



This man may  
change everything  
you know about  
attaining happiness

# Prem Rawat Unlocks the Door to Inner Peace

An Interview with Prem Rawat, also known as Maharaji,  
The Prem Rawat Foundation, Los Angeles, California

People from different civilizations with differing aspirations have sought happiness through a wide variety of means. The exhortation “Know thyself” has echoed through the ages. In almost all cultures, people have been told that the happiness they seek lies within themselves. Despite the simplicity of this message, the pursuit of inner happiness has proved elusive for most.

Prem Rawat—also known as Maharaji, a title given to him in India where he began his work—maintains that having a fulfilling life is actually a birthright. He offers a specific means to make this hope a reality. He calls it Self-Knowledge, which he describes both as an inner discipline and a state of being that can be experienced by anyone with a sincere interest. “What I offer to people is not just talk,” he says, “but a way to go inside and savor the beauty that is within. I don’t create the beauty. It is not imagination. It does not come from ideas. It is within you. If it were not for the gift of Self-Knowledge, a practical way to be able to connect with that feeling inside, all my words would be empty.”

Maharaji has worked with men and women on every continent, young and old, millionaires and those of lesser means, intellectuals and the uneducated. It does not seem to matter. As you speak with him, it becomes evident that he has a unique ability to speak simply of the most profound. It is his courage to keep his message simple that enables him to touch and be understood by such diverse audiences. With sparkling humor and unexpected insights, Maharaji has a rare gift for inspiring people to see life with a fresh perspective and to find within themselves a sense of personal freedom, regardless of circumstance. Whether people pursue Self-Knowledge or not, they are almost always delighted and enriched by listening to his discourses.

Born in a small city in the Himalayan foothills of India, he grew up in a family where Self-Knowledge was a lifelong passion. From an early age, he traveled with his father throughout India, listening to his discourses on inner peace and contentment. Though he was only eight at the time of his father’s death, Maharaji embraced his work and soon began attracting audiences in the thousands.

your heart can be satisfied.” Those who have been exposed to Self-Knowledge have described it as a means to reconcile the often-conflicting aspirations of heart and mind and as a pathway to their own personal freedom. [See sidebars.]

For the last 30 years, Maharaji has continuously traveled to all six major continents addressing millions who came to listen to him as a pre-eminent guide to achieving inner contentment and personal happiness. While he still maintains a grueling pace lecturing around the world, he also reaches people via the Internet and through videotapes of his speaking engagements.

People who practice Self-Knowledge say that it is precious, and yet Maharaji does not charge for it. When asked why, he explains that he has never seen helping people gain Self-Knowledge as a commercial undertaking. Far from “selling” Self-Knowledge, Maharaji even concedes that it may not be appropriate for everyone. He cautions that people must choose it freely, be ready for it, and pursue it without obligation. “This is not for sale,” he explains. “It is a gift, in the truest tradition of a gift.” His work is supported entirely by voluntary contributions and the sale of related materials.

Over the years, Maharaji appears to have become more passionate about his work. Despite the growing number of people with a keen interest in Self-Knowledge, he seems indifferent to fame and has avoided the celebrity circuit frequented by so many others who seek to gain adherents. Others who represent themselves as “self-help” gurus tend to achieve popularity by focusing on what people could have or do to achieve external success. Maharaji makes it clear that Self-Knowledge will not make you a movie star or a CEO, nor will it make you rich or improve your golf game. It may, however, bring you the fulfillment that these things alone cannot provide.

We were particularly pleased to have the opportunity to conduct what is perhaps the first media interview with Maharaji since the mid-seventies. Unfamiliar

## Self-Knowledge

shows you how to be happy

because you’re alive.

Toronto, Canada - 1997

At the request of various Westerners, Maharaji traveled to London in 1971 when he was thirteen. After speaking engagements in Europe, he traveled to the U.S. with invitations to speak in several cities. During the 1970s, many in the U.S. and Western Europe linked him and his message with their fascination with Indian culture and Eastern philosophy. As he relates in the following interview, Maharaji realized early on that his teachings applied to all people, regardless of culture or belief.

By 1974, Maharaji had settled in the United States but continued to tour and speak to audiences around the world. His message has remained consistent over time and is best summed up by his assertion, “What you are looking for is already within you, and I can show you how to get in touch with it.” In 1971, he told a Glastonbury, England audience, “Isaac Newton only discovered the law of gravity; he did not invent it. In the same way, this Knowledge is within you. I can only show you how to experience it for yourself so that

iar until recently with his work or his thinking, we found his comments on the meaning of success and happiness provocative and were impressed by the story of the development of his global work.

**How do you define success?**

The way I see it, if you don't feel successful within yourself, then it doesn't matter how successful you are on the outside. There is always going to be a distinction between the two. Even if you are the CEO of a big corporation, you have to come home, and what happens then? You may have a big office, a lot of power, and a range of awards, but when you come home, you're just yourself. You need to be a success there, too. Ultimately, you can be exceedingly wealthy and still be happy and satisfied, or not have a penny to your name and be equally fulfilled. Once you draw the distinction between you and everything else, it's very easy to see that outward success is not what really matters.

**Is it difficult to convince people that inner success is as important as success on the outside?**

It's not really a question of convincing them. Once you accept that success begins with you, everything else becomes secondary. People have to experience this fundamental shift for themselves and then, rich or poor, it's very easy for them to start grasping the principles of Self-Knowledge.

**Do you see Self-Knowledge as essential to achieving success, or is it more a question of simply adding**

**value to people's lives?**

Well, you can look at it both ways. Whatever you are trying to pursue, Self-Knowledge will augment your chances of true success. And if a person is just trying to feel good within, then Self-Knowledge will definitely help. I can't claim that it will make a person successful in business, nor that it has any particular health benefits. Some people say so, but I dispute that. What I do believe is that the journey toward joy, contentment, inner peace, or whatever it is you are pursuing begins with you.

**So what exactly does Self-Knowledge change in a person?**

I don't say that Knowledge will bring outward changes in personality. It may, but it may not. There are no guarantees. But Self-Knowledge will bring a fundamental change within you. There will be a shift, and you will find peace, joy, and harmony; and most importantly, you will find yourself—the real self.

It's as if you were in a boat being taken up and down by all the waves. Then, suddenly, the boat just takes off and glides on smooth, calm air. You stop being subject to all the ups and downs that continue to happen. If you are able to find peace within yourself, then maybe you will become a better person, and that could make a difference to everything else in your life. But that will always be up to you.

**What does "Maharaji" mean, and why do so many people acknowledge you as the leader in the field of Self-Knowledge?**



Royal Albert Hall, London, England, 1980

Maharaji is a title given to someone who shows people a way to a fulfilled and centered existence. Why do many consider me a leader in the field of Self-Knowledge? It is not for me to say. I simply make an offer to people who are interested in fulfillment. When those who accept what I offer find that it satisfies them, they don't have to look elsewhere.

I have been doing this for a long

time, since I was very, very young. And during the last 30 years, we have pioneered many ways of reaching people across the world, breaking down many of the boundaries of culture, language, and so many other kinds of conditioning that tend to trap or limit people in society. It has all been a remarkable adventure, beyond what I ever could have imagined from its simple and humble beginnings in India.

The basis of my message is that fulfillment must always begin with you. Rather than tell people, "Look at all the possibilities the world offers and see what you can achieve to be successful," I simply say that I can show you a way to find fulfillment within yourself.

**You were speaking to audiences of hundreds of thousands at the age of eight. How did you find yourself in that type of situation at so young an age?**

I really feel it is a gift. I can't imagine how all of this would have been possible otherwise. It's a wonderful opportunity to come from the heart and to address the very simple nature of us all.

**At that young age, did you have any idea that you would dedicate your life to this type of work?**

Well, at that age, I could not possibly have known the consequences of what I was doing. I was too young. In those days, I would get up before groups and talk, and my father would support me in that. I would talk and enjoy it and that was it. After a time, I had the opportunity to come to the West, and from that point the potential of my work really began to grow. But in those early years, it was difficult to contemplate what the world was. I was living in India, and my world was very, very

small.

**What were your expectations about how Self-Knowledge would be received when you came to the West in 1971? How did you build your work since then?**

When I first came to the West, there was a lot of interest in anything that originated in India, and what I was presenting was initially perceived as Indian. However, when I saw that this placed a limit on how much my work could grow, things really started to change for me. I saw that my message was indeed a global one, not one

restricted to a particular group of people. I think we have seen such a lot of growth over the last 30 years because I had the foresight to adapt my message for people everywhere.

**How do you define Self-Knowledge, and how is it different from other forms of introspection?**

The Self-Knowledge that I am speaking of is fundamental to one's being. It is the core of who you are. It is not about changing behavior. Rather, it is about feeling more centered within yourself. It is much more fundamental than people

■  
Excellence is when  
the person is content.

Excellence is when  
the person is complete within.

For the real excellence  
look within you, that is where  
you will find it.

■  
Sao Paulo, Brazil - 1997

**A Most Rewarding Effort**



*Now a Senior Vice-President with Grubb & Ellis Company, a global real estate services firm, Richard Cooper is responsible for charting and implementing real estate strategies for his firm's corporate clients. Cooper reckons he always had a thirst to get at the fundamental nature of being alive. "When I first discovered Self-Knowledge," he says, "I knew I had found something unique, but I had no idea how powerful that discovery would become for me."*

Watching the paranoid John Nash in "A Beautiful Mind" recently reminded me of my own turbulent and sometimes insecure college years. My practice of Self-Knowledge since that time is directly responsible for my being able to not just ignore the fears

that stymied me, but to completely eliminate them from my reality. In business, I find myself strong, confident, and unencumbered by personal agendas. My clients like that.

People sometimes ask me for advice about finding "contentment." There are all kinds of contentment, of course, like the kind that comes from eating a great meal or the kind that comes from closing a big deal. For those kinds of contentment, I might suggest a fine restaurant or a seasoned real estate advisor. For a person seeking sustainable inner peace, though, advice is not likely to help. That person, if anything like me, is not hungry for advice—but for experience!

I first heard of Maharaji in 1971 while a student at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania. It was a significant year for me in many ways. At the encouragement of my parents, I had enrolled as a

pre-med student, competing both for grades and for my professors' considerations, but that year things changed. I worked to please others a bit less and started to do things for myself just a bit more. Maharaji was helping me to become both self-sufficient and truly content. Today, more than 30 years later, Maharaji is doing the same thing. He continues to inspire and is always there to help. I had always hoped that my appreciation of both Self-Knowledge and Maharaji would grow, but I could not have foreseen that it would become as profound for me as indeed it has.

The pursuit of Self-Knowledge has not always been easy, but looking inside for that which is so elusive on the outside has been the most rewarding effort of my life.

**Inner Discipline**

*"Self-Knowledge has given me a more objective point of view about the people and events in my life," observes Neil Evans, Executive Director of the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies, an affiliation of Bellevue Community College, Bellevue, WA. Prior to his work in technology education, Evan, was the CIO (1983-1994) with Microsoft where he was recognized for three years by CIO magazine as one of the nation's leading 100 IT officers. He believes it has made a difference in his career. "I am constantly asked to take a leadership role because others can sense my objectivity and clarity," he says.*



In 1974, when I was 26, I had been investigating a variety of different ways of learning more about myself. I had practiced martial arts for several years. This certainly helped, but I wanted to apply this understanding to all aspects of my life. Maharaji's Self-Knowledge has enabled me to have this understanding. Like martial arts, it takes constant practice and the results are cumulative.

The biggest obstacles that I have had to overcome are ones that I have created. As much as I pursue my dreams wholeheartedly, there is always a voice within that tells me to stop, to go slower, or practice tomorrow. I try not to listen to that voice. Maharaji provides guidance and leadership on this path, reminding me of the value of my life, and the importance of consistent practice of the techniques of Self-Knowledge.

might think.

I make a big distinction between the person and everything else. I tell people, "You have been given the gift of life. You have been given a treasure within you. Why don't you address what is most fundamental to you?"

That's where the Self-Knowledge I am speaking about is very different. I am confident it's not going to get lost because it is unique. Of course, it is important to make sure that it doesn't get lost because other people use similar words. I will continue to adapt my message to reach people, but essentially it remains unique.



Brisbane, Australia, 1995

#### Can you describe the process of reaching Self-Knowledge?

The first step is getting familiar with what I offer. This may involve coming to a presentation. People listen to me, and if they are interested, they pursue their interest and listen to more of my lectures. They don't move on to the next stage until they are convinced it's really for them. Each person proceeds at his or her own pace. This can take a few weeks, several months, or in some cases, years. After

they're sure they're interested, I teach them some techniques that allow them to get in touch with the simplicity that is inside all of us.

It's really a question of presenting the possibilities to people. If you focus within, you can start up the ladder of success from the right place, rather than just reaching for the outside trappings of success. Of course, I'm not dismissing that kind of achievement. It's extraordinary

what some people have accomplished in this world. But success really begins within you.

#### Are you more focused on one age group, or do you work with people of all ages?

They're all ages, from the very young to the very elderly. You need to be at least eighteen to fully participate, but there are a lot of young people who just come and listen, and many of them have told me that it has made a profound difference in their lives.

#### Do your techniques remain consistent from one country to the next?

Yes, they do.

#### Do you work with corporations, or is your work mainly with individuals?

I look at everyone as an individual rather than as a part of a particular group of people. That way it is much easier to cross the cultural barriers, the language barriers, and whatever other barriers people put up.

#### And while you provide the techniques and the know-how, it's up to

## Worth the Search



*A nuclear physicist with degrees from Cal State at North Ridge and the University of Colorado, Marcus L. Munger, Ph.D., became interested in Self-Knowledge through his fascination with the forces of nature. For over two decades, he has worked on the design and development of surveillance satellites, initially for IBM Federal Systems Division and currently, as senior scientist, Research and Development Project Lead for Lockheed Martin. Having worked on the early development of the Strategic Defense Initiative during the 1980s, he holds two patents for algorithms that allow satellites to track objects in ballistic motion. Before receiving*

*Self-Knowledge, Munger thought the pursuit of science in and of itself might enable him to understand his own nature. He's discovered that there's more to it than that.*

Ever since I can remember, I have been fascinated by how nature works. When I went to university, this curiosity led me to study nuclear physics. I hoped that through these studies I would also come to understand myself. After a few years, I realized that studying nuclear physics, although interesting and challenging, was not yielding what I was looking for.

I first became interested in Self-Knowledge in 1972 when I read an article about it in a Denver newspaper. This led me to attend a Maharaji lecture in Red Rock later that year. What I heard made sense to me. Maharaji

spoke of a superior power within each of us that could neither be created nor destroyed. This, of course, is one of the tenets of the principle of the conservation of energy. The pursuit of Self-Knowledge became for me the means to realize and experience what was happening within me moment by moment. Thinking a certain way is not as important to me as being able to experience contentment. Analysis and synthesis are still necessary in dealing with problems both at home and on the job, but I don't have to rely on them for my own satisfaction.

Self-Knowledge has increased my understanding of my inner self. It connects me to something that is permanent, affording a wider perspective to see the beauty around me. The experience has taught me that there is a way to have satisfaction even when I can't find it in the world outside. People notice that I tend to remain calm and am not upset by changing circumstances. I have talked several times with one of the managers I work with about life and where contentment lies. The other day, he said to another manager who was feeling upset, "Talk to Marcus. You will understand things from a different perspective and begin to feel better." After this person had talked to me, she had become aware that there was something more important to understand.

I find that this fast-paced life can be confusing, and it is wonderful to have someone to guide me who knows how to experience joy. In the 29 years I have known about Self-Knowledge, he has reminded me again and again to consider what is most important to me. I now know that it is possible to feel satisfaction and contentment in this life. It is worth the search.

Every being wants to be happy because that is what their heart desires.

But we have broken happiness into formulas and we pursue the formulas more than we pursue the desire itself.

Kaosiung, Taiwan - 1996

#### Individuals to carry themselves through to a state of Self-Knowledge?

Yes, definitely. It is always incumbent upon the individual. How much he or she wants to pursue and apply Self-Knowledge is up to each person.

#### How many people have you reached so far?

In the past 30 years, I have been to over 250 cities in 50 countries and addressed in person more than 4.5 million people. I go around the world, stopping at places where there is interest in my work. This is not just a passive thing, like watching TV. It is much more interactive. People come, they listen, and sometimes there are opportunities for questions and answers. That happens from India to Argentina to Florida to any number of other places around the world.

#### How does your foundation operate?

Our focus is not really on the organization itself as much as on what we do. The organization is a tool that is flexible enough to change with the needs of the times. What we do is greater than the sum of all the elements of the organization, and this approach has to be maintained. A lot of young people are now participating, and it's wonderful to see the wide spectrum of people involved in the work, the old mixing with the young.

#### Do you have other people helping you teach, or do most individuals deal directly with you?

There are people who help on many different levels, but really, individuals have to deal directly with me. And hopefully it is enjoyable for people when they come and listen.

#### Is new technology affecting the way you operate?

Yes. I am a computer buff, and I have integrated new technology into my work

as much as possible. It has made things a lot easier for us as we can now present the possibility of Self-Knowledge to people in a very simple and intimate way. At first, we used the Internet as an informational tool only.

However, as technology evolves and Internet speeds get faster and faster, an increasing number of people will be able to access services that are much more interactive.

#### What does Self-Knowledge cost?

There is no charge for Self-Knowledge. Many people who enjoy this gift help make it possible to spread the message around the world. Reaching out to people happens on a local basis.

#### Are you planning any changes to what you do?

I keep the message and the techniques consistent for everyone around the world. At the same time, I adapt to what the future brings. The future is a wonderful thing as long as you don't carry too

## Finding a Forgotten Freedom

*In her capacity as Director, Business Excellence for Rolls-Royce plc, Dr. Sandy Hewitt travels to diverse locations, coaching and encouraging the use of best practices. She has worked for several global companies and spent three years researching excellence in business management. She has two sons and first discovered Self-Knowledge towards the end of 1975.*



Initially, I had little interest in Maharaji, but gradually, as I learned more about myself, I began to appreciate his clarity and to recognize his wisdom. Most importantly, I have come to value his perspective.

Self-Knowledge has made me aware that first and foremost, I'm a human being, alive and alert with the ability to learn, to appreciate and to shine. Knowing that about myself means that I see it in others too: in my family, the people I work with and people I meet. Pursuing Self-Knowledge is teaching me to trust myself and to see that feeling good does not depend upon other people or situations. Because I'm less dependent on those things, I can enjoy them so very much more. Although I've been many things—a student, a wife and mum, a secretary, a shopkeeper, a manager, a consultant, an academic—through it all, what I've actually been is me, enjoying the learning.

People tell me that over the years I've become more open, receptive, self-assured, and resilient. But the thing I notice is that, compared with many of my generation, instead of getting set in my ways as I get older, I'm probably getting less so.

I have great admiration for Maharaji as a leader because of his absolute refusal to allow anything to contaminate the integrity of his teaching. Sometimes I'm lucky enough to watch a real craftsman or engineer at work, and I'm always struck by the focus, total mastery of a skill, and depth of understanding of their craft. There are many of these people in the company I work for, people who will accept nothing less than excellence in the gas turbine engines they design and make. Twenty-six years ago, I encountered a man who has this same kind of understanding about *himself* and about life. With each subsequent encounter, I've noted that his mastery does not waver and his clarity does not weaken. Although our lives are superficially very different, he continues to be a reference point for me as I learn more about myself.

Looking back, I realize that although the view of the world that I had learned from my family, from school and my friends was valuable, I have a fresh perspective that has more to do with my own integrity than with the judgment of others. I don't know how that shows on the surface, but I know I feel less driven to weigh myself on the scales of successes and failures. That's freedom.

much of the past into it.

**How important is it for you to maintain a relationship with the persons to whom you show the techniques of Self-Knowledge?**

Well, it's up to the people involved. If they want to pursue the relationship, they can. It's up to them.

**Success in any industry always brings with it some jealousy or criticism. You have not been exempt from that in the success you've had. How does that affect you?**

Well, fortunately or unfortunately, I have been exposed to this since I was eight years old. When I first used to speak, some couldn't believe it was really me. I was even accused of having a tape recorder hidden somewhere. So contro-

**You judge your life by the good things and the bad things, by what you have accomplished and by what is left to be accomplished. None of these things should be the measure for this life. There should only be one measure — how content and how satisfied you are.**

Miami, Florida - 2000

## Discovering What's Important

*As the CEO of Intellikey Labs, a DVD testing service based in Burbank, California, Lauren Evers is at the center of a firm experiencing hypergrowth. In 1996, Lauren and her future husband, Darrell, both worked in Time-Warner's quality assurance program creating quality standards for computer and DVD applications. Time-Warner had doubts about the future of its testing business and closed the quality assurance department. Darrell and Lauren thought otherwise and set up a testing service. They were able to turn their contacts with Sony, Paramount, Warner Brothers, Disney and Universal into permanent customers. Demand for DVD players and the disc testing methodologies they employ has been recession proof, a boon to Intellikey which tests thousands of master discs every month. Virtually*

*no DVD reaches a consumer's hands in the United States without its check disc having been vetted by Intellikey. Evers believes receiving Self-Knowledge has afforded a different kind of quality assurance—more like quality of life. In 2001, her husband, the love of her life as well as her business partner, died. Having received Self-Knowledge in 1997, she reckons, allowed her to cope and find strength.*

When I first met Darrell we both worked for Time-Warner. I knew there was something different about him. One day he returned from Miami beaming about an experience he had listening to Maharaji. I asked him to explain it to me and that's when he told me about Self-Knowledge and how much Maharaji had helped him in this pursuit. I remember thinking, "Darrell must be weak: why does he need to depend on this person for guidance?" I was puzzled, but also curious. A month later, Darrell invited me to hear Maharaji speak in California. That evening, I became fascinated. I started listening to tapes of Maharaji's addresses several times a week and discovered he was addressing some of the most profound questions I ever had. I began having new insights into my life, seeing it as a gift that I had never fully appreciated. I also realized that I had, in reality, expected Darrell (now my husband) to be the source of my entire happiness when, in fact, happiness was first to be found within myself.

When Darrell was diagnosed and soon died of cancer, I was devastated; but these last years have been a rich time as so much good has taken place. Through my practice of Self-Knowledge, I was able to see what happened as a gift, and to remain at peace. I remember how differently I once saw things. At Time-Warner and earlier at Commodore Computer, I was a workaholic and judged myself on the approval of colleagues and superiors. I have come to realize that life isn't about your success or failure in business, and yet success keeps manifesting for me.

Having Self-Knowledge has helped me discern what's really important for me and how to work for it. For that, I am grateful.

versy is not something that has ever been foreign to me.

**Do you ever consider who will take your place when you can no longer be there for people?**

Whoever succeeds me will have to prove himself or herself in the field. I don't think it's possible to simply name someone as a successor. It doesn't work like that.

**Since last year's terrorist attacks on the United States, people often say that we're living in a different world. Have the new complexities of life brought an even greater need for Self-Knowledge?**

Yes, many boundaries are becoming increasingly vague, and the need to be an individual and to be satisfied individually has become even more salient. In other words, the need for Self-Knowledge becomes more and more apparent as technology and the global situation continue to evolve.

**How easy is it to step back and truly appreciate what you have accomplished in your life?**

All I can say is that every time I read a letter of gratitude from someone, I am inspired by a sense of how much more is possible. My teaching makes a difference in people's lives, and the more I can do, the better people's lives become. Sometimes it is difficult to step back from the fervor and the passion, but I don't mind. I passionately enjoy my work.

**So your work is on your mind twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week?**

That's right.

**Do you ever try to forget about your work?**

No, because I find it challenging. I have a passion for my work, so even if I find myself playing tennis, I will usually be discussing my work at the same time.

**Over your career, each person whose life you have touched has viewed you in a different way. How**



**do you view yourself?**

I have always maintained that I am myself. I am not any of the labels people might want to place on me. When I was in school, I would go to an event and speak to 100,000 people; then I'd go back to school and be with my friends. In both

places, I was the same person. Even back then, I made it distinctly clear that I have to be me and only me. People may put labels on me, but that is them putting on labels. I say to people, "Look at me for who I am, what I am doing, and what I have to offer."

**Finally, what is your own personal measure of success?**

If I can keep satisfying my passion, that is success for me. •

*The Prem Rawat Foundation  
tprf.org*

## The Other Part of Me



*An MD, Giulio Cossu has spent a career in medical research, beginning with his post-doctoral work in anatomy and embryology at the University of Pennsylvania and culminating in a professorship at the University of Rome, with a sabbatical at the Pasteur Institute in Paris in the interim. His work on muscular dystrophy led him to work on stem cells to develop treatments for such diseases as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. He is President of the Italian Society of Cell and Developmental Biology in addition to being Director of the Stem Cell Research Institute in Milan. Cossu experienced Self-Knowledge only recently and has come to value it as a source of personal strength.*

The experience of Self-Knowledge is recent for me. Several friends who had received Self-Knowledge gave me videotapes of Maharaji's lectures. I thought this man was saying something very simple and straight to the heart. Later, I watched satellite broadcasts and found myself listening to him nonjudgmentally and

with simple curiosity. My rational mind kept saying (and at times still does), "Come on, this is a story for people living in another world. Listen if you want, but then you will have to go back to real life." Now, I ask, which is the real life?

Despite the pressure of hundreds of commitments and deadlines, I am becoming aware of how much more there is to enjoy in life. As a scientist, I always prized the rational part of me, always planned my life to the minute. I had closed off the other part of me, perhaps out of fear. I left no time to be curious about the substance of my life, or to appreciate what an incredible gift it was.

People close to me started to notice something different. I should add that I am, on the surface, an easy-going, light-hearted person, which makes seeing personal changes more difficult.

The experience of Self-Knowledge is difficult to describe. It is like a subtle but continuous presence of enormous benefit. I feel stronger and more confident simply because now I know something more about myself and am able to enjoy the little things in life that I had once crowded out.