

A Conversation Among Raindrops

Steve Abhaya

What we have here
is a conversation between raindrops
as we fall to our death in the sea of our self.

1. *I have seen God. Wake up. Find God. Know God. Wake up now.*

That's nice. I know a man who knows God. He said, WAKE UP! It startled me for a moment, and I listened to him. He kept saying the same thing over and over. I heard him. I was awake when I heard him say he'd seen God. That's good. I know a man who has seen God. Where shall we go for dinner?

2. How big is God, or did *he* invent this big and that big? I said God is *he*. Out of whose mouth did he and she first come? If something gives birth to all these babies and keeps giving birth, what does one baby know, except where it came from?

3. *Is it good to repeat the name of God in prayer?*

Yes. And then, forget God, over and over. Think God, then forget it. Think God, then forget it. Think God, then forget it. Think God, then forget it, over and over, without ceasing. Someday, inside one moment, skip the thinking part altogether. There's real opportunity here.

4. Take your holy book and toss it away. Now, where is the word of God? Did you throw it away so easily? One little gesture and a little tongue wagging, does that do it? Does that get rid of the word of God, just by throwing away a book? Isn't the word of God a lot easier to hear, now that there's one less noisy book in the way? Are you not listening to the unmistakable, everpresent, undeniable, absolutely sweet and beautiful word of God? It is the truth of who you are.

5. Who says you're not drunk? You're drunk all the time. Since you like being intoxicated, why not try water and air for a while? What is the sound of a smell, the taste of an idea, the feel of forgetfulness? Come on. You know. It's the furniture in the house of God you call your heart.

6. Where does a shadow go when you turn on the light? That's where your mind goes when you sleep sound and dreamless. What is the light that keeps shining when the mind goes willingly invisible? You wander in fear through your house at night, looking for ghosts, rapists, thieves, murderers. Oops. No one there. Even your terror can't get you killed. The enemy of this demon is the flashlight you carry in your exhaustion called surrender.

7. Freedom is a horse ranch for those who've wrecked their cars, whose cars have nearly gotten them killed. They swear off cars, wander onto the ranch, and the corral is full of freedom, free for the taking. They listen to others tell how great their freedom is and how awful their vehicles were. Skip the pep talk. Here is your freedom. Get on your freedom and ride.

8. *I've been happy all my life. I've gotten in the habit of refusing to admit it. I come from a tragic family. Everything went wrong. It keeps going wrong in my family. People in my family hurt each other. They get hurt by each other. Nobody listens, and nobody seems to care. It's terrible. It's been going on for years, as long as I can remember, for at least a million years. What do I do? Maybe next year, it will all be better, if we try harder.*

Honesty is learning how to tell the truth. Humility is telling the truth and accepting it. Serenity is the truth when all is said and done.

9. Say to yourself, I'm not, I'm not, I'm not. I'm not light. I'm not love. I'm not free. Nothing can force you to recognize who you are. Not even you.

10. I am not God. God is me. How foolish can I get, to start thinking I am God? How did I ever get started on such an idiotic idea? Oh, I know. I noticed God, and I thought it was me. I said, *Is it me, or is it just God that I'm feeling?* Did you see what I saw, or is it just me? Is it you too, or is it just me? Yes. I can see that it's you too. Thank God, it's not just me.

11. What is this ego you speak about so proudly, with such disgust? Show it to us. Come on, drag it out here in the middle of the room, like one of your children, and get it to sing for us. What? You can't find it? It's shy, is it? It doesn't like the light. It prefers to speak about itself and refuses to put in an appearance. I think you never had such a one. You've been bragging and complaining for years, and we come to your house, and you can't even get your ego to put in an appearance.

12. Pick a moment, any moment. Take this one, for example. There's no other, by the way. Now, just for a second, let go of that last moment, and don't begin the next one. Just this moment. It won't take long. The tiniest, tiniest, absolutely tiniest part of one moment is all that it takes. Now then, don't rush on to the second half of this same moment. Stop. Did you do it? You didn't? No problem. Here's another moment. Take it. It's all yours.

13. What a genius you are. You know a secret language. God knows it, and you know it. It's right on the tip of your heart. A strange blow on the head, a long time ago, erased your memory. What are you going to do to relearn it? Listen to the one who didn't forget. You know a secret language. Forget English, or anything like it. Don't translate. It's untranslatable. The meaning gets lost in translation. Listen. Don't use your ears. It's your secret language. It's the one you knew first, last, and always. It never went away. You know a secret language. It's the source of all the other languages. What a genius you are. It's right on the tip of your heart.

14. If your mind goes crazy, let it. Don't go running after it. Don't throw good money after bad. Don't worry when your mind goes crazy. Birds of a feather flock together. Your mind will be right at home. If a clown runs off to the circus, what's the harm? If a snake falls into a snake-pit, be happy. When the wolf finally throws off its sheepskin, no more confusion. What a lucky day.

15. Send a free man to church, and he'll wonder what all the fuss is about. Would you put a photo of the Grand Canyon next to the Grand Canyon? Would you send a happy man to a seminar on happiness? Would you build a church in the middle of the church? Would you teach breathing to the fish in the sea? Will you make signs that say SKY - THIS WAY with an arrow pointing up, and EARTH -THIS WAY with an arrow pointing down? Where's the arrow that points to everything at once? Where will you plant such an arrow?

16. You are the haystack, and the needle is lost. You are the needle, and the haystack is confusing the issue. To find the needle, let go of the haystack. You are the needle. You are the eye of the needle. You are the eye of the lost needle. Who will still be searching the haystack when you have already been found?

17. Who is looking out from behind your eyes? Who is watching your life from the inside? Who is untouched, when the most awful things happen? Who is peaceful, in the middle of your torment? Who is calm, when you are unbelievably busy? Who is not surprised, while you are shocked and disgusted? Who has never changed, even as you've lost count of your changes? You've worn a thousand costumes, but who is delightedly naked all the time? Who is the stranger in your house? Who was there before you remember? Who is the silent stranger you know so well? Look in his face. The next time you're looking in the mirror, be the one who looks back. Don't flinch. The one you look back on is more familiar to you than all your reflections.

18. Let's take a little trip. Let's go back to the time when God was only a glint in his creator's eye. You have the key to this time travel. Stick it in the keyhole and turn inside to the moment. This is the moment of your own origin. Did you think there was a difference? Did you think the original moment had changed over the years?

19. One day your body will dissolve like a cube of sugar in water. Most people can accept that. But what if I tell you your mind is just as doomed? Like fog in brilliant sun, like shadows in the light. Oh, how awful that seems. The mind hates to contemplate its own demise. It doesn't want to encourage this thought either. It would rather tell you about the rotting corpse of your body. It would rather distract you with stories of worms and maggots. But, that's all a game. The mind will give in, finally, like a tired child at midnight. Like an angry thought subsides to forgiveness, the anger dies willingly, despite its long life. And so will your mind subside to emptiness, like water poured from a vase. *Mommy, mommy*, it will say, *just one more story - puh-leeze*. It may attack you at the last moment, before it crawls off to bed. *I'll hold my breath, until I turn blue. I will. OK*, you say to your mind, *I'll wait. I have an eternity*.

20. Someone, something, some flower of rare beauty, in the middle of the crowd of weeds, nobody notices, nobody sees, but there is one who sees. His eyes fill with rare beauty. Now who is rare?

21. You say, *My Mind, My Body*, like you say, *My Shirt, My Hat*. And what if one day you stop saying, *My This, My That*? Now who's left standing there? No mind, no body, no shirt, no hat. It must get pretty cold and what to do? Is this what you imagine heaven will be like? Give it a trial run.

Isn't it better to see a place before you move there permanently? Just for a second, no body, no mind, no hat, no shirt. Do you need a nametag between dreams when you sleep at night?

22. Pray. Become the prayer, become the answer, until prayer is no more. What is, is no more. Pray what never was prayer. Pray what you are. Who calls the horse running? Within the running horse, running is.

23. If you *think* you are in love, how can you be *in* love? Do you *think* you are breathing? Are you *in* breath? Breathing breathes. Love loves. Love loves itself loving. It's quite simple really, and not to be confused with like attracting like. Your dog attracts fleas, but fleas can't bark and won't fetch a stick. Loves loves love. See how it disappears. The poor mind is lost to understand such wonders. Be nice to your mind. Love it to death. Love is a fire to the paper mind.

24. You can only die into love. This is like jumping into stillness. You have seen the ads on TV-*Eat Your Way to Thinness*- and some part of you believes it. So, die into love. Love is absolute. There is no this or that in love. All this and that must go. True death is the end of this and that. Don't mistake this death for suicide. Suicide is like taking off your shoes to declare yourself a nudist. This kind of nakedness requires the shedding of your nudity as well. Surrender to love, until death has consumed everything else. Eat your way to thinness. Die your way to love. Strip away everything including your nakedness. When your nakedness is gone, will you worry about fashion?

25. Fear is not real. Only love is real. But, *oh*, you say, *Love is rare, and fear is everywhere*. Fear is so common, no salesman is required. Yet salesmen of fear abound, and love is the only antidote. A boy, who grows up among wolves, never thinks, *I'm a boy among wolves*, but only, *What a terrible wolf I am*. We, who are love, live in fear's clothing. We turn our fingers to claws, our tender skin to matted hair, and one day, in the midst of the hunt, we hear the faint crack of the awakening heart, and we wonder, in our fear, if this means certain death.

26. There's nothing serious here. There's nothing to do. It's already true. Get out of the way, and let what's true, be true. *What is there to do to make that true?* Leave it alone, forget it, ignore it, go stupid. The farmer doesn't have to plant the sky. He lets it rain. The sky grows rain. The seed within you is you withing the seed. This is the holy trinity.

You are the seed. The seed becomes you. You are the becoming. You are the luckiest becoming, to witness your own blossoming, to witness your own witnessing. Your being has eyes without sight, sight without eyes. There's nothing to do. It's already true. Leave it alone.

27. Death and birth are paths. Within your death, within your birth, is the key to your discovery. Discover death, discover birth, discover God is love is truth is who you are. Dig deep, for gold is buried deep.

28. Jesus said, *If you want to pray, go in your room and pull the door shut.* So, what does everyone do? They pray in public and shit behind closed doors. God is no fool. He sees this policy statement. He doesn't care. It's OK. It just doesn't do the trick. God has infinite ears to hear and respond to all true prayers and leave the rest alone. All the shattering glass and squealing brakes in the world he doesn't mistake for prayers. Go in your room, pull the door shut, and say something like this

29. The person who says he has found truth, tell him to go away. What good is he to you? If he hangs around you, what will you do to make the truth more true? If you hang around him, what will you do to make the truth more true? First, he says this is something only you can do, and then he says you must be alone, and then he says this solitude is infinite and silent. Then he says all the talking in the world won't get the job done. What can you do? Tell this annoying person to get lost. Go away from him as fast as you can. If you've understood this much, what more can you be interested in? If you're hungry, and someone points at the banquet table, what are you waiting for? Do you want your hunger to get a little more desperate? That's a good answer.

30. Religions. Atheism. Agnosticism. There an infinite number of paths to enlightenment. Even the pony express had to stop every few miles and get a fresh horse. All these way stations have their function. There are those who sit on lawn chairs with a beach umbrella and a small table and a sign that reads *Stop here for the only true and authentic map to the home of the stars.* You are the star. You are the map. Follow your map home.

31. *So, what can I do? Is there anything I can do? How can I discover truth?*

The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. Truth is the journey. Truth is the goal. What's the step? Tell the truth. Tell one truth. Follow that with another truth. Silence will lead you to silence. Be silent. Tell the truth.

These things are already who you are. Isn't the greatest pianist only one who wiggles his fingers? Wiggle your fingers.

32. *I may be God, but I don't know who I am.*

My body is made of chemicals, but I'm no chemist. I'm eternal, but I have no grasp of time. I'm free, and I can use the word freedom, but freedom engulfs me. I'm a raindrop falling in the sea. Who has perspective? Who can step up to the podium and explain the nature of water in water? Not me. Me is helpless in any situation.

33. Satan is God's imaginary friend. A little girl has tea by a tree on the way to school and back. She sings nonsense songs to her imaginary friend. One day, one song comes out, *Binky-do, bucky-do, finky-do, fucky-do*, and she hears herself sing it. She's horrified, but she's also a little bit thrilled. Her imaginary friend doesn't object. Tea-time continues, and she's late getting home. She's punished, and she blames her friend. He's evil, and he says nasty things. The next day, tea-time is crowded with extra places. It's become very popular. What to do? Cancel school altogether. This new world is really fun. There's no sense in ever going home. One day, when she's thirty-seven, she remembers her imaginary friend. He was never real. How could he be, when she came first? What's real doesn't come and go like dreams. She grows up. Even God grows up some day.

34. What if I tell you that God has sex with you and your lover? Where's the line you've drawn where God is not allowed? What gave you such powers to define the activities of God? Do you pray to God, or do you pray to his activities? Pray to God and leave it at that. Can you sort out the source of all being? What if I tell you that God loves to have sex with you and your lover?

35. God is all that is, without definition. Now, speak, without giving evidence of God. Reject your knowledge of God. Can you proclaim your ignorance and your separation after all this? You are the same being that God is, and you know it. Are you willing, now that you admit it, now that you admit who you are, to embrace it? You've done a good job accepting your human nature. You don't deny it. You take it for granted. Can you be just as sure with what's even more true? You're at ease in your clothing, and you know your clothes aren't you. Can you be just at ease in your skin? Now, toss off the skin. Too much too soon? OK. Keep your skin on. Keep your shirt on. Nothing has changed.

36. What a shock to discover no one is sitting in my chair. This shock is not for the timid. This shock is not for the unwilling. Besides, if there is a whirlwind in your chair, you'll never notice. And if there is a heap of problems in your chair, you'll be too busy. If your chair is occupied by torment and turmoil, ideas and lovers and fears, this shock won't be in the offing. Clear off your chair as well as you can. Throw away all the useless trash that's cluttered up the cushions. Sit still and be quiet. What a shock. I have discovered the nameless one sitting in my chair.

37. Are you afraid of drowning? Drown. Get it over with. Get it out of the way. Get rid of it. Your fear of drowning is drowning you. Are you afraid of dying? Die. Are you afraid of falling? Fall. Are you afraid of ignorance? Be stupid. Whatever you're afraid of, let it happen. It will happen anyway. It's already happened. Whoever is afraid of falling from the sky looks at the sky with apprehensive eyes. If you're afraid of the opposite sex, run from them with all your might. Run as fast as you can, as far as you can, for as long as you can, and don't look back. Oops, you peeked. What brave part of you turned back to look? Is it drowning you fear? Then scream and yell and thrash about in total panic, sink to the depths, feel your lungs fill with water, feel your heart burst, feel the terror. Uh, oh, what's that tiny fish swimming away from your imminent death? All this you call your self, give it up. OK, nevermind, you're right after all, you ought to be ground up in little pieces and fed to the pigs. Wait a minute. Is that an angel smiling? Who is it in you that sees what you're so afraid of in yourself?

38. Just as you have surrendered completely, at that point, it seems, your mind will say to you, in a very loving voice, *This is great. This is truly great. You have done a wonderful thing. How perfect it is for you to surrender completely to God. It's the right thing. This is surely the high point of your life. What a truly beautiful thing you have done. Now listen to me for a second.* Such is the habitual way of the mind.

39. Your whole life is a town. Inside the city limits are many houses. Inside the houses are all the parts of your life, some known to you and some unknown, some parts you are proud of, and some you don't want to talk about. Imagine this; you are able to shine a light in every house, every house is open to you, you are welcome in every house, from the mayor's to the town drunk's and everybody's in between. All your parts are known to you. You have met everyone in town.

Now imagine this. Who is it whose town this is? Nevermind all the houses, nevermind all the stories. Who was there before the town was born? Who is there, now that the town is grown? Forget the town. It's your town. Who are you?

40. To be in this moment, try to get out of it. Think of a favorite place, a place you truly love, a place you once loved, a restaurant, a room, a patch of grass, a friend's front porch. Go there, right now. Put all your concentration into this. This is tough. Don't sit here and think about there. Go there now. Go there, right now. Where are you? Look around. No tricks. Make every possible effort to go completely and totally to the place you love, that isn't here. The better you get at getting where you want to be, the sooner you'll discover it's always right here, right now. Where else could it be?

41. You don't want to surrender. This is a problem. There's no way out. Surrender is not possible. God won't listen. People are fools. Surrender to surrender. That's a little too sudden? How about this? You begin to consider the possibility of surrendering to the possibility of surrender, as if, in a perfect universe, under the best of conditions, you might, possibly, consider surrender as a thing to do, maybe. How does that feel? Has one small, tiny, miniscule cell of freedom begun to blossom inside you?

42. If you live in God, there is no Satan. If you live in God, there is no Devil. If you live in Ohio, and you never visit Toledo, and you never hear about Toledo, and you never see a picture of Toledo, and you never meet anyone from Toledo, what is Toledo to you? If your whole world is Ohio, if your whole life is Ohio, if your heart and soul are in Ohio, what is Toledo to you? If someone comes up to you and tells you about Toledo, are you going to leave Ohio by running off to Toledo? Perhaps you will say, *Oh, Toledo must be another part of Ohio. Ohio is even greater than I imagined.*

43. God is the absolute and eternal no one, and I am Mr. Nobody. I can't say, *I am God*, because *I* is only a pseudonym. Whenever I say *I*, I begin to misrepresent myself. *I am not God*, is close, but *I is not God*, is accurate. Be wary of *I*, and while you're listening to anyone, listen even better to no one. Now you're getting good. Listen well to no one. Find no one and listen to him. Listen to No One and find God.

44. So you say someone has a big heart, when each heart is all heart. Perhaps you mean big love, when love is all love. Can someone have a big love?

Can you say someone has a big air? Does anyone have a big daylight? Bigger eyes, perhaps, or bigger noses. Maybe their organs work better, or maybe the air's a little cleaner where they are. Air is all air. Love is all love. Ocean is all ocean. Even a wave is only part of the same ocean as any other wave. Does your wave have bigger ocean, compared to all the other waves?

45. Ooh, death, the big bogeyman. I say, love death. Like death. Appreciate death. Congratulate death. Cherish death. Death is the mask of God. Death will wipe out everything that isn't real. Be grateful. Life is the great deceiver. It's life that's not to be trusted on its face. The so-called will to live is really the willingness to die, to get out of the way, so that true life can assert itself. There is no will to live. What's truly alive cannot die. What's the use of will in that? This propaganda called the will to live is only letting the fear of death die.

46. Here's the truth everyone hates. You are perfectly happy right where you are.

No. I have to change. My needs are not being met. I may not be the most miserable person in the world, but I'm pretty close. I have it pretty good, but something bad could happen any minute.

You are perfectly happy right where you are. You've done a terrific job ignoring your true self. You've spent a long time listening to those who tell you how unhappy you ought to be. You are perfectly happy right where you are. Find out who you truly are. It is true. Find out where you truly are. It is true. Your happiness is true, right where you are.

47. Be who you are. A great sculpture doesn't run around proclaiming itself. It sits, and people admire it. They say, *What life! What movement! What truth! What beauty!* It is still. It is quiet. The artist has invested it with life. The sculpture doesn't have to prove that fact. The artist has poured his being into the art. Are you any less than that? Do you demean the artist who made you, running around shouting, trying to chisel yourself a little on the side? Be still. Be quiet. Be beautiful. Be powerful. Thou art.

48. Let's talk. Over here. Away from the experts. That guy standing up front who calls himself priest, preacher, shaman, master, teacher, chosen, who chose him? Go to the chooser yourself, if you want to be chosen, too. Say, *Choose me. Say, I would be extremely happy and eternally grateful if you would choose me to be chosen, whatever that means.*

Forget about the great names in the chosen business. Go to the top. Go to the source. Pour out your heart. Get down on your knees and say, *Can I be chosen, too? I have chosen myself to ask you if you would choose me, too.* There you are, already half-chosen, on your knees with the chooser. Now what does it matter about the others? Take a middle-man's advice. Skip the middle-man. Go straight to the source.

49. The way to beat your enemies is to have no enemies. The one who has nothing cannot be robbed. If you have no fear, no one can frighten you. The well-fed one cannot be made hungry. Replace your fear with love. It's easy. Look at fear. It will disappear. And you'll see the love behind it. It's Clark Kent and Superman, never seen in the same place at the same time. Clark disappears so the caped crusader may appear in his place, just in the nick of time. There is a nick in time. It's where love lives and fear cannot go.

50. Your life is a room full of furniture. You're walking all around the room, trying to get things done. You're blind, and there's no light in the room. You bang into everything. You try to learn the location of everything, but other blind people keep using the room and moving the furniture. The air is filled with moans and groans and four-letter words. *Misery loves company*, you think. Then, one day, a miracle! Your blindness goes away, and the light comes on. What a mess! The room is chaos! The lights are on, but everyone's still blind. You don't like being the oddball. You close your eyes. What's a few bruises among friends? This is the plight of the seekers of light.

51. *What is it I like about this flower? Is it the perfume? Is it the tender texture? Is it the profusion of color? Is it my childhood associations? Is it that beauty is transient and ephemeral, and the flower will die? Is it the entire setting of nature, including the sky above, the earth below, and the people near or far? Is it that my attention has turned from daily distractions that are less happy? Is it the lovely name of the flower or my pride in knowing its history? Is it my unconscious recognition of the ineffable kinship of all beings and, thus, my sharing of a moment of life with that which unites us all? Or, is it that, for a split second before I began all this thinking, I thought nothing, and I was only in the flower of my own self?*

52. Stop a moment and ask yourself who you are. Step out of the shadows and reveal yourself. There's no need to speak. There's no need to think up a name. You've been in shadow so long, you say, *I am shadow*, but shadow is only thinking. Shadow can't reveal what shadow hides.

Call yourself out from the shadows. Ask yourself, *Who am I?* and then wait to see who emerges from the shadow. Or, use the scientific approach and consider the source. From where is this *I*, that you call yourself, coming. What is the true source of your *I*? There is no need to ask. Simply find out. Look within. The shadows are gone. You stand without shadow. Look within to the source of who you are. Don't think. Thinking is an invitation to shadows. Stop for a moment and look within. Who is it that emerges from the shadows? It's you. It's who you really are. You will know you anywhere.

53. When you were younger, did you ever wonder who created God? Who created your wonder about God? Who created the question of other than God? Who created the thought in the mind of a child about the creation of God? Think about infinity. Think about the space of endless time. Think about absolute darkness. Travel into that darkness for a while. Travel in total darkness toward endless infinity. Stay with the thought as it travels toward nothingness in the void of space and time. Now look around. Who's there? Did you look all the way around? Did you look behind? Is something there, doing the looking? Is there a sort of nothingsomething in the void of endless time and space? Who is it that can imagine infinity and willingly dissolve itself in the process? The mind is capable and willing to give itself away, to dissolve to a higher peace. *Peace?* you ask. Was there any threat in that moment of spaceless, timeless travel? You go there every night. You close your eyes, the universe dissolves, and you dissolve with it. Later, you may dream, and later still, you make wake up. But consider how willingly you dissolve to nothingness, every night. What amazing courage you have, night after night. Do it right now, in this moment, awake, and free from thought.

54. *How am I ever going to find out that God is love?*

The ocean of God is a sea of love, and you are merely a wave, a ripple, a white-cap, a swell of that love.

How will I ever believe that I and God are love, and that I am God are made of the same substance?

The ocean is water, there's water in your glass, love is wetness, tell me what the difference is? OK, so you're not as salty as God is. Pour your glass into the sea. How salty are you now? Is your wetness less salty than God's? That which is wet, you are. You're all wet. You are wetness itself.

Wetness is your nature, yours and God's. Do you continue to deny your nature, you glass filler, you?

55. Use this noisy tool to invent silence. Run as fast as you can toward nowhere else. Pick up your hands with your hands. Forget about forgetfulness. Think about God. You say, *If God is everywhere, then God must be in thinking, as well.* Blue is the bluebird. The bluebird is blue. Will you say that the bluebird knows blue? The bluebird says, *I know blue. Bluebird is blue.* What does the bluebird know? Does the bluebird know that it flies in the heart of God?

56. Within this very moment is all you dream of. There's no doubt about it and no doubt within it. No fear, either. Within this very moment is peace and joy and love that engulfs any you've ever known or imagined. To get this blissful freedom, you need only give up everything you are not attached to. This is impossible and incredibly simple. To let go of everything can be done at once, in one single cut, or it can be done one cut at a time, until it is done in one single cut. Fling yourself into this very moment without hesitation or recourse. Abandon yourself and cling to nothing. Do it once and for all. Or, do it once and spoil your illusions. If you are ready and willing to cast off all illusions and the comfort of all illusions, now is the time. Or wait, postpone, but know that your ultimate and ordinary freedom is within this very moment.

57. As long as your mind enjoys all these games about its disappearance, it remains. Go where no games remain. Go into this moment, where the mind cannot go. The moment of your freedom is favorite material for the mind to consider. The mind lives just beyond the moment of freedom, just outside, on the outskirts, on the edge of town, on the edge of time, where time loses its reality, and where it begins to seem real again, just before and just after the moment, but not within it. The mind lives in the past and out of the past. What is it that lives in the past but the dead? Does anything alive live yesterday? Tomorrow is the past projected as a re-written variation of itself. The past second is not alive, and the second not yet born is also not alive. Now is only now. There is no now but now, no home of God but now, no true home for you, but now there is.

58. Your life is a potted plant you nourish and abuse, cultivate and ignore, rediscover and re-pot. You hope for a blossom to win a prize or please someone else's eyes, and all your life you tend to what will die. You put the ribbon you win beside the plant you call your life.

It turns to dust a few days after your lovely or not so lovely life dies. The gardener never dies, yet you never recognize or turn to see the beauty in his eyes. No beauty can match the exquisite light in your own gardener eyes.

59. There's no escape. Truth is what's true. Love is eternal. Fear is transient. God is who you are. Look and find out. Don't take my word for it. If I say your house is full of angels, don't look at me. Open the front door.

60. If this is your life-time to be a mass-murderer, and you're bound and determined to hurt as many people as you possibly can, and you're absolutely convinced you have no choice, and there's no alternative, and it's the only thing that will ever make you happy, and your free will tells you you don't have any free will, and your mind tells you there's no God, or it tells you that it's God's will for you to slaughter human beings with reckless abandon, then ask yourself, *What is it in me that has never been killed, has never killed, and who is it in me that I cannot kill?*

61. You are exactly who you are. When are you going to show a little interest? You've been ignoring the one central fact of your life, your whole life. Why delay any longer? Why not tell the truth now? You're like the murderer on the stand, waiting to be cracked by the prosecutor, knowing that the truth is lodged in your throat like a tree trunk. *Yes, it's me!* you want to shout, but you don't, and you won't, and you can't, but *damn*, if only someone would ask the right question. *Yes, yes, yes! It's me! It's me! It's me! I can't live a lie one moment longer.* You cry. You sob. You weep. And deep within you, joy is born.

62. If you jump out of an airplane, you get to use a parachute. If you dive into the sea, you get to wear a scuba suit. If you walk out on the Broadway stage, you get a well-written script. If you get married, you get inlaws and friends and TV in the afternoon. But what if you die to the world and wake up in truth? This is for real heroes.

63. One quick way to eternal life, at least as it's advertised, is to jump headfirst into that active volcano over there. The cords of your attachments will be severed, burned away in flame, but they may be reattached again and again, life after life, as you leap in increasingly hotter volcanos, life after life, again and again, or you may leap into this moment with complete surrender to the one from whom you arise, and with whom you remain, and in whom you are right now.

What sort of nonsense is this? What kind of alternative is that? What kind of choice is this? To create death by artificial means and there by gain a brief advantage, or to accept what already is and be free in the unchanging truth of undying life. What's the catch?

There is no catch. The catch is no catch. The catch is to let go of all catches. Do nothing and do it perfectly. It is to abandon perfection, too. Are you happier now that both choices seem equally ruthless?

64. This gold is within you, but wait, don't go nuts navigating your Amazon or unearthing your Sierra Madre. Don't go get your grubstake. Don't listen, deep into the night, to the tales of heartbroken prospectors and feverish dreamers. Yours is not The Lost Mine of the Aztecs. Your gold is within easy reach. Your gold is within easier reach than the easiest reach you ever reached. Your gold is within no reach at all. Here's the secret; stop reaching. Your long and winding trail ends right here. You cannot reach the end of reaching by reaching for it. What's here is only here. You can't get here from there.

65. *I have seen the best minds of my generation, and believe me, it's not a pretty sight.*

I have seen the heart of all generations, and it is the sight from which all beauty springs. Your mother loves you. Nothing you can say or do will ever surpass or diminish your mother's love. Children of terror and pain, your mother's love waits for you in the home of your abandoned heart. In your own heart, your mother softly sings her song of love for you.

66. *My God, I pray you to become me. Let it be that who I am is pulled within me, and I am inside out, backwards reversed, and undone. I pray to be what I am, without ever again being what you are not.*

67. *To find myself, I built a self. From nothing, I created something. To find myself, I destroyed my manufactured self. To find myself, I lost myself. I gave myself away to God. To find myself, I found nothingness, and discovery began. When all finding had failed, the needless search was called off, and I found what was never lost.*

When *Lost, O lost, O God, I am lost*, is finally stilled, hear the silent heart.

68. What's true is true. If you want to find God, find what's true. See what's not true and avoid it. Find what's true. Let God be true. Believe yourself. Believe only what's true in you. Lay a trap for truth within yourself. Inspect yourself for signs of truth. Examine yourself for signs of God. Don't take ego for an answer. You already know better than that. Ego will find fool's gold for God. Don't be misled. There is no *I* in God. *I* is the bastard child of God. *I* is no child at all but claims the throne. Beware of pretenders. Truth is only that which is always true. Accept no substitutes, no alternatives, no stand-ins. Here's your simple rule: what's true is unchanging. Falsity comes and goes. Truth is already within you. When you find it, you'll see that you are within truth, and God is within you.

69. *It's a funny thing. When I began to recognize myself, I was looking at God. He was standing in my room, quite invisible, a loving presence, over by the door. I couldn't contain him within my eyes. My heart saw him everywhere, something away from me, across the room by the door, something-nothing-everything, in the whole room, everywhere. My room could not contain him. I hid my eyes. I hid my eyes, so my heart could see. I hid my eyes, but my hands were no use. I was warmed in the presence of God. I was in warm love across the room. What room? There was no room in love, no room for anything else, no room for me. I was not able to contain myself within that love. God came in, and in, and in. There is no in or out. I see myself in that love. I see no one but that love. That love sees me. All this, in the moment between these fluttering words.*

70. Can you be humble? Can you do humble? Can you act humble, without stepping irrevocably out of the truth of your humility? Look to God and lose yourself. In your loss, you will see yourself. To be is not to act. To be is to act not. To be is not to do. To be is to do not. *Be yourself* is already wrong. *Be* is closer. Drop *be*. Drop the idea of *being*. Go back before before *be* began. Here is *yourself*, busy being one thing or another. Get rid of this imposter. Here is *be*, another sneaky pretender. How can *being* have a name. There's no *yourself*. There's no *be*. These are sunglasses for truth. This foolish command, *Be Yourself*. Go ahead, *be* anything else. I dare you.

71. *To thine own self be true*. This is a lovely reminder to stop marrying yourself to cows and pigs and goats. No matter how much a lion may love or fear his goat dreams, he wakes up a lion. Wake up to the truth. You have been having goat dreams for so long you've started eating tin cans. There's a Tin Can Council and a Tin Can Day, but a lion wakes up a lion.

He who lies down with a lion in his heart, wakes up to roar. Stop this goat noise. It's unbecoming. Un-become this: you are a lion in goat's clothing.

72. *If I recognize that I am that which is within all things, if I recognize that I am that which all things are within, how will I ever have fun?*

How will you not? What did you think fun was? Did you think fun was the party? Did you think fun was the other? Did you think joy was the movie? Ask yourself not, *What movie am I in?* but *Who am I in this movie?* You are the movie, the projector, the film, the light, the audience, and the entire Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. How can you not have fun? Are you just the critic, or is it only usher you call yourself?

73. Where your mind goes, let your heart go first.

But how can I trust my heart? How can I tell if my heart isn't a lie coming from my mind?

Where your heart is, your mind can't go. Go to the heart and look around. Do you see any mind there? When you think your mind is talking, say to it, *Who are you? Show yourself. Come out in the light where I can get a good look at you.* It will escape your efforts to confront it. Your mind is camera shy. Your mind will cover its face like a felon on the courthouse steps. When you think your heart is talking, ask your heart, *Who are you? Show yourself. Come out in the light where I can see you.* If your heart is speaking, your question will die on your lips. It will scramble itself like a junkie's prayer. How can the heart answer a question from the mind? Heart eats questions like the sun eats ice. Toss an ice cube, toss an iceberg, toss a glacier in the center of the sun. See what becomes of it.

74. *Will it do me any good if I hear about the truth, but I never know it for myself? Will I understand farming, if I never leave the city?*

You hear the stories of farms and farmers, and you buy the bread in stores, and you can read the books and see the movies, but I tell you, you are the farm, and you are the farmer. How can you be satisfied to stay away from who and what you are? This is the real question. This city you speak of is a hologram around an appleseed. Do you think the tree within the seed will be stopped by flickering lights?

75. What a coward you are. Faced with the opportunity of open-ended joy, you flinch. No, that's too polite. You run screaming to your own private torture chamber and clasp yourself in irons. No, that's too gentle. You sacrifice the child of your heart on a pagan block of stone. Except, the pagans are never so cruel. You commit unspeakable crimes, heaping death cell upon death cell, within the prison of your mind. What mind? Show me the torturer. He has died, and only his orders remain. You carry out the orders of an unseen warden. All because this silent moment would awaken joy and vanquish pain forever.

76. Enter and embrace silence. It won't kill you. My mistake, it will kill you. But what delicious death. Oops, wrong again. It hurts something awful. Someone tells a joke. He says, *He killed me*. Your lover smiles. You say, *Oh, lover, you're killing me*. Small potatoes. A few seconds of quiet, and you say, *Stop. This silence is killing me*. At least you have a grasp of the possibilities. Silence is the tiny key to enormous freedom. You want to pray, be still. You want to meet your soul, be silent. You want respite from the raucous noise of your mind, be quiet.

How do I be silent, or still, or quiet, when I know silence only as a brief break in the din that surrounds me, inside and out?

God is everything you don't know, that you know better than everything you do know.

77. *I suppose I better book myself a room in the Himalaya Hilton, get myself earplugs, a partial lobotomy, and learn to meditate, if I'm ever going to appreciate the stillness within.*

Yes, and if you want your arm to go on acting like an arm, enroll yourself in Medical School. And if you want to keep your oak desk from becoming licorice and toothpaste, you better learn Forestry. Here's your Graduate School in Enlightenment; listen to truth. Don't listen so much to lectures on truth. Listen to truth itself. Listen with a vengeance. Listen with a passion. Listen with vigor and determination. Listen religiously. Listen as if your life depended on it. Listen to the silence that lives within the pristine jungle your mother and father called you by their name. Listen, until you have forgotten to listen. Listen to your heartbeat, listen to your breath, listen to the silence that bore you into this realm.

78. *My heart has always gotten me into trouble.*

Your heart is the center of your being. Don't confuse it with the feelings you imagine in your mind. What the mind calls heart is fodder for thought, grain for the Bakery of Romanticism. The Imposter of the Mind calls itself Heart. Its inclination to make stupid decisions with endearing constancy is a dead giveaway. Its promise-you-everything and give-you-grief is tell-tale evidence that the mind is up to its old tricks. What comes from genuine heart cannot trick you. It is you. You are it. The hammy actory of the mind, dressed up in red, the con-artist calling itself heart, will take you for everything you've got, and then tell you how perfect your grief is and call it Your Broken Heart. Your heart cannot be broken. It is invincible. It is untouched by this empty drama. It is you. You are it. Cash in your ticket. Get your money back. When real love is yours, why watch an imitation, badly written and poorly performed, by a has-been who never was?

79. *I can't live in my heart and also keep a job. Not here, not in this place, not now. It just isn't possible. No way.*

And when you are on the gallows, with the rope around your neck, about to breath your last, will it be easier then?

I can't be in the heart of my heart with this rope around my neck. I have too much to think about.

Is it easier to be in your heart when you're on vacation, lying on the beach, with a brand-new credit card and a luxury condo? Or is pleasure just as big a burden as fear? There are so many things to think about. It's funny how thoughts multiply like rabbits, like insects, like mink, like disease, like autistic mathematicians. Thoughts pile upon thoughts like lemmings, like prison rioters, like sex addicts at an orgy, like images in a house of mirrors. They are so insistently overpowering. And in the heart? Silence. Unbroken, deep, and powerful silence.

80. *What if thoughts interrupt my stillness?*

Who can interrupt lovers in their rapture? Let thoughts come, like rain on window glass. Rain comes. The windows are drenched. Still, you can see the trees and the street beyond. Let thoughts come like rain on the roof. Inside your stillness, lovers play. Outside, the greatest storm is sparkling dew.

81. Seduce your mind. Your mind is a willing bride. You will be seduced by love, when love seemed unknown. Where your heart appears, your mind cannot remain the same. An unsatisfied Romeo hears rumors of a great beauty. He finds fault, he invents stories, he denigrates, until she enters the room, and his glib tongue goes silent. His sharp remarks dissolve, his wit turns to quiet desire. He cannot stay away from the doom of his prior life. Your mind cannot resist the incredible beauty of your seductive heart, if only you introduce one to the other.

82. *How will I know God if I ever meet God?*

How will you ever come out of your coma? You're an American spy who's been calling himself Boris for too many years. The iron curtain has fallen, and the empire has broken into squabbling neighbors. How will you remember the truth, after these many decades of lies? Will you write your memories and hope for war? Your work is done, or it was never done. It was done and re-done. It was done and undone. How will you wake up from this nightmare? How will you rouse yourself from your sleep? What else is there to do?

83. *God is a Johnny-One-Note.*

That one note contains all the others and the silence between the notes, as well. God is a black-hole of music into which all songs become one and from which all singing begins. If you want to play the instrument of your soul, if you want to be played as an instrument of soul, if you want to play the timeless music of all time, trace back the melody of your self to the silence before the first note was struck. When you first said *I*, you began your song. Read your own lyrics backwards and fall into the pregnancy of creation before your first word was sung. Go to your conception and leap back into God. Before your song begins, there is a moment of purest quiet, of empty fullness, of mindless intellect, a void packed to the bursting. From that moment to this moment, nothing has changed in the moment of the unchanging you call God.

84. You go to God, hat in hand, and you beg, *Oh, God, please give me my freedom*, and God says, *Why do you come to me with your hat in your hand and ask me to give you your hat? Put this hat on your head and go home.* You go to God with a heavy heart, and you say, *Oh, God, please take away this pain*, and God says, *Your boat is sinking from too much weight, and you want me to toss it overboard.*

Stop your weeping, stop wringing your hands, and clear the decks. There's no danger of your boat sinking, unless you won't dump this useless cargo. You go to God with a head full of woe, and you say, Oh, God, please give me some peace of mind, and God says, Peace of mind? What is this oxymoron? Don't look in the mind for peace. Go home, look in your heart, and call me in the morning.

85. God's evil twin, God, is the one who gets all the publicity, all the attention, all the followers, because he dumps evidence in the world, that the world understands, called tragedy and miracles. He's the one best known by the mind of mankind. The evil twin is the one democratically elected. He's the people's choice. He keeps pumping the pork back to the electorate and siphoning off the taxes. The twin who is the twin of God's evil twin does his work in silence and with greater love. So great is he, and of such love is he, that this government of evil is a single drop of rain above the unfathomable sea.

86. *What about all the bad people and all the bad deeds done by decent people?*

When your hands are full of prison, how will you pick up freedom?

Every time I put down my chains, new ones appear.

Did you put down your chains, or did you only switch them to the other hand?

My hands are accustomed to chains. They feel empty without the familiar links.

When you truly let go of your chains, let go also of their absence. Remember your hands before they held anything. Open your fingers. Unclench your heart.

87. When you pray, *Thy will be done*, you might as well pray, *Yes, I agree, Thy will is being done*. There is no God and no not-God either. You are fishing in an invisible tank, for invisible fish, without a pole. Your only problem is your persistent belief that you are a fisherman. When you go fishing, you might as well pray, *God, please catch me, today*. Then, *God, you have caught me*.

88. *Where do I live if I don't live in this world?*

Are you consulting a map? Are you trying to relocate? Are you calling the movers? Are you changing your citizenship or looking at other planets? Go to the core of your self as you sit in your rented room. You will discover the crossroads of time called the moment, called the space between breaths, called emptiness, called truth, called the center of the universe, called love, called God, called the one that makes every place home. Now where do you wish to go?

89. *So many people have hurt me. I can't forgive them. What can I do?*

Why do you let these ghosts from the grave continue to haunt you? Where is their muscle? What stones can they throw? Forgiveness is a light in a darkened room. In this very moment is the death of all who cannot live in this moment. Why do you welcome unwelcome guests? Your fear, anger, hurt, vengeance, and pain are a feast for these unwelcome ghosts. Go to the past. You won't find forgiveness. Come into this moment and become forgiveness itself. Who hurts you now? In this moment, who can hurt you now?

90. *My fears are overwhelming. How can fears not be real?*

Where does your fear go when you drop into sleep? What happens to your toothache and your cancer? Where do you put your rage and your enemy in the silent, dreamless night? Where are your tormentors and your unfulfilled dreams, in the middle of your laughter? Remember the politician who died last year? What happened to the fear you used, to name him dictator of your thoughts?

91. Prayer is your opportunity, in the privacy of your own room, to speak, for as long as you like, in any way you like, with the one who knows everything and everyone, at no cost to you but your appearance at the appointed hour you pick, in your own good time. What are you waiting for? Prayer is the dance-hall of the heart. Your willingness to love is the price of admission, and every night is free. It's so cheap and easy that it is generally mistaken for worthless. Life without prayer is the high price you pay for not praying.

92. *What must I do to sit with the One?*

First, make yourself a long list of requirements. Then, scour the world's religions and adopt all the duties you find. And, never let a voice go unrecorded that might add to your burden of musts. Plus, don't neglect the needs your fears demand. As long as your list keeps growing, as long as that, you will stay away from the One whose presence asks no toll. Scream at the One, demand to see Him, threaten Him, accuse Him, deny Him. The ears these pleas will not please will be your own. The ears these pleas will deafen will be your own. Finally, with deaf ears and no voice left, listen, hear, and speak. All you are is within the One. The One is within you. What must you do to be the one you already are?

93. *When I try to feel my heart, all I feel is anger, fear, doubt and confusion. What can I do? Sometimes, I feel like a criminal, and other times I feel like a saint.*

Who is this who says *I am this and I am that*? Ask yourself who it is who wears different faces? Who is it behind the masks? Stop counting masks. Stop listening to the masks talk to each other. There are people who claim to have two hundred personalities. With a little effort, you could have two thousand. The mind is in the business of making masks. Who is the one who wears the masks? Overpopulation won't solve your ills. You are looking out from behind your faces. Turn and look behind them all and see the one.

94. *I looked at God, and I saw no one. My eyes were full of beauty. I listened for God, and I heard nothing. My ears were full of joy. I spoke to God, and my tongue turned to light.*

And who are you, right now, in this moment?

I am silence in this moment.

Who is it that is speaking these lovely words?

No one but the one who comes from the one.

95. *I don't understand love. I don't know what it is. I don't know what it means.*

Love is not in the business of meaning. Love means nothing. Love has no meaning. There is no need to understand love. Understand can't love.

Love is not understanding anything. Love is. Is love. Be who you are and know love. Your hat is on your head, and you search the house for your lost hat. What relief and happiness when you discover your hat, still sitting on your head. Was it ever lost? Who goes looking for what's never been lost? Who tries to understand what's already understood? Can you understand what lies beneath understanding? Can you come to know what you've already known? Your essential nature is love. Where are you going to go, to look for it, to find it, to understand it, to be it?

96. *Oh, what an awful day, and it happens all the time, when I simply cannot hear the poems, I can't hear the music, I cannot pray. What to do? What to do?*

If you want to find a potato, it makes sense to look in a potato patch. If you want to hear a poem, go where the poem is born. The poem is born in silence. Go where the poem is. Go where the poem is born. Go where you are constantly born. Go where you are.

97. *I'm stuck in my head, and I can't get out of it.*

This is a puzzle for geniuses. How does the goose get out of the bottle? Go where there is no goose and no bottle, and see if you care about the question. Inside your mind, your mind will imprison your mind.

What is an innocent heart to do?

Yes, and it's all so simple, isn't it? Heart is not inside the prison of mind. In prison, all day, every day, the prisoners talk about freedom. All their talk will not set them free. Don't look in prison for signs of real freedom. Be free, and let the prison go.

98. Your heart is a passageway to the one in whom your joy is kept. Why have you barricaded the door with the furniture of your misery? Or perhaps you believe others have done it for you. Nevermind, it's time to call the junkman. Put your back to the task and haul off the trash. Do what it takes to clear the way, unless you prefer the fame you've gained as a notorious junkyard firetrap.

99. *What's the easy way to freedom?*

Be freedom itself. That's the easy way. It's the only way, and it's easier than the easiest of the easy. No question is difficult when you know the answer.

What's the easy way to freedom?

No way. Unpack your ways, and open up freedom.

What's the easy way to freedom?

Get rid of everything in you that isn't freedom.

What's the easy way to freedom?

Embrace freedom and let freedom clean you of everything it is not.

What's the easy way to freedom?

Do battle with your demons until they are exhausted and you are exhausted. Then be freedom itself.

What's the easy way to freedom?

Desire freedom. This desire for freedom is freedom itself calling you to its arms.

100. *When I pray, how will I know if I am heard?*

Pray until you become the prayer. You will be the answer to that prayer. The tree fulfills the tree within the seed of the tree.

But I don't want God to make me happy, as I am. I'd hate that.

Don't worry. Your prayers are answered.

101. *Do angels cry?*

All that you dream is being dreamed in heavens undreamt. Whatever kingdom you seek will be given to you in the perfect form of your desires.

Incredible monsters live in my spare bedroom!

These pastimes, and many more, are available to you for as long as you wish.

My body is being ripped apart by incurable diseases!

Then why do you pay any attention to them at all? Don't waste your time with fools. Don't give love where love is not given. Give your love where love is never lost. Look for love where love is in endless supply.

102. *I've been told I should love what harms me, in order to be free from it.*

If you love the bear trap that's got your leg, will it open its jaws and heal your flesh? Be love itself, and what can bear traps do? Don't waste your time whispering sweet nothings to a hunk of metal with a bad attitude. Be love itself, and what can bear traps do? This love you speak of is in the mind, and the bear trap of your mind may loosen its grip a little in honor of such a sunny disposition. Better yet, be love itself and let go the grip you have on your vast collection of traps.

103. *Freedom sounds great, but can't I just wait for heaven?*

Sure, wait. Wait a few million years. What's the problem? Where is the deadline in eternity? Or, take a break. Stop for the tiniest part of one second. If you want to wait after that, don't hesitate. The waiting room is huge and filled with pickpockets and vendors and video games. You'll have plenty to keep yourself occupied. Why be free, when waiting for freedom can be so entertaining?

104. *What will happen to me? What will I do?*

Your self is a doorway to the source, a mine entrance to the mother lode. Go down into this once-abandoned mine called the moment, drop down into this fearsome bottomless pit called the self.

What will I bring back with me?

You'll bring back the most precious element, in your empty hands.

What will I look like when I emerge?

You'll look like the truth of who you are. Everything you touch will be touched by what you've touched and by what has touched you.

How will I answer all the questions?

This is the question that answers itself.

105. *Where is my master? Where is my lover? Where is my self that I cannot see?*

A small branch of wind-blown tree appears in the square of window frame high on the wall across the warm room. The leaves are lit by the interior lamp. The branch bends against a stormy sky.

My butt is sore, even though I've changed chairs several times.

Whose butt? Who sees the branch? Who longs for his lover, his master, his self? Who goes out to come in?

106. The poet speaks the truth when there's nothing else to speak.

What does this form take?

It takes no form but truth without form. These words, in their fashion, are truth, and truth is hereabout within. Look to the words and quickly look away. Can you see her? Whoever sees truth sees the poem.

107. *The painter looks and sees. He paints what he sees. He sees what he paints. He looks at the painting.*

Nothing of beauty is known by these thoughts. The painter looks within his sight, until he sees without eyes. Spontaneously, instantaneously, simultaneously, the painter looks within his sight.

Does the painter have better eyes?

The true painter is quicker to go sightless, less afraid to lose his eyes. Sight unseen, he loves, and his eyes do the bidding.

108. *I don't know how to be free. Will I ever be free?*

If a child buries a compass in the sand, will true North be lost forever?

I've been looking all day for what's up. Can you tell me where it is?

Well, don't look down here.

Where is within?

I am without the answer.

I cannot find myself.

I cannot see my eyes.

109. *I want to be free.*

Cancel *free* from your search. It's only a concept. Drop *to be*. Future is not real. *Want* is useless at the doorstep. *I* is the beginning and now the end. Look to the source of *I*. Where has the *I* come from? Be a good detective. Retrace your steps. See from whose house these footsteps have come. All your questions are footsteps leading away from the source. Trace them back and discover.

110. Who you are outstrips your wildest dreams. Don't be so afraid of the cataclysmic moment.

But I'll never get anything done if I find out that stillness is joyful.

Yes, throw these seeds away. They don't even look like trees, and there's hardly enough for a snack.

Will I be happy if I find joy and forget happiness?

In the pursuit of pleasure, have you experienced pleasure, or is pursuit the only profit of pursuing? If you lose thousands of dollars to gain a few pennies, do you call your pennies profit? In all your seeking, where is your finding? Does seeking teach finding? Does longing teach satisfaction? Does reaching teach having? Does thinking teach being? Dress yourself in your true desires. What fits you is the skin of who you are.

111. *I am so unfortunate. I have nothing to be happy about. This ugly rind of misery hides rotten fruit. I want to kill myself. I can't feel anything but pain. I ought to toss away this ugly rind. I ought to throw my fruit in the ditch. Beneath the skin, beneath the pulp, within the core of the fruit, I am nowhere to be seen. I am not worth being saved. I despise the source of my being. Nothing can be done to give me peace. I'd be better off dead. I wish I'd never been born.*

Go to where you have never been born, in this eternal moment. You already are what you want to be. See what becomes of you, in your never been born, never to die, heart, the center of your center.

112. Listen to the voice of the One. It comes and comes and comes. It enters and enters and enters. It appears and appears and appears.

Where does it come? Where does it enter? Where does it appear?

You run there and there and there. You listen to the big bang theory of one. You hear the first whisper of the One, and you say, *No, I'm waiting for Godot*, and you say, *I expect an entrance. I've built a great staircase for the One, and I will wait for his descent*. At the foot of the staircase, you wait for the One who waits with you at his side. *I'll get a prize for waiting*, you say. *What have I done to deserve this torture?* you say. Meanwhile, the One, who waits for you, speaks your name, and you say, *Be quiet, I'm listening for the voice of the One*.

113. *I said to God, This town isn't big enough for the both of us. So, I drove God from the town. In his absence, I accidentally shot myself. Suddenly, there was room enough for God. I found out the true size of the town. It has infinite outskirts. I learned my mistake. Since my untimely death, I've been resting here, at home. Thank God, God is such a good shot.*

114. I say only, and I say simply, *There is no one between you and the One*. I say only, and I say it is simple, *As long as you listen not to the One, you'll not know who you are*. This is all I say, and it is simple, *You are the only one between you and the One*.

115. *I don't have what it takes to find God. I don't have what it takes to find love. I don't have what it takes to find truth. I don't have what it takes to find who I am.*

You got that right. It's true you don't have it. It's true it doesn't take it. It's true you can't find it. Even if you had it, and you could take it, and you could find it, you wouldn't know what to do with it, once you got it. You can't get it. It God, and it love, and it truth, and it you, cannot be had, taken, found, or gotten. Actually, you've defined things rather well.

116. Fire an arrow at the beloved one. Fire an arrow from the heart, and it cannot miss. Fire an arrow at the heart of the beloved, and it cannot miss. Ask a child to fire an arrow at the open sky. He cannot miss. Let a child fire an arrow at the heart of the open sky. Let your heart be as open as the open sky. The heart of the beloved one is as open as the open sky. Your arrow cannot miss. If it falls to earth, your heart will retrieve it. No arrows are ever lost that are fired from the heart. Fire an arrow at the open heart of the beloved one within.

117. Where will you look in the apple and not find apple? Where will you look in God and not find God? Oh, the worm, you say. Why not say toaster oven or Oklahoma Panhandle hairdresser? Yes, you're right. Apple does not contain, within it, all things. Where will you look in God and not find love?

118. *How do I abandon thoughts and open my heart to love?*

When thoughts come, say, *A thought has come. Where is this thought in my heart?* In library science, this is called cross-referencing. In you, it is called a path to freedom.

119. *When I say, Thank you, God, I feel irritated and annoyed.*

Yes, it's uncomfortable to not tell the truth. Tell the truth. Tell God how you feel. While you're clearing your cupboard of feelings, don't forget gratitude. *Here is some thank you, God, way back here in the corner.* See how it feels when it is the simple truth.

120. At the deepest core of your being is an inexhaustible well of love, and you have blocked the flow with a grain of doubt.

Instead of unblocking the flow, you search for *The Lost Lake of the Incas*, you write a sci-fi novel, *The Liquid Planet*, you go to parties and look for moist, wet, or damp lovers, you become a famous singer, whose biggest hit is *Please Rain on Me*. You don't want to dissolve the block because you think it will kill the goose that laid the golden egg. You bury yourself in golden eggs without a taste of who you are. Upon your death, the Golden Egg Society elects you to its Golden Egg Hall of Fame. You sit for eternity upon a grain of sand, surrounded by an ocean you cannot touch. At least it feels like eternity. Instead, you wake up, right now. At the core of your being is an inexhaustible well of love, and the tiny grain of doubt is gone.

121. I want to be free. Let me be more honest. *I* wants to be free. *I* likes what *I* has heard about freedom, and *I* has decided *I* would be happy if *I* could have more peace and joy and love and not have to worry so much about anything ever again. It's understandable that *I* would desire freedom, but for true freedom, *I* must go. For true freedom, *I* must die. *I* is the condemned man who shows a sudden interest in the firing squad in a vain attempt to control the outcome. I have always admired guns, *I* says. I like the death of the ego, says *I*. When *I* says *I* wants to be free, don't make the mistake of making *I* commander of the Freedom Fighters.

122. *All I see around me is sadness. How will I ever know joy?*

Who is it that sees sadness? Does sadness see sadness? Is there West without East? Who is witness to 100% sadness? Explore this witness. Where is this witness standing, to look upon sadness so profoundly? Be warned. There's danger in joy. From joy, you will see only joy. Even sadness will glow with joy. From joy, you will see everything joyfully, and joy will overwhelm it all. One drink of real joy, and you will desire to drink forever. Those drunk on joy are always drunk. You'll be the one staggering home with joy.

123. Don't just get to know yourself. Don't be a stranger to yourself, but don't be an acquaintance either. Don't be only a friend to yourself. Don't be satisfied to be your own best friend. "Who are these two you are still being? Be one. To be yourself is to lose the distance between you and you. To be yourself means not to have any doubt anymore. *Well, I don't know about that*, you say. You see? You doubt yourself, and you are strangers again. Don't love yourself as an act of charity. Be where there's no room for anything but love. That point is now and only now. Be in love Be *in* it. Sit in it. Soak in it.

Get to know love from the inside out. Be yourself until yourself is second nature. Then who is first?

124. *I'm too stupid to be enlightened. I'm not smart enough. I'm not educated. I haven't learned enough to know anything.*

This is quite a good start, actually. Before anything was written about, it had to be true. Don't avoid this timeless opportunity. Before the word, was the truth. Once upon a time, the thing you could read about now, had never been written about, and still it was. What was, still is. What *is*, was, or it isn't true. Discover the *is* that always was. The *is* that always was is *still* within you. You are *ising* all the time. You *is* automatically. *Your isness* is identical to the *isness* of all time. *Isness* isn't a biography for you to read. *Isness* is an autobiography, and you are its author.

125. *You are talking about drinking from the fountain of life, and I'm not even thirsty. Why should I be interested in drinking from the fountain, if I'm not thirsty?*

Be good to yourself. Proclaim your lack of thirst. If no thirst is your truth, be true to it. Say, *I am not thirsty*. Say, *I have no thirst*. Name the things for which you have no thirst. *I have no thirst for God. I have no thirst for freedom. I have no thirst for self-recognition. I have no thirst for truth. I have no thirst for joy. I have no thirst for peace. There is no thirst in me. I am devoid of thirst. Thirst stinks. Thirst bores me. Thirst is stupid. I have absolutely no interest in thirst.* Be the one you are. Thirsty or not, be true to the one you are.

126. *All at once, in moving, I am still. Stillness haunts me. Wherever I go, stillness invades me. Where can I go and be free from this freedom? It dogs my steps. Happiness, for no apparent reason. I look for my old baggage of fear, and I've been robbed. Thieves have stolen all my fear. A pack-rat's been here. In the place of every absent fear is stillness. I pick up the stillness, and all I see is love.*

127. Apples and oranges. Since you're so fond of thinking, think this: *Think in*. All thoughts go out from the center like fireworks. Where do these thoughts go? What are they aiming at? What fizzle lies at their destiny? Think to the source of thoughts. *Think in*. Think to the source. *Think in*. Think to the base of your thinking. *Think in*. Apples and oranges. *Think in*.

128. *This is way too much for me. I can't imagine it. I can't begin. I don't even want to think about these things. Just getting along is enough for me. I've got enough to do just to get by in this life. I don't want to think about eternity. I'll be there soon enough as it is.*

What to do? How not to think about what you have no desire to think about? Be who you are. Be yourself. Be right where you are. Don't move off yourself. Stay at home. Leave the business of others to others. Don't go away from yourself. Don't pick up the ideas that are dropped by others. Follow the direction that comes without direction. Look into the wisdom you are given to be who you are. Look into the source of your good fortune. Eternity will come to your kitchen door. Eternity will relax in your kitchen. Eternity has no particular interest in big questions and big answers. Eternity goes well with a muffin and coffee.

129. *What about feelings? I don't want to give up feelings? I just learned how to feel feelings. I see how thinking has gotten in my way, but I'm glad I have feelings.*

Feelings are to be felt. Feelings are not called holdings. There's no need to hold onto feelings. You hold onto them, until you can't tell who's holding and who's being held. A feeling comes like a breeze, like a wind. Only a fool says the air is calm when a fierce wind is blowing. Let the wind blow. You may be the captain of your ship, but you are not the captain of the wind. So a wind comes up. A hurricane, a tornado, a tidal wave of wind, and then it is gone. Pick up the pieces. Call the insurance company. Do you say, *The hurricane is here*, after it has passed? Let it come. Let it go. Don't hold onto it. Don't run after the hurricane. You can't live inside a hurricane. Let it go. Did you feel more alive during the hurricane? Recognize your aliveness. Keep your aliveness. Let the hurricane go.

130. *I like to listen to words of freedom. These words are soothing and stimulating. They help me to understand.*

A book cannot teach you to read. You are the reader of the book. Why praise the book when it's your own reading you enjoy? If you are serene, praise serenity. What can make you serene, if there is no serenity within you? Your serenity has simply been enjoying itself. Your aliveness is entirely yours. A bird flies across the sky. Your eyes follow the flight of the bird. You gasp at

the beauty of the sky. The bird is gone. Your wonder is still here. Praise your wonder. From within your wonder, the setting sun and the bird on the wing are seen. God sees his glory through your eyes. Praise this gift to hear a few words. Praise your listening heart.

131. *When all hell is breaking loose, and everything is crumbling down around me, and I don't have a leg to stand on, and I feel completely helpless, it's easier to recognize there's nothing real in this world that I can depend on, and it's easier to think about God and ask for help.*

You are the lucky one. The one whose life looks great and doesn't cause any problems is the unluckiest of all. Who can look at anything new and say, *Now, there's an example of human failure?* Who can look at great beauty and say, *Now there's a cause for immediate surrender to the will of God. Thank you, God,* is another way of saying, *Thy will be done.*

132. The smarter you get, the stupider you become. When it comes to your heart, you're a butcher on vacation. When it comes to your heart, you package airplanes in newspaper. When it comes to your heart, you build houses on the sides of bicycle tires. When it comes to your heart, you sit on a tile floor, you wear a feather jacket, you drink dry tea. Everybody is an idiot, when it comes to the heart. When loves comes up in the heart, everybody's idiocy shines like the sun.

133. Think dead. Think really dead. Don't think about not being alive. Think alive, even as you are thinking dead. Think everything dead but your awareness alive. Think the survival of your awareness past the finish line of your life. Think dead all the transient parts. Think the body dead, think the mind dead. Let be dead all the stuff that comes under the heading of who you think you are. Think dead everything you refer to as *my this* or *my that*. Let die everything on that list. Think past what you think of as death. This is your innate truth. This is your future, when future has lost its meaning. Look again at all you see. See who you are when all you are not is not.

134. The true moment of life is this moment, where even the word moment cannot go. Living in the moment is not the same as *living for today*, or *going for the gusto*, or *getting the most out of life*, or *doing your own thing*, or *just do it*. It's not the same as *carpe diem*, or *use it or lose it*, or *get it on*, or *coming to the party*, or *showing up*, or *standing tall*, or *getting down*.

The true moment of life is empty. It is the huge space between the last moment and the next moment. It means, *Let the last moment be done and don't move to the next moment.* There is no moment in this only moment of being. Anything that infringes on this emptiness is already dead, gone, lost, and useless *forever.* This moment is the not-moment as we have come to know and understand moments. As moments go, this moment stands alone. It cannot be named. It cannot be seen. This moment is all there is. Nothing else exists that hasn't already been consigned to the scrap heap of the past or the fantasyland of the future. This is the only moment, and you *cannot go there.* You are already in it, and you will never leave it. Any other moment that calls itself the moment, is an imitator of the truth that is who you are.

135. *I can't find God. God is hiding from me.*

You couldn't find your toothpaste in your suitcase in Toronto, last Tuesday. You used to say you couldn't find a decent companion. You can't find an attractive way to wear your hair. You can't find your shoes in the dark. You can't find Casablanca in the TV guide. It's as if you couldn't find the floor from a chair. And you think God is hiding from you? God is huge. God is gigantic. God is impossible to miss. God is everywhere, all the time. Come out of your own hiding and see who is missing.

136. Be as a child in your heart. Be as the truth of a child in your heart, back when your silence meant, *I'm here and I've almost lost touch with the truth.* Do you hope that when a child first speaks, it will tell you what it knows? Each one of these tiny, uneducated foreigners learns a new language, forgets its homeland, even as the eternal being keeps its own in its heart.

137. You and everyone else are all the same stuff. You and everyone else are all the same ether. Just because your elbow hurts when you bang it on the door-frame, don't get the idea there is any difference between them. Balloon A is attached to Balloon B. The air of Balloon A is the same as the air of Balloon B. The air you breathe is breathed by everyone else and always has been. Where do you leave off and anyone else begins? We are all Siamese twins pumping the same blood. Six billion Siamese twins and all the other billions and billions of Siamese plants, insects, rocks, birds, and atmosphere make one giant Siamese balloon, and what separate part of this union are you?

138. *The overgrown belly of my brain gets in my way. It bumps into things. It knocks things off tables. It obscures my feet from my sight. It gurgles and rumbles. It's great at creating gases. It makes the center of my bed sag. It keeps me miles away from my lover. But, I can't get rid of it. It is me. It is who I am. I buy bigger pants and a longer belt. If I didn't have this Buddha belly, I'd disappear. There's be nothing left of me. Then what?*

139. Think about an invisible swan on the perfect pond of your heart. This is the way the mind gives itself up for love.

140. Can you wait for nothing to happen? Can you let nothing happen? Can you let nothing seep into your overcrowded everything? Can you let the water of nothing soak into the everything sponge of your heart? From nothing we come, and to nothing we go. A clue: *nothing* means *no thing*. Haven't you had enough of things for a while?

141. Emptiness is a funny word. Here is a box full of non-box. Here is a place of no place. Here is a state of being in which no being exists. Get rid of this emptiness. It's taking up too much space. This vast emptiness. How arrogant of something with so little to offer. Call it infinity, and now it's downright majestic. *Emptiness, I've got no more room for you! Emptiness, get out of here!*

142. Love is the dictionary of wordlessness. *Oh, tell me you love me. I love you. I love you. I love you.* Like a bookmark between sunbeams. Feel the heat. See the light. What's the use of romance? Read the first word in the dictionary of love. It is the word *I*. And the meaning is: the absent one. Understand this word, and all the other words are easy.

143. Everything you are attached to is sucking the life out of you. *But it feels so good, you say. This blood-sucking at my throat gives me a sense of belonging. So what if I belong to a vacuum? This draining feels almost like surrender.*

144. These pages are a treasure map. Do you rip the pages apart looking for gold? These pages aren't written in gilt. These pages are a read-out of your assets and deposits. Don't try to cash in these pages. They're not legal tender. These pages are not a bank, thought they sit beside the flow. At the end of the longest lines, there's no one here but the teller. You are already rich. This is nothing but another account of your wealth.

145. *God damn!*

Look inside your latest episode of damn. Look for God in there. Damns are chock-full of God. This damn-nation is populated with God from coast to coast, from shore to shore, from sea to shining sea.

146. Wean yourself of lies. Wean yourself of bull. Wean yourself of pleasure.

Whoa. Wait a minute. Stop right there. What's wrong with pleasure? Do you want me to crawl in a cave and starve?

Pleasure is a photograph of joy. Teach a man to pleasure, and he enjoys for a day. Teach a man to truth, and he enjoys forever. Give up your fish and begin to recognize the ocean around you.

147. The greater portion of pleasure is pain. You stop needing, when you get what you need. You keep wanting, when you get what you want. You needed two legs. You got two legs. Did you go begging for more legs? Why aren't you greedy for three or four? What if you had dozens of sexual organs? What if you kept getting more and more? For every inch Sisyphus pushes his boulder of desire, he's rewarded with another foot of mountain to climb.

148. Is the truth true, or is some other number playing in the back of your mind? Name that tune, if you can. Drop that tune, if you prefer the true music.

149. Parents have no idea what a child cherishes. This is the way your head thinks about your heart. A chemist analyzes perfume. This is your head thinking about the love in your heart. A dog watches his master reading the newspaper. Your mind knows as much about the heart. A paperweight sits on a table at the United Nations General Assembly. This is the leaden mind compared to the multi-lingual heart. A drunken bum in the alley begs a quarter from a billionaire. This is the woeful poverty of the mind compared to the riches of the heart. Which is the leader of the other?

150. The next time you think to say *I love you* to someone, slide that thought into the oven of your heart and let it cook. It only takes a second. Your heart will start to glow, before your words pop out.

151. *How can I pray to God when God isn't real to me?*

You think about love all the time, and your version of that is a cartoon with a criminal record.

152. *How can I pray when I don't feel like praying?*

Say, *God, I don't feel like praying, but there are a few things on my mind.* Save your blockbuster prayer for the right moment. Beat around the bush. Look what it did for Moses.

153. *Allah* has a lovely flow. *Krishna* is lush. *Jehovah* is rich and ceremonial. *God* drops like a thud. *The Great Spirit* sounds like *Mr. Big*. What to do with all the names of the *Creator*? How about when, between friends, the conversation is awash in love, and names are forgotten? How about when you suddenly fall in love, and you can't remember your own name? What are you called then? Do you care? The only name of *God* is *All of the Above*.

154. Bring it home. Whatever it is, bring it home. Whatever you believe to be the issue, bring it home. Whatever sticks in your craw, bring it home. Whatever seems beyond your awareness, bring it home. If a reporter asks a politician a question you feel passion toward, ask yourself that question. If Jesus asks his Father a question, ask yourself that question. Whatever question needs answering, ask yourself that question. Ask deep. Ask beyond the mind. Ask into the heart of your unknowing. Any true question asked into the heart of your own darkness will bring forth light from the center.

155. Faith in the fullness of the unknown is freedom. Do you believe in ghosts? Isn't this belief in the unbelievable a belief in what is beyond believing? Isn't it that ghosts live where belief can't go? Instead of filling up your non-beliefs with things that try to be real, why not see the fullness that exists where no things can go? Go where you think you're not known, and see who you are.

156. Do you give faith only to the well-defined? A photograph of your lover is not your lover. Definition is the mind's portrait of truth. Distrust all definitions, not because they're wrong, but because they're not right. Enough right will keep a definition from being perfectly wrong, but any amount of wrong will keep it from being perfectly right.

God is love is not wrong, but it's not right, either. This photograph of truth is not truth. What's absolutely true is beyond question and beyond answer. Leap into the absolute love. Your heart is the only available lover's leap. What have you got to lose but your footing?

157. Awareness is a vast wilderness. Your wilderness does perfectly well without the footprints of the hunter. Awareness thrives. The mind struggles. The intrepid explorer goes where no man has gone before, and destroys the truth of that. The adventurous mind cannot go where mind can never go. How can the hunter know the unpeopled wilderness? As soon as he shows up, the emptiness feels empty. Abandon your attachment to invasion and conquest. Put yourself in the place of your own unmapped nature. What does your perfect nature think of this intruder now? The mind unconsciously destroys the very perfection it seeks. Let your perfection be. Let it enjoy the absence of the intruder.

158. *But I love my mind. Why can't I love my mind?*

You love your dog, but you don't live in the doghouse. You love your body, but you treat it worse than you do your dog. You say you love your mind, but you let it do the shopping, when you know it loves junk food. If God can love a sparrow, don't stop loving your mind. Be generous with your love, even to the least of these. Be the lover of your mind. Be the love that loves. Nevermind the object.

159. *Life* is a magazine. No one mistakes it for its namesake. *Love* runs all over the world, taking its mother's name in vain. *Love* runs here. *Love* runs there. *Love* comes and goes. Fortunes are made and lost for *love*. In the many names of *love*, everything but *love* itself is known. Know your mother, in whom you are born again as nameless, boundless *love*.

160. Set aside one moment in the heart of love. Run to this moment. Be free in this moment. Leave all your clothes at the door. Lose track of time. Lose yourself. Come into the room of this one moment. Drop everything. Come as you are. Come alone. Come in.

161. Everyone tells the psychopath his obsessions are his alone and have nothing to do with anyone else. This, of course, he cannot believe. This genius for thinking has drawn the only conclusion that thinking can draw. Thinking goes outward like cluster bombs and exploding water balloons.

The heart is within, and this is the direction of true sanity. Once you've reversed your insanity, what will you do then? Bring your wood to the fire.

162. *I love my family too much to stop thinking about them.*

You love dancing so much you've begun running, and in your exhaustion at night, you have dancing dreams. How did this confusion begin? Does *I Love You* mean *I think you*? Is the symbol of Valentine's Day a brain? Thinking about love is rampant. You think about compassion, too. Thinking about heaven is common. Thinking about the Caribbean won't get you a suntan. You must go there, first. Go into love and see what happens. Your family will thank you for it.

163. Look away from the source. Look back. Look out from your center of self. Look in. Look backward and forward. Look neither. Look at what you see. Look where the seer is. Look at what you love. Look at your love as it comes. Look at love in its source. Who is this one who recognizes love?

164. You can raise your hand and imagine the sightline from a camera held aloft. Now do yourself one better. See the world as your heart sees. This camera is mobile, stable, and never out of focus. Try it out. Take it home. Use it every day for thirty days. If you're not completely satisfied, keep it, with the compliments of the manufacturer.

165. *What can I do with all these feelings I have?*

What can I do with all these flowers I have? The works of man are nothing, compared to the works of God, and they are the same.

166. *At the center of GOD is O. At the center of NOW is O.*

Do you see any significance in this coincidence? OHIO begins and ends with O. OCELOT begins and almost ends with O. The center of GOD and the center of NOW are the same, and it has nothing to do with spelling. Give spelling to your mind. The mind is good for spelling and counting and bringing you your slippers.

167. *I want to be a hollow reed, but somebody has jammed my flute in the mud, and no sound comes out. I don't feel like a hollow reed, I feel like a tube of mud.*

Yes. How to be hollow when there's no hollow in sight? This congestion has been in you for millions of years. This is major constipation. Hollowness has seemed like a mystic's dream. *When is a hollow reed not a hollow reed?* When you have forgotten who you are. You've dropped hollow from your name. Pick up hollow. Call yourself hollow. Hollowed be thy name. Hollowed be. Let go of everything that is not you.

168. The best kept secret of human life is the truth of who you are. From birth, you have been heir to the greatest fortune. This knowledge has been kept from you. When you learn about it, or even suspect, others rush to take control of your estate. You own everything. You can't be cheated of your inheritance. You don't need a guardian. No one can buy you out. *You own all the money!* You are begging on the street in front of the financial empire that has your name on it. You are taking advice about profits, when your wealth is beyond calculation. Your mind is penniless in the gutter, while your heart is master of all it surveys. Be who you are and let go of your fondness for poverty. For one so wealthy, your desire for riches makes you a beggar.

169. Tell the truth. Say *I love* and let it go at that. Say *I love* and bask in it. Say *I love* and recognize yourself. Who are you? *Me, Tarzan, I, love.*

170. All are alone, not knowing who they are. No one knows who he is. No one knows who she is. Be who you are. In the one you are, you are not alone. Be the one who is not alone. You are not alone. In one, there is no aloneness. Be who you are.

171. *Who made it up that saints are serious and devils laugh?*

A saint who doesn't laugh is imitating God, sight unseen. Laughter is the form of joy in the world. Joy is the form of peace in the world. Peace is the form of God in the world. Where is a laughing devil in all that? God is laughter incarnate. A devil is one who has deserted God. How much laughter, joy, and peace has come to you in your long exile? Laugh your head off. The laughter of a saint is the laughter of the heart.

172. You are in the middle of the ocean. It's too far to swim to shore. You have no trouble swimming. You can easily live your life where you are. Recognize your freedom and be of the sea. Freedom is a kind of swimming.

173. The heart is accused of harboring liars, criminals, and fools. The forest is accused of hiding evil. Eternity is accused of seeking revenge. Truth is untouched by accusations. When the wrong mail is addressed to your house, return it to the sender. Your heart is the home of truth, there's no one home but truth, and love is truth in the heart.

174. An old sage says to you, *You do your best work when you are exhausted.* For years, you try to become tired, worn out, beat up, used up, spent. When you have told every story, written every poem, played every part, when there is nothing left, when all of you has been exhausted, then see who you are. When all is said and done, when there is no more of you left, then be who you are. When you are exhausted, that time is now.

175. When all is said and done, let the joy begin. When all is said and done, celebrate. When all is said and done, *Thank you* is the only prayer. When all is said and done, think nothing of it.

176. Being thrives. The business of mind is staying alive. No matter how politely or eruditely it may seem to change the subject, your mind is interested only in survival. All your mind truly cares about is the drive to survive. Take away the drive to survive, and what's left is what has no fear of dying. Beyond dying, your being thrives.

177. *I am love itself. How can I tell? When I think I am anything else, I feel out of sorts. Nothing seems to fit. I'm in the wrong skin. I don't recognize myself. I'm beside myself. I feel like killing myself. It wouldn't be suicide. I'd murder a stranger, if I was not love itself.*

178. *There's no one here in my chair. Where is my agenda, now? What happened to all my plans? What good is ambition? One thing for sure, after years of trying, I finally know what to do.*

179. *The dream of a lifetime. All my life I have wanted to do nothing and not quit. The greatest achievement. It's very difficult. It's taken many years. And now the cover of Time Magazine. I've done nothing to achieve my success. What a lucky man. And, at such a young age.*

180. *How can I learn to do nothing and be free?*

It's difficult. The first part is easy. Do nothing. Now, the hard part. Forget what happens next.

181. *What is this nothing doing? It sounds like old-fashioned sloth.*

The sloth is sleeping. He's very busy. Only you can do this nothing. Only you are smart enough to do nothing and then drop this nothing doing.

What about activities?

Being itself is very active. Take your orders from being itself. You'll have to hire a secretary just to keep up.

182. *If my heart gets too big, it will bust like a balloon.*

And then you'll have heart all over yourself. You'll discover the heart inside you, that you have always been inside.

183. *If I live my life entirely in the moment, I won't get to look at any photo albums. I won't get to plan the future. I'll have nothing to remember and nothing to look forward to.*

Show a photo of your joy and tell when you expect to capture it again.

184. Look at all the flowers. So many kinds. Endless names. Colors and shapes and intoxicating perfumes. Beauty runs from flower to flower. Who calls beauty his own? Beauty, in a million forms. This is you. And still, you worry about your neighbors.

185. *Sometimes, I discover the center of my heart in my fingertips, or in my ears, or in my nostrils. How can the center move around so much?*

It isn't the center that moves. And, the center pops up everywhere.

186. *If I cling to truth, what will become of me?*

If a flower clings to beauty, what becomes of the flower? If the sun clings to light, will its heat be lost? If your heart clings to love, will you be lost or found?

187. All thoughts and all feelings are merely relationships, without substance of their own. Drop relationship and see where thought and feeling go. Relation seeks to join separation. Nothing is separate in awareness. Nothing is separate in love. Drop these empty relations called mind and body and be free in your awareness and love.

188. Everything that counts is already true. Who go looking for it? Cultivate truth and find out who you are. Do you hope for peace and gratitude? Do you long for serenity and humility? Do you seek joy and love? These things are within you, like gold in the ground beneath your feet. You stand on your fortune, and you scan the far hills with binoculars. You are the revealer of the unrevealed within. Learn truth. Speak truth. Listen to your own truth. No one can give you what you already have.

189. *I'm afraid to think and feel anything. My thinking and feeling seem bogus. I don't trust myself anymore?*

Who is this wise one who has seen the foolishness of I? You have seen how inappropriate your old clothes are. You have heard how garbled your old language has been. You have seen the imposter, with his mask lying on the table. Who is this wise one who has exposed the imposter in the skin of I?

190. Remain in the one who sees the truth. Stay within this one for a while. Millions of years of bad habits are broken in a single moment. Let go of your life of bad habits. The bad habits carry on of their own accord, like a loose ball and chain rolling downhill. What free man goes running after his old ball and chain? Don't pick them up again. Let them go. Watch them go. Stay within the free one, until your ball and chain are completely out of sight.

191. When feelings come, don't drive them away. Can you drive away the rain? Can you live a life of no wind, no porcupines, no architecture? If you attach yourself to a car, passing in the street, you'll be dragged for blocks. Let feelings come and let them go. Let thoughts come, and let them go. The beloved one, who lives in your heart, thoroughly enjoys the pageantry of a normal life.

192. *How can you speak so lovingly of God and also say that God is nowhere to be found?*

Do you want the rational or the non-rational answer? God is a focal point in eternity. God is the greater part of who you are. God is the love that loves God that loves you. God is a name for the Nameless One. God is shorthand for all that is. God is a bone for the mind. If I say Peace and Joy, do you think of people? Why do you think of God as your Divine Uncle? When you think of your heart, do you call it Joe? God is Joe.

193. *If truth is the only reality, what does my behavior matter?*

Here is the finest wine of France, the best wine in a hundred seasons. Shall I pour you a glass? Shall I pour it in your shoe? Shall I pour it on the ground? What vessel is best for you to receive the nectar that even heroes are shy to taste?

194. *What's the difference between truth and telling the truth?*

What's the difference between love and the acts of love? If you wear the letters of a university you never attended, will you graduate? Truth is for those with a degree of truth in their background. Water acts like water. It never graduates from fire without some transformation.

195. Reveal your truth, however it comes. Compost the weeds you pull, in the gardening of your heart. Expect your truth. It is within you, as surely as you seek it. Would you seek what's never been known to you? Let it be known. Let it come to the surface and, Voila! Bouquets of truth. Bunches of love.

196. If a poet speaks words of love, and you never feel them in your heart, where will love be when the poem is done? If you feel the love of the poem, and you feel the love of the poet, where will love be when the poem and the poet are gone? If eternal love is an unbroken flow within, who is the true poet? Where is the end to your poetic nature?

197. Go home. Good-day. Goodnight. Go home. Stay home. Now, come here. Good. I see you have moved heaven and earth to remain here at home. Now, stay here. Come here. Stay home. Come here. Good. I see you haven't moved, despite all the commotion. You're everywhere at once. You're getting pretty good at this stillness in silence.

198. *I look in, and I see only clear light. I look out, and the picture is clouded. I'm confused.*

Doctor, when I raise my arm, it hurts. What can I do? Don't raise your arm. Look in. Look where the light is good. Then, where the light is not so good, bring a little light. Then, look out.

199. *What about sex? Will I ever have sex again?*

Let light make love to light. Where is the problem? When light recognizes light, be prepared to dance.

200. Do you want to know the meaning of everything? Go to the source of meaning. Find out who you are. Your book will be opened to you. Start where you are. Trace back to the root. Look to the beginning. Look back before the table of contents. To know the book, meet the author. To know the author, meet the being that has authored all. This author is universal. All his works are acclaimed, even the birth of gods.

201. Look to the guest. Look to your self. Invite your self in. Offer your self your home. Give your self the shirt off the back. See how well treated you are. Like a king, you won't know whom to thank.

202. Why do you mistake the messenger for the message? You get the message you've been waiting for, and you kiss the messenger. Kiss the message, and the messenger will be pleased.

203. Why be caught in doing anything? Who is the doer? When there's no more to be done, no doing and no doer, see how you cause the sun to rise and set, each day. The sun rises at sunrise It sets exactly at sunset. What other details do you need to be concerned about?

204. Think peace and get sloth. Think love and get lust. Think knowledge and get pride. Think admiration and get envy. Think energy and get anger. Think satisfaction and get gluttony. There are not seven sins here, but one. Drop the attachment maker, thinking, and let seven joys be yours.

205. Do you let the crowd take away your joy? The town square is full of boots, and you are barefoot in love. Let hard feet trample where they will. Walk on fields of uncontested joy.

206. Which emptiness is greater, this one, or this one here? When it comes to emptiness, there is no greater than. But, given a choice, I choose the emptiness that begins here, and has no boundaries.

207. The drowning man clings to the sea. Drown in this moment. Cling to its emptiness. Stand on no bottom and reach no shore. This sea has no sky and no floor. Dive deep, here, in this moment. Bury your arms in its fathomless folds. Drink your lungs full of its freedom.

208. *I long for my lover, and guess what? No lover in sight. I discover I am within the lover I long for, and the lover I long for is within me. The room overcrowds with love.*

209. All day, all night, the debate. This side, that side. In the twinkle of an eye, in the end of *I*, where is the question I can't find anywhere?

210. Religion says, *Come out, come out, wherever you are.* Truth says, *Come in, and be who you are.*

211. Actors appear on an empty stage, with scenery, action, pathos, meaning, passion, conflict, resolution. Each night, a new drama. You are none of these. You are not the play or the maker of the play. You are the empty space. Everything that is not you, is within you.

212. You don't mistake the actor for the character he plays. Who plays the actor? Drop inside and drop out of the drama. You see the drama. Who is the seer? Within you, is the theatre no drama can define.

213. *I am free!* will not set you free. *I recognize who I am!* will not set you free. No thought can be what freedom is. All your iron filings line up in one direction, and you are magnetism itself.

214. What is preventing your discovery? Will you use a fork to discover uranium? Will you use a dousing rod to find gold? Will you use a geiger counter to recognize diamonds? The mountain is all that is within it. What good is geology to a mountain? Let the mountain come to the mountain.

215. *Sometimes I know, and sometimes I don't know.*

Life is full of knowing and not knowing. Changes move from one to the other, in endless cycles. This wheel has a hub, motionless and changeless. The poet is a spokesman, running back and forth across time, for the sake of neither hub nor rim.

216. You walk through the garment center, picking up one design after another. *This is not me. This is not me. This is not me*, you keep repeating. At the end of the day, you say, *I couldn't find anything that was me*. Who is this that cannot be clothed?

217. *I'm terribly busy. If I let go of doing, nothing will happen.*

Nothing will happen with such abundance, you'll have no time for anything else. Your busyness is a pale imitation of who you are.

218. No yin and yang. No before and after. No here and there. No in and out. No up and down. No high and low. Where is *and* in all this? Which part of *and* is aligned with one or the other? Don't bother doing the work of *and*. *And's* work is effortless.

219. You are the master of understanding. You know that everything passes away. You haven't been fooled by the concrete or the plastic. You know they melt and evaporate. This truth has never passed you by. Skip all the truth of things. They aren't real, and you know it. Skip the truth of thoughts and feelings. They are only slightly real, and you know it. You've never been fooled by the charade of flesh and all that flesh creates. Get ready to leave this world behind. Get ready to discover true reality. Look inside this transient life and discover what never changes. You haven't been fooled, up to now. Now, be prepared to be certain of truth. This empty, endless debate of what's real and what's not real is about to be over. Now, look inside the single moment of your being and see the truth. Let go of the endless debate of what's false. Come inside. Come out of the false. The more false and the less false have occupied your attention long enough. Come inside to the truth of who you are. Come inside. Come inside truth and be free.

220. Awareness is empty. The mind goes mad trying to plumb the depths of your awareness, guess your weight, guess your age, guess your occupation. The powers of the mind are useless to gauge your awareness. What powers are these that have no power?

221. The leap into awareness is the simplest thing. Suddenly, your prison cell is a meadow. Poof. No difference. You laugh. You've always known the truth. The guards think you're crazy. They scamper off for acorns.

222. This innocent moment, this vigilant moment, where about to be known is the only knowledge. Forget yourself for a moment. Don't bother to remember before after and after before. Get lost and be home.

223. In your innocence, explore a while. A smile comes, and you leap to explain. One foot in the room of joy, and you're on the phone describing the furniture. One moment in love, and you're planning your honeymoon. In your innocence, leave it, and you leave it alone.

224. *I am clogged. I am the clog.*

How to be free, when only thoughts of no freedom clog the moment. Be still. There's no history in freedom. There's no freedom to look forward to. Stillness only pours forth in silence. Silence unclogs the moment.

225. The mind ransacks itself to match the details of this moment with the details of some other moment from long ago. You fall in love with the perfect match of some distant lover. If I paint a smiling woman, will you call me DaVinci? Inside the details, irrelevant details, is the unmatched moment the mind is desperate and helpless to match. Let the memory-maker be still. Let the moment be.

226. Unfree from invincible death, you think you are immortal. This is an easy mistake. You mistake your truth for a simple guarantee. You think your innate knowledge of eternity applies to your groceries. Let the vegetables die. All the produce of your life is nothing in the Market of Eternity at which you have unlimited credit.

227. Your eyes are full of fear. Close your eyes and see what. Everything the blind man sees, you see too. Your eyes are full of light. Fear is a deer caught in the light in the eyes of a blind man who sees the truth.

228. *My life is dying to me. I feel sad because I am dying.*

And when you are all the way dead, where will your sadness be then? Put yourself out of your misery. Don't prolong your agony. There's only endless freedom waiting on the other side of your clutching at dying.

229. Don't come this way. This way lies madness. This way reveals unmistakable madness. Where madness was once an occasional thing, here it appears in all its disguises. There is inescapable madness in this life. Surrender to truth is all that's left. What to do? Don't come this way. Stay where madness is unrevealed. This way lies the last resort of freedom.

230. *I try to stay in touch with the God in me.*

Who tries? Who is in touch? When this touch is joined, who is there, at the touch-point? You are the image in the mirror, waiting and hoping the real you might show up, once in a while. Drop this reflective nature that waits for reality. Who are you without mirrors? Come out of your life of glass. The one who tries to stay in touch can't touch the skin of who you are.

231. *I say, Thy will be done, and it works. I let go of my ego, and things go a lot better.*

This is good practice. Now enter the game. You are already this will you pray to be done. You've already got your pants on. Are you still looking for them?

232. *My grandfather is closer to God than I am.*

Who is? Your grandfather may be closer to dead than you are, but no one is any closer to God than anyone else is. All are the same distance. No distance at all. Look inside this complete lack of distance. See who is grandfather and who is ageless.

233. *Mind-altering drugs give me a glimpse of God, or truth, or whatever you call it.*

This glimpse through the key hole is unnecessary. The door is unlocked. You're standing in the middle of the room. There is no door. There is no room. This magic has given your head a deep depression where all the old door knobs fit perfectly.

234. *I want to find myself.*

Will you swim in a iceberg? Will you go strolling in granite? Be yourself. Recognize yourself. Don't try to find yourself. It's been tried. It's called Human History. Isn't that enough discouragement?

235. *You say the same thing over and over, with slightly different word.*

After many lifetimes of lies, can you bear a little repetition of truth? If you are truth, and these words fall on empty ears, nevermind. Shut the book. Dwell in stillness. Dance in joy. You have discarded the first unnecessary word. You have discarded I. No more discussion.

236. *I feel loyal to the person I've become. I don't want to give up this culmination of evolution and hard work.*

Your finest sculpture, give it to the museum. Give it to the graveyard. Let it go and start fresh. Let everything die in this birth. What is this loyalty but a fondness for gravestones?

237. Here is a thought to stop thinking. Here is a dance to promote stillness. Here is a song in favor of silence. Here is a human being to speak for God. Here is a half-truth to point toward truth. Would you notice freedom if it weren't for prison bars? Have your newly discovered bars become your latest fascination? Begin to notice that nothing can imprisdon this freedom, and never has.

238. Living without recognition of your own truth is insanity. All who do, live insane. All that's done to live with this insanity is insane. Find out who you are, absolutely. Be free and be sane, absolutely. The King of the Lunatics is only a fool among fools.

239. *I'm going to spend the rest of my life beaking my habits, and my habits are ancient.*

Break your habits this way. Be in freedom, where no habits can touch you. Be in this only moment, where no habits can enter.

I need help to stay in freedom.

All the help you need is right here. Come into this moment and see if you need any help.

What about the rest of the world?

Where is this moment, when is this moment, with whom is this moment not this moment?

Don't I need to pray, at least?

In order to be in this moment, you must come naked and emptyhanded, without thought or question, without doubt or hesitation, in willing surrender and without fear. What else do you think prayer could be?

240. You are the soul of who you think you are. Who you think you are may think it has a soul, but soul cannot be had. *Is* cannot be had. Think about a billion dollars. Now produce it. Be who you are. Now fail to produce it.

241. *Can you give me a mantra for this work?*

I can't give you anything. No mantra will do. This is workless work. How to answer such a question? Here's your mantra. **NO MANTRA.** Now forget this too.

242. Your awareness thrives in the company of its own self-recognition. The task of your thinking is to step out of the way and let this common miracle occur. This is a great and profound act, only a willing mind can perform. The doer must cease doing. The abhorrence of vacuum must surrender to vacuum. Thinking can't imagine any other face for its ceasing. This horrible face is a mask of divine joy, known to you, but unrecognizable to the thinking mind.

243. You have been rich. You have been powerful. You have been sexual. You have tasted all the temptations. You have given birth to generations. You have created masterpieces. You have been among the saints. You have been among the devils. Now it's time to put aside your pastimes and be free. This last challenge is the least of them all. A slender thread remains, tied only to the heart of God. Let it go and be unbound by what you are.

244. Silence is within you. Silence is within all. You cannot become silent. Silence is not an alternative. You are silence itself.

Recognize yourself, and you recognize all. What is there to fear? What is there to seek? What is there to understand? What is there to become? Be still.

245. *If I live in total awareness, how will I have boundaries? People will walk all over me.*

Your awareness is the recognition of the limitless truth within you. Who can intrude upon the truth? What becomes of an intruder in the presence of truth. I am Color, and here comes Blue, what to do? I am the jungle, and here comes a fugitive from the zoo. What to do?

246. You are eternity in transient clothing. All your problems come from a poor fit. Nothing in stock will ever perfectly fit your absolute nakedness, until you accept it. You will enjoy your costumes when you remember who it is who is wearing them.

247. People live their lives, and then a war comes. After a time, the war ends, and people try to return to their ordinary lives, with difficulty, and secretly, they miss the war. Everyday life is wartime in slowtime. You can leave this war behind, as well. Come home.

248. Do you break eye-contact with God, because you don't like the form God is in today? Do you try to make eye-contact with God, because you like the form God is in today? Do you try, as hard as you can, to like the form that God appears in, out of respect for God, who has no form whatsoever?

249. All these forms of God, using and abusing each other, desiring and adoring each other, tolerating and hating each other, ought to be a clue that God is not a creature of form. God is not within form. God is not without form. God is not absent from your enemy, any more than God is present in your beloved. God is the one who has no home, because God has no homelessness.

250. *What good will it do me if I remember who I am, and the whole world insists that I be someone else?*

If you are absolutely certain of who you are, your mistaken identity will be like a wrong number on the telephone. The caller is mistaken, and you are not.

251. *What about all the problems to be solved in ordinary life?*

When you are finished solving all the problems, what will you do about the problem-maker? Go to the source of your problems. Go to the source of I, and discover the source itself. In one moment, step from problem-maker to maker, from source of problem to source. Be who you are as you are. The crime spree ends when the criminal and the accuser are exposed, wearing the same pair of pants.

252. You know that all beings are beings of God. Why do you not acknowledge it in yourself? Are you ashamed of your lineage? Are you ashamed of your alma mater? Are you ashamed of your origin? Are you ashamed of your family? You are the embodiment of your birthright. Why do you continue to live under an assumed name.

253. The essential nature of your existence is guaranteed by the God of gods, and you want a report card.

254. The Creator creates the Creator creating. There. I've just called your name.

255. You can't take it with you. You didn't bring it with you. Where is the thing of value in this equation? What is this that you are, that was, is, and will be, regardless of baggage, that gets so easily lost in the airport?

256. In your heart is a photo ID of your true self? You carry it with you at all times. No matter how many fake IDs you print up on your handy home counterfeit kit, your identity is absolute, undeniable, and verifiable. If your true identity is ever in doubt, get it out, open up the wallet of your heart, and be who you are.

257. If you're having an identity crisis, ask yourself, *Just exactly whose identity is in crisis, anyway?* The false identities of this world are betrayed in this crisis. They all get their phony papers out, and the only the simple truth can stand the bright light and the brilliant questioning of the examiner. *Who are you?* you ask yourself. *Who am I?* you ask yourself. And the truth stands revealed, in the light of this relentless third degree. The examiner falls down before you, speechless, silent, and grateful that his investigation is finally at an end.

258. Every word we have for everything is the same word we have for everything else. Words stand in for the wordless. These proxies have voting power over our lives, until we realize there's no more debate, there are no more questions, there's no more choosing. Be still, where words cannot go. Be still, and know who you are. Fill your words from the source, like buckets from the well.