worked in all circumstances.

A few years later, when I “remembered” the teacher in me, my work would be

driven by a desire to show others a “how-to” of worldly and spiritual development.

Second Awakening, 1975: Receiving the Light

While working as a carpenter in the summer of 1975, I got a job building a horse barn in Charlemont, Massachusetts. I had converted a large yellow school bus into a very comfortable home and parked it in the middle of an old apple orchard. Despite its innocuous appearance, the bus was quite beautiful on the inside. I had removed all the seats and added a wood floor, wood-paneled walls, a kitchen, hot and cold running water, heat, and toilet. There was even an outdoor solar shower. In the back of the bus I built a bed, the top of it just below the wrap-around rear windows.

While I was deep asleep one July night, something awakened me, causing me to sit up. Through the window I saw three dark-complexioned men peering at me. Surprisingly, I was not frightened. In fact, I didn’t find it odd that they were there. My instinct told me they were “holy men.” They looked at me and I looked at them.

It took me some moments to realize that I was awake, but in a different way. I was there, as were my familiar surroundings. And though my experience had the qualities of normal physical reality, more was included. I was not dreaming. The event was as real as anything else I had ever experienced—perhaps more so. I didn’t question if the men were in ordinary physical form (which they weren’t); my observing and questioning mind was not part of the encounter. After a few minutes, I slipped back into sleep.

Two evenings later I was once again awakened from a deep sleep, and found

² Synonyms for Soul: Heart, True Self, the Christ within, Heart Presence, Buddha nature, formlessness, the Holy Grail.

myself staring into the eyes of yet another dark-complexioned man. I can still see his relaxed face and clear, dark eyes. Even though the night was very black, I had no trouble seeing his features. It felt normal—simply sitting up and looking into the eyes of this man who was looking at me. I was hardly surprised that when I looked down my physical body was still asleep on the bed. I was awake, sitting up, and looking out the window, yet I was also still lying down sleeping. I had a sense that the part of me that was sitting up was my real body, and the part that was lying down was less physical. But knowing which was which didn't matter. I went back to sleep.

A few nights later I sat up again and saw a super-bright glow in an apple tree about 20 feet from my windows. As in the two previous "visits" I had no reaction to what I was seeing and sensing. In the tree was a luminous sphere radiating a very bright, silvery-white light in all directions. I began to merge with the light. We were one—it was part of me and I was part of it. The more I became part of it, the more the light grew in size and intensity. Once again, I was not awake as we ordinarily define "awake," and I was not sleeping as we ordinarily define "sleep." I did not actually "see" a person as we define a person—maybe the light was too bright—but the following happened: A "man" within this light lifted his arm and extended it toward me. A beam of intense—but not threatening—white light extended from his hand and quickly entered my forehead. My face automatically turned upwards a bit to fully receive this beam. There was no experience of "time."

The entire experience, from initially seeing the glow to returning to sleep, may have lasted twenty-five seconds. Once again, nothing about the experience shocked or surprised me. It happened in a different kind of world

where emotions, thoughts, questions, and time did not exist.

Many people might associate this experience with meeting God or being touched by the light of God. And people have different meanings for the word "God." I did not consider the "God perspective" at the time. I did not question or evaluate my experience.

Looking back, it is remarkable to me that I simply experienced these things and seemingly continued my life as it had been. You hear about these kinds of experiences and they sound so extraordinary, enlightening, and, to some people, strange. Yet to me they were just what they were. I didn't question them. I know in retrospect that I was given a gift and that this gift—plus 31 more years of learning—is now mine to give to others.

Recognizing My Highest Calling

Soon after being touched by the light, the structure of my life began to change. I was, for example, to meet a teacher who became the major influence in my life for the next five years. She taught, brilliantly so, techniques and perspectives that were exactly what I needed. I learned about energy (spirit, chi) and was thrilled to be more grounded and connected. She was extraordinary at conveying this breakthrough information. *Everyone should know these things, should grow up with these skills, this consciousness,* I remember her telling me. And I immediately wanted to help make that happen. I found myself interested in other ways of being, learning, and changing that would have great meaning for all human beings.

But how could I help this happen? After all, even thinking this way was such a shift from whom I had been to date.

The recognition that I was a teacher came to me in another mystical experience—a gentle, thrilling kind of jolt that blew away any remaining complacency. I immediately began teaching what I had learned to others. I began with individual consultations that quickly grew into small groups and residential retreats. Although I had once been someone who was absorbed only in his own growth and immediate world, a new person emerged in me. I worked to improve myself so I could become a better and better vehicle—no longer focused on just my own evolution, but everyone else's as well.

I continue to be in awe of just how much the experiences in the apple orchard enriched the course of my life.



Teaching, 1983

Third Awakening, late 1990s: Classical Enlightenment

In the late 1990s, in a very short period of time, the structure of my life changed again, this time completely. I was living in Colorado, in a home high in the hills west of Denver. My twelve-year relationship had just come apart, and I

was alone for the first time since my 1975 awakening in the apple orchard. Furthermore, the business side of my very successful 20-year teaching and training career was quickly declining. I had large financial obligations and no reserves. As I tried to hold my personal and professional life together, I intuitively realized something bigger needed to shift. My fear, and sometimes terror, was enormous. But I knew how to work with these emotions and trusted the process deep within me. I knew it was time to let it all go. And I did.

I had no idea where that letting go would take me. I didn't know that I would have to pay my large mortgage by borrowing against my credit card three times. I didn't know I was going to spend the better part of a year in seclusion. I just took a next step. And then another.

I spent most of my time alone on a couch in my living room, with immense inner turmoil and the magnificent Colorado mountain views. I knew to follow the turmoil inward—to willingly experience what was there. I followed it daily, felt it, lived with it, surrendered to it, and went deeper.

After I separated so dangerously far away from my fear and my Self in 1972, I was determined to know where real inner stability is found. I learned that we all have unrealized capacities of Heart, and mind, connection, creation, and perception. I learned that we even have the capacity to be consciously in command of our own life force. I could easily stay grounded and connected in the midst of internal and external turmoil. Now, some 27 years later, I used these capacities to stabilize my inner adventure.

Rather than controlling or hiding from the fear and terror, I surrendered into them, using the energetic techniques to stay grounded and connected. I stayed

with my experience. I observed my mind as it created the fear, and accepted it as part of me. These cycles were like being in a jungle: although I didn't know what was behind the bushes that were all around me, I went forward. I didn't know what would happen, but I did trust the process. I was fully in the moment—willing to experience wherever this journey was going.

When I fully gave up my battle with the fear and terror, life—paradoxically—got easier. My inner world opened up into a kind of emptiness—a deep place free of turmoil. I surrendered into this and merged into an aspect of life that was greater than pure comfort. I was in "nirvana," also called "heaven" or "paradise."

One morning—about five months into this period of fear, terror, AND nirvana—I went out into the spring mountain air and walked along the deck on the north side of my house; cool shade, warm sun, a sense of freshness. I was both weary of, yet excited by, my grand adventure. I had been feeling truly free for the first time, even though the worldly aspects of my life were still very trying (after all, you cannot pay your bills in paradise). I was simply walking when suddenly everything changed once again. Have you ever walked into a very large room, perhaps a gymnasium, when suddenly all the lights were turned on? Multiply that by at least 50 times. Beyond words or comprehension, perfect, clear light instantly awakened in and through me. The Light simultaneously surrounded me and radiated out from every part of me.

Instantly, I became a profoundly different human being. The person I believed myself to be was still there but I also *became* the Light as opposed to just experiencing it. The Light was infinite, everywhere, without end. And I simply, naturally, and immediately

recognized that I was this Light. It's hard to describe, but there was also a sound—a comforting, sweet, thrilling sound that I gradually stopped hearing over the next couple of months. It was like a powerful, infinitely consistent wind blowing slowly through the treetops.

This third awakening was profoundly different from the previous two. In both of the earlier experiences, the "fullness" unfolded over time. With this third awakening, however, the fullness was immediate and permanent.

Unlimited Freedom

After this third awakening I felt completely free, without limitations. My daily experience was one of pure love and pure life. *Everything* was clear. I felt free to live and free to die. There was no longer an attachment or a need to be one way or another. Like all human beings, I had been motivated by a need to survive and a desire to accomplish—but these were no longer controlling my existence. I made a choice to learn how to live this Enlightenment in the everyday world—though little did I know it would take more time. I spent the next seven years learning how to simultaneously live that complete freedom while being engaged in the needs and complexity of daily life. This was the continuation of the path that I have been following since 1972.

2007

I have recently stepped into the most creative and connected time of my life. From a personal perspective, I'm healthier and feel more alive than ever. In my work, I am privileged to spend each day transmitting what I've learned in a form easily accessible to others.



Teaching, 2006

I hope that my story inspires you to welcome the step-by-step process inherent to real and lasting growth. Even in today's rapidly changing world, there is an unchanging source of truth and wisdom that you can trust completely. Your deep inner yearning, coupled with a willingness to grow, will take you where you want to go.

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By staying committed to my own learning, the vision I had 30 years ago—the ability to help people rapidly and permanently change, even when dealing with life-long challenges—is being fulfilled. And what took me years to learn now happens for many of my clients and students in a matter of months. Sometimes it happens in an instant.

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