A Conversation with Saniel & Linda Groves-Bonder

Bill Harris: Hello everyone! This is Bill Harris, director of Centerpointe Research Institute and creator of Holosync Audio Technology and I am here with Saniel and Linda Bonder and I'll let them tell you a little bit about themselves in just a moment, but as you already know we're here to help people to understand better and implement the wonderful material that Eckhart Tolle has been teaching to the world and also to thank Oprah Winfrey for being a platform for this. So, welcome you guys!

Linda Groves-Bonder: Thank you, Bill! It is really great to be here with you.

Saniel Bonder: Yeah, thanks Bill! It's a deep pleasure. We are very honored to be part of this project.

BH: Yeah, so, why don't you guys start off by telling everybody a little bit about what you do and, you know, why they should believe anything you tell them.

SB: Well, thanks for saying that! I think the first thing we want to say is that actually, and I think this is kind of in line with what Eckhart is trying to promote also, you know, we want to welcome people to consider what we have to say and find out through their own careful investigation what's really true for them. So, hopefully we'll have something to say that's worth their consideration.

I guess I'll go first here since I started our particular thing. Yeah, my name is Saniel Bonder; among other things, I am the very happy husband of Linda, who goes by the name Linda Groves-Bonder actually. A compound name. I have devoted really my whole adult life to spiritual quest for enlightenment or this transcendence, this liberation that Eckhart introduces so deftly, and spent many years in both Western and Eastern styles of spiritual practice, study and pursuit and after a little over a couple of decades, came into a stable, awakened realization myself that stood out as being, among other things, very much combined with my body and my human life. I discovered fairly rapidly after that awakening, which took place in late 1992, that I had a talent, not just a talent, but people were feeling the kind of liberated or opened-up energy and awareness in my presence and it was starting to help activate things for them and since my training had been with very powerful spiritual adepts, among other things, who worked in part through that kind of process of imparting a transmission or an energy or a presence in that kind of a way, I knew what I was dealing with in that sense and had a tremendous desire to help others do the same things and that's pretty much what I've been doing ever since. So, we've had a lot of success.

We've helped essentially under the radar, you know, without a lot of fanfare. I mean, we have a wonderful endorsement from Ken Wilber, who I know is part of your program here and a few other people, but we've never had best sellers or big money or any of that going on, we've just worked mostly through word-of-mouth and just finding people who were hungry to awaken and to grow in an awakened life and through that, several hundred people have gone through this kind of transformation and we have a whole network of people who are replicating it with one another. Just a couple dozen plus teachers and so on and one of the main teachers, we also have people who are mentors, you know, it's kind of a whole network that is growing. A kind of culture nationally and internationally and the main teacher and colleague that I have is my wife,

Linda. So, I will let you followup.

LGB: Thank you babe. Yeah, I met Saniel back in '94, in October and at the time leading up to that I was actually kind of an eclectic seeker. I was involved in many different things. I dabbled in a Kundalini process at one point, got involved in a teaching around consciousness and energy, had been leading and going to different lectures and finding that I was getting really profound pieces but the piece that I really was searching for in some ways was actually centered in my body. I was feeling like there was something that was just not complete, just wasn't being fed by everything I was learning and experiencing.

So when I first started sitting with Saniel in '94, he started teaching this particular piece around the core wound and the separation that we feel and for me at the time, it wasn't really about spiritual awakening as much as me just wanting to be a real, authentic human being moving in the world, knowing more of what my purpose was than what I knew.

So, it was really intriguing to be with Saniel in the early days and to listen to his teachings, to actually feel his energy, his transmission of being, how profoundly that was anchored in him and how that was also being kind of spread through the room. It wasn't that he was doing anything to or at someone, it was that people were starting to template off of that energetic, off of that transmission of consciousness, of being, of embodied consciousness and I actually started feeling lots of changes and shifts within myself within a very short period of time.

I found also that a lot of the paths that I had been experiencing along the way just kind of fell away because I knew that my heart's passion was to really do my due diligence, really do my work with Saniel and with some of the other people who were finding openings through this amazing process that Saniel revealed. And as I started feeling myself dropping more into my spiritual being and through my awakened self, I realized that this was about a year-and-a-half into my time with Saniel, a couple years; I had my awakening in August of '96 and three months later, I found myself helplessly drawn to do some form of service, some form of teaching to individuals and at the time I didn't know how that was going to manifest at all. I was a little scared about it actually, but there was a drive in my being that just kept propelling me forward to do this and to find a way to hold individuals in their own investigation, to assist them in doing the consciousness work and feeling what is actually coming alive and awake in them, as them and also bringing that into every part of who they are in life and in the body and in the emotional being.

So, this was my beginning, late '96 into early '97, my beginning of my own teaching work in the context of Waking Down in Mutuality, which is the work that Saniel founded back in '92. So, it's such a great honor and such a great pleasure to be Saniel's best friend, wife, spiritual partner, business partner. We do this very, very much together in the world. We travel a lot to do workshops around the country and as Saniel had mentioned, we have a teacher foundation that also hosts lots of different workshops and ways for people to access their embodied conscious nature and to have it be a stable, consistent shift and change in their lives.

BH: Well, I'm really glad to have you guys here. I met you guys at a meeting of Ken Wilber's Integral Spiritual Center, which is a collection of, I don't know exactly the number, 30 or 40 teachers of the many of the top spiritual teachers in the world and I was immediately very impressed by you guys and then when Saniel began to tell me something about what you teach, it really resonated with me because I think that it was an aspect of spiritual teaching that some people are not really expressing and I think it's important and so I asked you guys to send me some of your books, which I have read and I was even more impressed. How many books do you guys have out there?

SB: Well, I have so far, I think it is somewhere in the

range of eight or ten. Some of them are kind of partially completed manuscripts that we distribute to people privately, mostly done books, but it is in that area and there are maybe four or five key ones.

BH: Okay, well, anyway, you mentioned this a couple of times so maybe we could start with this. I'd like you to comment about this idea of transmission of energy, because that might be something a little new to people. On the other hand, I've had a lot of people tell me that when they read *The Power of Now*, for instance, Tolle's first book, that they really felt themselves, in a lot of cases, getting into that, what he calls presence or the now state, which we could also call the transcendent, that they felt a transmission to some extent just from reading the book and so, if you could explain a little bit about what that's all about.

SB: Well, yeah, sure, Bill. At first, I'm just going to quickly step back and say that Linda and I have a playful, not really argument, about who is the most lucky and most blessed to be with one another. I just want that to be really plain. I am so, so grateful and privileged to have such a magnificent and full and complete partner. We're really lucky people.

BH: I have that same argument with Denise, except I think she's the luckiest.

SB: Okay.

BH: Just kidding.

SB: Yeah. We understand. We understand. Thank you. So anyway, and actually, that's a fun way to get into it. A big part of our point about this is that transmission sounds kind of woo-woo and mysterious, maybe a little a scary, maybe a little fascinating, but it's simply taking into account that everybody, all of the time is transmitting our state of being, whatever it is, totally and receiving from everybody else. It's going on all of the time. And what happens in situations of spiritual opening, such as, you know, the beautiful acknowledgments people are giving you about what happened when they read *The Power of Now* is that in some ways it's duplicating the kinds of nurturance that we receive from our parents when we are infants and children and growing up and even later into life, from our loved ones, from teachers and mentors in general and it's acknowledging that a kind of charismatic or intense presence and energy actually has a very formative role in helping us really get the meanings of things like the words coming out of the book. So, for us it is a matter-of-fact understanding and we have this many times also. People will say, "I was reading one of the books," or "I was listening to one of the talks where you guys are talking," whether me or Linda or one of the other teachers or other members of the community who have gone through profound awakenings, and they receive the energy awareness viscerally, you know, kind of heart, guts, body, cellularly and it translates as an opening or an intuition or an insight or a profound awakening. So that's, I think…

BH: You know, I would probably also just say, to put it into really plain terms, that when you are around someone who is in this state, the state that Tolle is talking about and, I mean, the three of us actually know quite a few people, actually, that are living in this state. It is rare to some extent, but it's not as rare as it used to be, I would say, but we can talk about that a little later maybe if we have time, but when you around somebody that is in this state, you can feel it. There is something about being with someone… And it's kind of the same phenomenon if you have ever heard a speaker or someone and you just felt the charisma that they were putting out or even if you are hearing a comedian or something like that and you are getting into a joyful state because you're laughing because of them. There is a way that people do transmit, as you said, their state. This just happens to be a state where you are… And that's kind of the next thing I kind of thought we might talk about a little bit is what is this state? What is presence? What he calls presence or being totally in the now or what I like to call, the transcendent, although there are many names for it. You know, when someone

is in that state, it does have an affect on the people around them and to the extent, you know, some people are more open to it that others and so I think they feel it more strongly, but there is something that happens when you are around such a person.

LGB: Absolutely, that was one of the things I was mentioning in my introduction, Bill. When I first met Saniel, you know, I had experienced lots of other teachers and other traditions, but... and I could feel the energetic. I could feel certain shifts and awarenesses arising and they were experiences. They came and went. They weren't stable realizations in the moment, but that's okay. You know, when you are a seeker, you will take what you can get. Right? And so when I sat with Saniel I felt a very different kind of energetic coming from him that for, initially, was a little confusing, but it really was, as I learned more and integrated those experiences more in my own body, it was the transmission of conscious being. It was consciousness itself that he in his actions, through his words, in his writings was transmitting and as you are saying, as Saniel is saying, everyone does transmit.

> **"It was consciousness itself that he in his actions, through his words, in his writings was transmitting..."**

You know, there is a level and a feeling sense of an energetic that might be coming from individuals. This particular transmission of being or transmission of consciousness itself is very activating for individuals. That's one of the driving forces in our work together, Saniel and I and also with the teachers that are out doing their workshops and individual counseling and teaching work. This realization of consciousness in life, in the body, through moving through the world is a very activating force and so when individuals encounter us or encounter other teachers in our work or other teachers in other traditions perhaps, there is an activation of their own being that can template, as I used that word earlier, templating off of the awakened condition. So really it isn't an indication of conscious awakening, but in our particular work, it's not nearly about the transcendental awakening of consciousness itself, it's that yes, definitely, but it is also simultaneously an awakening in the body, in life, in every aspect of who you are. So there is a bit of a distinction from Tolle's work, I believe.

BH: Well actually, Tolle, he talks a bit about the body being a doorway to this and he does talk about how it manifests in the body. I have to say, as I read his stuff, I kept... You know, at first, I was kind of waiting to find, you know, glaring omissions and so on and so forth, and there is a few things that Tolle, you know, doesn't talk about, but I was surprised at how he really did gradually kind of cover all of the bases and that's one that he also covers too. Well, lets talk about, you know, he has described what presence is in his terminology. You know, whether we call it being or consciousness or presence or the transcendent or being awake or whatever, lets see if we can try to give people an idea from your point of view what that is.

SB: Yeah. Thank you. I think what you just said about Eckhart's approach is really true and I found also reading through *A New Earth*, the new book that he's doing the webinars with Oprah on, there's a great deal there that really does point to a very fundamental shift and that is moving out of. There's a kind of a stage of development where you move out of exclusive identification with, you could say, the bodily, local, personal ego and of course he has a lot to say about ego.

BH: Yeah, which would also include the mind and your beliefs...

SB: Your mind, your reactions, the emotions, the belief systems, the whole complex of the local individual being and so when you are moving out of that, there is this capacity, this potential to awaken into an awareness that is relatively, compared to that, quite impersonal and is kind of taking it all in, witnessing is a word that is used in many traditions by many teachers and he is really emphasizing the necessity of people moving out of that, kind of being stuck in our ordinary identification with the local personal self and all of mind and the thinking and beliefs and reactions and feelings and the pain body and all of the rest. Moving out of that into being more and more able to not only be aware of that presence, but to stand more and more clearly as that presence and to know how to work with the challenges that life throws at you from that direction.

BH: Yeah, you know, I think that there's an interesting progression about this that I think you are sort of hinting at, maybe I am just stealing your thunder by saying this, but, you know, at first people are pretty firmly identified with their mind, their idea of who they are, their body, their emotions, all of that stuff and what Tolle is asking people to do is some things that allow you to step outside of that so that you are able to just be in the now and so that you're interacting, you might say, with the world in a way that doesn't bring in all those ideas and maps of reality and all of that sort of thing and a lot of people then think that the whole idea is to have no mind and to get rid of the mind. Now, he doesn't really say that, but at first, I believe that people at first kind of have to be willing to set aside the mind and get into that other place that he calls presence or the now moment, but some people misunderstand and think then that the ego or the mind and your map of who you are and all of that is the enemy and the truth is that once you can live in that place, then you bring back in the mind as a very useful tool and you go about your business, but you're using it now as a tool rather than falling for the idea that that's who you are.

LGB: Or solely identified by that.

BH: Yeah, because that's not who you are, but it is part of who you are.

SB: Exactly.

LGB: Yes, exactly. See, thank you so much, Bill! That also kind of addresses the simultaneous paradox of existence. You know, you are that and you also are that presence or that awareness and when you bring your attention to the presence and you can observe those places of reaction or the mind function or an emotional thing that might be coming up, then that assists this awakening process. You know, making much more of a stable condition of your life if you can continue to access that.

BH: Yeah, and I think one of the points I was making was just that people are so stuck in their idea of who they are and as Tolle would say, in the past and in the future, that at first, they have to kind of almost disown that part of themselves or get a great distance from it and become established in that now moment, that presence, the consciousness, whatever you... because the other is so tantalizing to them. Their whole story of who they are and, you know, all of the ideas and beliefs and concepts and the idea of the past and the future, it's so familiar and they are so established in that that you have to get some distance from it at first otherwise you'll only have brief moments of presence, but once you're established in it, then you can begin to kind of realign with that, but in its proper role and its proper place.

LGB: Yeah, I think that's really an accurate description of Tolle's expression of that and Saniel you said that you would have something...

SB: Well, yeah, I wanted to respond to that a little bit. Our orientation is somewhat different and really, I think you made a very important point here earlier that for us, it has been very crucial in working with now hundreds of people and seeing what's going on with the teachers we've trained who are more or

less autonomously doing the same thing and that is we humans tend to only hear things partially and as you were pointing out, people can kinda get off on something that Eckhart himself might not say, which is you come away with the feeling that the ego is really the bad guy here and that you should have nothing to do with your ego. I mean it's interesting.
I was reading through his book and preparing for, you know, our discussion thinking about it and I got a letter from a guy I wrote about in my book *Great Relief* and at the end of the book I tell the story of a man who had been a mechanic, car mechanic, and he had really just flipped out and he committed a violent crime and, you know, this is a pillar of the community. Well, now he's in prison and dealing with what happened to him and you know, it's a very stark story and so just as it happened, he told me in his letter that... Oh by the way, he got a copy of *A New Earth* from his mother and you know, he is not able to watch it on TV, but he is describing how much it meant to him because what happened with him back at that time was... We only had a professional connection, you know, he was a tradesman, but then when I would visit him in jail it was obvious, it wasn't coming from me, it was going on in his being, that he was going through the beginnings of this kind of opening. Well then he went to prison, he kind of lost all of that and recently now it's coming back to him and he was describing how much Eckhart's teachings mean to him in terms of helping him start to question that ego part of himself, but the flip side of the story is that he's feeling bad about simple human things like really hoping that I'm proud of him, you know, because he knows I'm a teacher and he appreciates my support and to me that's a good image of the difficulty here.

People can get so, like, anxious about not identifying with their ego, that they actually don't allow themselves to feel it and in our work, you know, our view is that the ego, the mind, the ordinary identifications are actually not a problem and the kind of secret of that transmission process is it starts to activate, I like to say it turns up the gas at the pilot light in your own heart so that the flame of your own being is transcendence, consciousness, whatever you want to call it. Just naturally emerges and we also train people in ways to activate that more fully, while at the same time, giving a green light to all the other parts of who they are as well.

So, it's a somewhat different orientation and, you know, we've had a lot of success with it and that is not to say that Tolle's approach is not very profoundly helpful also. It's thrilling to see millions of people on, you know, the work that he and Oprah are doing together.

LGB: Absolutely. I mean, along the lines of what Saniel's talking about, there is a process that I came up with years ago called Six Step Recognition Yoga and there is a guided meditation that we do to help individuals access that conscious nature or that presence, but it's in the midst of everyday occurrence, in the midst of the issues, in the midst of your history and maybe, as Tolle writes about, the pain body. We have words that kind of correlate to the pain body, which is called broken zones and what happens through this process of the recognition is they go through, many times, very spontaneously a level of investigation of diving deeper into the condition in the moment and then recognizing through this conscious awakening process that they are not really affected by the issue as they used to be. They're not, again, solely identified and controlled... I use an image of a choke hold. You know, the hand on the throat? That choke hold starts to loosen and they can actually breath easier, even as they are encountering the difficulties or the broken zones or the pain body.

So, this is a process that goes on over time and individuals realize that they don't need to transcend or stay in the transcendental in order to be that or to get rid of it or to not embrace it, but on the other way, they actually embrace it fully through that conscious nature and they realize that the effects of the issue no longer can control them. So that gives them, hence, one of Saniel's titles of his book, *Great Relief*. All of a sudden, they start realizing, "Wow! I can actually be that too and not have to throw that away in order to be this awakened being present in the world."

BH: You know, one of the things that Tolle is talking about a lot is being in the now and when someone has had abuse or trauma in their life, what I find that they tend to do is to take feelings and thoughts and all kinds of stuff from the past and it's like they drag it into the present and attach it to whatever is happening in the present, when it really isn't there and this process by which Tolle, and many, many other teachers, this isn't something he invented, but of being present just now and not in the past, not in the future, that sort of breaks that connection and it doesn't mean that you have amnesia or anything like that, it just means that you don't have to intensely feel something that isn't happening now. You don't have to suffer over and over and over about something and so, I'm assuming that that's partly what you're talking about, but it's not a dissociating from what has happened to you and it's not a repression of what has happened to you and in fact, it's even a fuller realization, a fuller being with, embracing or whatever you want to call it, of all the things that are happening to you, but it's also... You know, when you get into just the now moment, whatever it was isn't happening now. So, you know, many people are just pulling those past hurts into now and then feeling them when they're not really happening now.

That stopped the discussion.

LGB: Yeah exactly because, you know, part of me wants to say, "Yes absolutely and, but there's other sides to it as well." It is funny because Saniel and I recently were playing with some phrases, you know, and I came up with one phrase that he just cracked up on and then we both together worked on another phrase and it is basically you can't be here now if you weren't there then, which kind of is talking about, I think, the embrace of yes being in the now, but if you are dissociating in some ways from the past and that is not what you were talking about, but some people tend to do that in order to think that they're only going to stay present and negate what actually they have embodied in the past. You know, we all have cellular memory and those past experiences or wounds or as we like to call them, broken zones, are actually lodged in our cells and so, there is a shift that happens in that cellular memory, but before the shift can actually happen, how we feel and work with people is to go there, go into the broken zone, reveal it as you need to reveal it, transcend it when you can. Absolutely, be in the now, recognize it for what it is and also become it before you can transcend it. You know, that is also...

BH: Yeah, I fully agree. In fact, you know, in many cases before a person can really, fully go into the now, they have to go and revisit some of those traumas and work with them. So, I 'm not just saying, "Okay. Just being the now and forget about that stuff." Because that's not the way that it works.

SB: Exactly and that's why, for us, we often have many people come, especially... You know, you and I have had lots of conversations about who mostly have been our clients and it's interesting to see- I love Oprah Winfrey for this-she is just taking us out into the mainstream.

LGB: It is so incredible.

SB: I just love it! Spiritually now. Your Ah-ha momement and you know, quoting people like Robert Thurman and Elizabeth Lesser, who is part of the Omega Institute along with Christian and Jewish people and so on. I love what they're doing and I love that she's in effect saying, well, literally, she is saying, "Are you ready to awaken?" And this is another conversation Linda and I were having and you and I have had this discussion a lot. Probably the accurate answer for a lot of people is going to wind up being something like, "Well, I don't know. I don't really know what awakening is yet, but if I'm not ready to awaken, I want to get ready to awaken." And so, what we're seeing is the necessity to provide people access to growth processes that among other things, can really help them integrate that split off material from the pain body, without trying to jump out of it so fast, but also in ways that don't leave them mired in it and that,

you know, that's part of the, I feel, the challenge of 21st century spirituality that's not just leaving people with the feeling that you've gotta just be here now and no matter what's coming up, you can't allow yourself to feel it, which is not what Eckhart says.

BH: No it isn't and it's not what any of us are saying.

SB: That's right, but it is how many people will tend to interpret it, through no fault of their own, trying their best.

BH: Well, and you know, a lot of people are so focused on solving their 'problems' and they see something like this as a potential way to do that and, you know, I think that Eckhart really has a very interesting discussion of the whole idea of problems. He talks about your life, which he kind of means, you know, who you really are, this presence, the being in the now as opposed to your life situation and, you know, what he's saying, I think, one way to say it would be that when you get into this presence, when you get into the now, your perspective on what you thought were your problems changes and you see in the moment that there's either something you can do about it, in which case, you do it or there's nothing you can do about it in which case, then you just surrender to the fact that that's the way it is. Whereas, if you are not in the moment, you know, you put yourself through all kinds of pain and suffering and anguish about something that either you could do something about, but aren't and if you are not in the now, whatever you're doing about it is probably much less effective than if you are coming from that now space or you are in anguish about something that you should just say, "Okay. That's the way it is. I ran the red light and my car is wrecked." And, you know, now what do I do?

So, you know, and he was even talking about, you know, kind of emergency sort of situations. Maybe a life threatening situation and saying, "Okay. In the moment, as you deal with whatever it is, you'll either survive or you won't." And that's just the truth. That's just the truth. You'll either survive or you won't and I guess I am trying to get a handle on this whole idea of people taking this as a way to solve their 'problems' when really in a way, he's saying you can drop out of the world of problems, not in the sense that the garbage bag won't break or, you know, you won't encounter idiots and assholes during your day or you won't get caught in a traffic jam or somebody won't get cancer or whatever it happens to be. It's a different way of seeing and dealing, a different perspective, I guess you could say, on all of those things and how to be a human being in a world where those kinds of things do happen.

LGB: Right. Yeah. It goes back to what I was saying about the Six Step Recognition Yoga. Getting to the point of being able to transcend the effects of the problem if there's a problem or of the reaction or of the situation. So, in other words, it doesn't completely control you. I think that's what you're saying and Tolle is saying as well.

BH: Yeah, I just think that there's a... He's saying, you know, get in the now and it'll be very clear to you exactly what to do and people are kind of instead of getting into the now, they're trying to understand this intellectually and say, "Okay, but how will this solve my problems?" And I think the answer to that question, really, is shift your perspective into this other place and find out what happens and so I thought maybe something we ought to talk about here is how do you do that. He talks about a number of methods and I think they're spot on. He talks about, you know, just observing something. He talks about, you know, a sunset or a flower or something like that and just observing it without thinking about it. He also talks about accessing it through the breath. He talks about accessing it through the body. He talks about getting out of the past and the future and there's a number of things that he talks about that are kind of traditional doorways to this. He also talks about in a moment of danger or something, often people's minds stop and they are very much in the moment and just responding to whatever is happening instead of analyzing and thinking about it. You know, as a car

swerves toward them or whatever. So, what do you teach people about how to get into this place? And certainly meditation is another one.

SB: Yeah well, thank you. Our approach is to initially welcome people into, and Eckhart acknowledges this when he talks at the beginning of *A New Earth* is there is a number of ways you can do this. One of which is to spend time with spiritual teachers who are in some way adept or masterful in relation to it and that's where, for us, the transmission process, which includes what we call gazing meditation, which traditionally means simply making eye contact with people in a kind of a meditative setting or might be in a personal session with a teacher, one of us or one of the other teachers, but what we do is we welcome people to establish a connection with us and with other members of our community, begin to listen to and consider our teachings and also to make personal links with people so that they can themselves be listened to.

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So there is a kind of a mutual listening and hearing, a mutual transmitting and receiving of one another's states that's really the core of the whole thing and we're actually, we're now inaugurating a level of that, we call it Heart Gazing, because it is a very heart based process in the sense of the great Heart of existence, capital H, which includes the being nature, transcendent consciousness as well as the soul nature or the individual spirit as well as the ego sense. And so our work, essentially, just welcomes people into a connection and an investigation of their own lives, which includes learning things like Six Step Recognition Yoga. We're offering that along with something that I call, from early on, the Falcon's Glance meditation, which is...a mentor told me early on, he said, "You know, falcons can look straight into the sun." And I thought, "Wow, what a beautiful image for consciousness becoming aware of and as itself."

And so that teaching is something we are offering now on an online course that people can go to as well as the recognition yoga and other things and what winds up happening then in that is that, and especially for long time seekers, but also for folks who haven't done that kind of thing, they get more and more of a feeling like, "Oh. It is really okay to just be me here. To not try to get into the now except in the moments when I am kind of moved to explore that and get into it. To welcome and see what, you know, the more pain body parts of myself are trying to say." Like our friend Genpo Roshi's, what does he call them? Disowned voices?

BH: Right.

SB: So we welcome people into being not just a true self of ultimate consciousness as if there was really something false about the rest of us, but really their total selves and in that process, they spontaneously get energized and accelerated toward being able to stand more and more firmly in that awakened consciousness as well as to own and be at peace with what previously had been the disowned parts that they have been spending enormous energy and attention fighting and holding off and trying to figure out what to do with and avoiding and trying to get liberated from. And the other side of it also that is interesting with respect, for instance, to negative emotions and so forth, I was at one of our advanced retreats recently and one of the senior teachers who I feel very privileged to have helped bring forward and trained her and helped her

come forward herself. She said, "You know, on a certain level there is no such thing as a negative emotion. There is just emotion and how we relate to that is a process that unfolds over time."

And so what winds up happening is people own more and more of their brokenness as well as their wholeness, more and more of their local self as well as their transcendental self and they discover, you know, like I talk about as the spirit matter split or the war between the transcendent and the local and the finite is like a peace treaty gets signed in the heart or something like that.

BH: Yeah, because it is an illusion that it is really a war.

SB: Exactly.

LGB: Yeah.

BH: We create the war and can stop it at any moment.
SB: Yeah and you know, then what happens, which is really interesting, is that once you get stably established in this and you are feeling yourself to be the ocean of all existence you could say as well as this local wave of the personal self and it is interesting, when we met Genpo and went through his Big Mind process, his falling from grace is analogous to what we called the wake down, shake down, which is... It's like after the awakeness is well established, if you give yourself permission to kind of be a whole messy, you know, a human with all of the faults and foibles as well as the awakeness...

LGB: But a divinely human...

SB: But a divinely human being by that awakeness, you will become then more and more attuned to and open to the cut off parts and so forth. It's sort of like all of the disowned voices rush forward and say, "My turn. Listen to me now." And there is further, just to finish it, in other words, the awakening in our view really begins a whole evolutionary process. It accelerates it.

BH: I just want to explain a little more about what you're talking about here for people who don't know. You know, first of all, Genpo Roshi is another one of the teachers in this series, so people are going to definitely have a chance, if they haven't already heard that lesson, to experience Genpo, but you know, the way he would describe it is people, most people are caught, he would say, in the relative world, what Tolle might call the world of the mind or the world of the past and the future, you know, there's many ways, but when people have this awakening happen, sometimes they get stuck in the transcendent or stuck in the now or stuck in the presence in the sense that they disown the regular old world that they were living in before and so very often when people... And you see this sometimes in people that are so spiritual that you can hardly stand to be around them, if you know what I mean.

SB: We do.

BH: And at some point, actually if they're lucky, although it doesn't feel like luck at the time, those people will have a fall from grace where they... It is almost like they are kicked out of the garden of Eden in sense. You know? They are back in the relative world with all its suffering and all its problems and everything and then the next step after that is an integration of the two where they learn to be in the world, but not of it, to use those terms or to know who they really are, this transcendent presence; at the same time that they are a normal, ordinary person in the world. Because the transcendent, in some cases, people see it as an escape, you know, from all of the problems of the world. That is one of the things that I really admire about your work and what attracted me to it was that you really have the guts to talk about it, that this is not an escape from being a normal human being. In fact, Genpo calls this place the one who chooses to be human being.

SB: Correct.

BH: Knowing that you are this ever-present, never dying, never born, you know, Big Mind that he calls

it. Knowing that you are that, you still choose to be a human being, which interestingly enough, it's a really parallel to the whole thing of Jesus and, you know, taking the form of a man and suffering pain and being crucified and all of that, there's a famous passage in Paul's apostle to the Philippine's that starts of, "Let this mind be in that was in Christ Jesus who..." I wish I could recite the whole thing, but it goes on to essentially say, who knowing who he really was, took the form of a man and suffered and all of that anyway.

SB: And actually, there is a line in *A New Earth* that I thought, "Gosh, I wish he would have developed this a lot more for everybody." Where Eckhart is speaking to the Christian teachings and describing how people gain so much out of seeing Christ embodying both the pain body and the transcendent consciousness. So in other words, not just kind of getting hip to the pain body so you can get away from it as fast as you can, but recognizing, you know, this is part of our teaching. We call it the core wound, that we are simultaneously infinite and finite and that's got a bite to it.

LGB: Yes, indeed.

SB: You know, and so, when Genpo talks about choosing to become human, that, I mean I, there's a version of that that I wrote in an earlier book that also in that choice to become human includes choosing to be related to others, choosing to be exposed to the world, choosing not just to be identified as this ultimate, free self so to speak, but to be here in the rough and tumble of life and to experience the pains without needing to immunize yourself from them.

> **"But in life and in relationships, having families, having that profound love and devotion and deep attachment to people in your life and creatures and things, this is still all part of the flow of consciousness."**

LGB: That perpetuates that spirit matter split that you talk about, Saniel, when you do avoid or deflect or dissociate from that, from being that actually.

BH: Yeah, I think that that is very important too. You know, one of the things that Tolle talks about and, you know, Genpo and lots of other people talk about this too, is the fact that, I mean, it's kind of the basis of a lot of things in Buddhism that everything is impermanent and ultimately passes away and that is almost the key reason why it's hard to be a human being. You know, you either get what you want, but then it passes away eventually or you get what you don't want and you know...

SB: And that passes away too.

BH: Yeah and that's why people say, "And it too shall pass," when something bad happens. But, I mean, there is this inherent aspect to being human that does lead to a certain amount of suffering or pain. What all spiritual masters that I've ever been around really say is that when you are awake, when you are conscious, when you are in this now moment, when you're in this presence, whatever you want to call it, you stop creating a whole lot of that suffering that is not necessary. You stop unconsciously putting yourself in all kinds of situations where you can suffer and instead, you choose your suffering in the sense that, for instance, one of the things that Genpo says is he'll say, "I'm more attached to my children than I am to your children." So he has chosen to have children and to have a wife and to have certain relationships and to be in certain situations in his life and because all of that is impermanent, there is something about that that has some level of suffering. When we're unconscious, we create a whole lot more

things that we didn't really want to create that creates suffering. The awakened person still has to live in the world that is impermanent, but they're conscious enough that they don't do things that they are unaware about any longer.

SB: Right and that doesn't mean that you... In other words, you are willingly permitting and even choosing certain kinds of pain and suffering and I think this is another of the ways that it's important for people reading Eckhart to, you know, to be aware the ideal life here is not one that never ever feels any problems or any difficulties. That's not what he's trying to suggest and certainly not what we are trying to suggest.

LGB: Or no attachments. You know, that's a really classic ancient way of saying, you know, if you have attachments and they're 'unhealthy' attachments then you need to just transcend that because it's all illusion anyway. But in life and in relationships, having families, having that profound love and devotion and deep attachment to people in your life and creatures and things, this is still all part of the flow of consciousness. It's not separate from that, but as you're saying, Bill, I really like the way that you speak it.

You know, it's that you see it so clearly in the awakened condition, you can see it, you can bring your attention there. You can make conscious, I like to call them skillful, willful choices. You know, conscious, skillful will comes into play. Conscious, skillful will takes you into a movement in life that is very different from before. In this awakening, we call it *The Second Birth* actually because it literally is such a transition, it feels like you are completely transformed and yet you're still the same person. You do have an ego. You do have an emotional body. You do feel feelings. You still have bizarre, weird thought processes that come and go, you know. But you are awake in the midst of all of that and so it's a new life, it's a second birth where from that point, you integrate, you grow, you move in life and you relate to individuals in mutuality that will also accelerate that integration process of being a divinely human being.

BH: Let's take another example that is a little bit different because it's not a conscious choice and that would be, lets say that somebody has chronic pain or something and it's not an emotionally induced pain that some kind of inner work could perhaps alleviate. You know, they have some sort of a chronic disease that's very painful or something. Tolle talks about, if you are in the now, you know, really being present with that, that doesn't make the pain go away necessarily, although I do think it makes the extra pain you've created by resisting it go away, but people that tend to, I guess you could say surrender to that, they do experience an incredible peace about it. Even in the midst of it being painful. It's the same sort of a thing as when somebody has a terminal illness and they finally come to terms with it and they are reconciled, surrendered to the fact that this is the end of their life, they're going to die soon and anyone that has ever been around someone like that that has gotten to that place, that person just radiates that same energy. It's that same kind of transmission that we were talking about at the beginning of the conversation.

LGB: Right. Oh gosh, I am so glad you brought that up because I've got a great story linking exactly to what you are saying, Bill. I was teaching an elderly woman down in L.A. years ago and helped her through her awakening process. She never thought she would ever awaken. She was 35 years plus a spiritual seeker and never really had that foundation established in her. Through the work that I had done with her through three-and-a-half years and a couple of other of our teachers, she had the awakening and a couple years after her awakening, she had a stroke and she found herself collapsed in the hallway of her apartment building on the floor calling out for help, nobody came to help her. She had to sit there for hours in the midst of having a stroke and simultaneously in experiencing this stroke, her whole being was saying, "I'm still awake. I'm still here. I am this absolute conscious nature even in the midst of experiencing my body going through this." So that's a really good example of what you are talking about.

BH: Yes, and even in the midst of that, there is this presence and in fact, something like that often throws you into it.

SB: Yeah. It accentuates it.

BH: You know, in a way, I remember, you know, Bhagavan Sri Rajneesh talking about being with some car full of people in India and the car drove off a bridge or the bridge broke or something, I forget and he was sort of chastising these people because this threw everybody into the moment for sure and I guess the other passengers of the car or some of them or something missed it in a way and he was saying, "Look, this is really an opportunity." You know, anything that really totally grabs your attention if you go into it takes you to that place and it doesn't have to be a "positive" event or a "negative" event and in fact, I think one of the points that Tolle is making and that all of us make also is that positive and negative are labels that the mind puts on things. There's nothing intrinsically positive or negative about anything. There's just what is.

SB: Yes. That's right. Yeah.

BH: And that's a hard one for people to reconcile sometimes because people have very deep opinions about 'this is really bad.'

LGB: Yes, well we've all been so conditioned with that in many places through life.

BH: On the other hand, we're not sitting here saying, just to make this clear to people. We're not saying that it is okay to kill someone or it is okay to molest a child or something like that. Suffering is suffering and we're in it.

SB: Yeah and certainly against adding unnecessary suffering to what's already been given.

BH: Yeah, that's what I mean because obviously there is suffering inherent in being a human being. The point is, wake up and don't create any more of it unnecessarily, either for yourself or for other people.

SB: And be available to receive and be given over to, like you were describing the situation of someone who surrendered to a terminal illness. It's interesting, a friend of mine who is one of our Waking Down in Mutuality teachers in the network is also something of a student of Indian yoga and Sanskrit and he said that his understanding of the actual meaning of Ananda or Sachitananda, being consciousness, typically translated a bliss, but he said his understanding of it was it's actually being given over to what is. The inherent peace and well-being, as you could say, of being given over to whatever is, and I found... We have a book Linda mentioned, *The Second Birth*, as a name for the quality of the awakeness that we describe and transmit and one of the teachers here has a story, there's about three dozen stories in it of awakening, and there's Jennifer Mayol and under her picture there's a quote from the story that really speaks to the two-sideness of life and being able to be with both sides and she is talking about the gazing meditations that she was doing with us and some of the other teachers when she first came in. She said, "In the gazing meditations, I felt how much I needed and wanted to be seen. At the same time, there was a deep shame in being seen in all my jagged glory." A great phrase. Deep shame, yes, but also profoundly liberating relief and I just thought, you know, that kind of says it because that's what we humans are awakening to being here together.

You know, we are all sides and I love that point that we're emphasizing here that, you know, as one of the old stories goes, who knows what is good and what is bad and to give yourself permission to go through all of it, while more and more being profoundly established as that conscious presence. That appears to us to be the challenge of, you know, what we might call 21st century enlightenment because even if the enlightenment is somehow the same, the challenges we're living it under are like nothing that humans have had before and there is so much more wisdom about so much more of who

and what we are. I know one of your other guests on the series, Ken Wilber, is probably going to be talking about a lot of that. And so we all as teachers also have the opportunity to benefit by so much more understanding of other aspects of what it is to be human that typical, traditional teachers of the transcendent only had access to. I think that's a big, big difference that's coming through in our day and time.

BH: Well, one of the wonderful things that Oprah has become interested in this and is providing this platform for Tolle is bringing out onto the, you know, stage of popular culture, something that has been a very active subculture that all of us are involved in for quite awhile and even it being an active subculture, if that's what you could call it, is a step up from being very esoteric, which is the way that it was, you know, 50 years ago and thousands of years ago for that matter. So, it is very exciting that...

SB: Yeah, and often not only esoteric, but also feared and persecuted. So, you know, to me what Oprah is doing is one of the greatest events in spiritual history.

LGB: Oh, it certainly is.
BH: It is and we're all very grateful that this is happening. We probably have time to talk about one more thing and so I thought I would bring up the idea of surrender and talk about that just a little bit. One of the things I noticed in *The Power of Now*, you know, he has these questions that he kind of answers in the book and it's the same kind of questions that I get when I bring up this subject, actually, because people think that surrender is passive, first of all, that it means you don't do anything about whatever's going on, and that's just sort of allowing the world to step all over you or something and I think that what he is saying, which is really the same thing I say and many other teachers, is that in the moment, if you are present in the moment, first of all, you'll know exactly what to do and then you do it and if there is nothing you can do, then you don't do anything. You know? But this is not about not having any kind of goals or not trying to make things better. It's really about being okay with what is, even while you might try to make it, to improve it in some way. I mean, it is a deep subject because there's a lot more to it than that, but I would really like to get your take on this whole idea.

SB: Well, yeah, thank you. I think, for us, surrender as a kind of attitude that you try to reinforce all of the time from the position of sort of struggling to surrender. I mean, I have had many years of spiritual practice where I was struggling to surrender and when my awakening process clicked into gear, one of the first things that happened was a kind of a literal, even a sense of bodily, my consciousness, my spirit surrendering into being here in my body and as my body and I remember at the time feeling, oh, no wonder I was having such a hard time trying to surrender to something outside myself and what winds up happening, I feel, is that you live the dance between surrender as a kind of letting things be and surrendering also into the flow of your own passion, your own creativity, your own exercise of what Linda so beautifully calls skillful will and being willing in that choosing of humanness, being willing to encounter frustration and disappointment, being willing to, you know, experiencing even the really painful defeat and despair and whatever, without having the fundamental surrender into the totality, into what is, being compromised by any of that. So that's kind of the difference to me. You know, I'm still living a life.
Yeah, I think the more passionate kind of temperaments might have a hard time trying to constantly be in the now and never identify with any of their feelings. We've run into many people like that, you know, who get the green light from us that says, "You know, hey, if you're reactive, that's not fundamentally the problem." So, the surrender is into so many depths of who and what you actually are as a living being that may not be true of other people and how you like your simultaneous, like that image that Eckhart has of Christ, simultaneously your pain body and your transcendent god nature or whatever you want to call it.

LGB: Yeah, I think that was beautiful, Saniel and I think

too, it's so spontaneous. You know? There's a natural, organic flow within your whole being that enables you to relax into that surrender. Relaxation is a big word we use a lot of times in our teaching, you know, and it doesn't necessarily mean take a nap or go jump in a hot tub. You know, it is a deeper holding relaxation where you allow the organism itself, the mind, the spiritual intuition, the soul nature all to encounter this deeper place of, "Oh, I can just rest here and be in the now." Resting here, relaxing into this moment and then this moment and then this moment. So that is a form of a surrender into what is given in the moment.

BH: Even if it's a painful moment.

SB: That's right!

LGB: Yeah. Absolutely and in some ways, especially a painful moment because you are so acutely aware of that.

SB: And even if it's a moment where you suddenly discover that you've got to in effect, muster up your will and in some ways, psychologically, emotionally, spiritually jump off a cliff, defy others, possibly perceived as being really egoic or really wrong or whatever it may be. I mean, in other words, there's a surrendering into the truth of your own moments as they come and having a lot of fluidity in your being and your character so that you can respond to different ways accordingly and then adjust later if you need to.

BH: You know, one of the big things in Zen that I have learned from Genpo is that true surrender is what leads people to being in this place of presence, getting there so that they are permanently established in that and I, in working with him, have found that to be exactly true. When I really, when he kind of facilitated me really going through a surrendering process, the next thing that happened was that I was, you know, really established in that place and so, on the other hand, it occurs to me as you guys were talking that this is sort of a chicken or egg thing in a way because what allows you... If you practice, for instance, doing some of the things that Tolle talks about and there's many other ways to get into that present moment where your mind is not offering all kinds of commentary and you're just experiencing now the way it is, that also enables you to surrender. So, which one comes first, I am not really sure. They sort of feed... In a sense, they are both the same thing in a sense. Being in the presence is surrender; surrender is being in the presence.

LGB: Absolutely. The simultaneity.

SB: And it is a rhythm, the rhythm of the different ways of being in the moment is itself the larger and truer surrender when being true to yourself. I was just thinking, actually, that one of the other specific techniques that we offer is another teaching that Linda came up with called, she calls it, active conscious dreaming, which is making use of your consciousness, your mind or will or capacity to visualize and taking it into action to go after the things that you are moved to in your life and, you know, part of what struck me about that is that in some ways doing this thing with Eckhart is a kind of a counterbalance in Oprah's recent presentations to all that work that she did around promoting The Secret, which I know you were part of and which is that kind of a flip side of the coin of how do you marshal yourself to identify what it is you are moved to achieve or obtain or whatever, go forward and make it happen and there is room for both.

BH: Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Well, you know, there's so many more things we could talk about and we could go on for hours I can tell.

LGB: I know! This has been great, Bill! Gosh!

BH: The clock on the clubhouse wall, as they used to say in the Mickey Mouse Club, that which really dates me.

SB: We don't remember that right babe?

LGB: Oh! Not at all!

BH: You know, I was one of the first people, by the way, to join the Mickey Mouse Club because I went to Disneyland about two weeks after it opened, which is when they started this like in 1954. I was four-years-old. So, I just want you to show me the proper respect as like a founding member of the Mickey Mouse Club.

LGB: We bow down to you.

BH: And everything I have done has been pretty Mickey Mouse since.

SB: Well, actually we are going to take one extra half minute to say to our listeners that Linda and I are so grateful to you for paving the way. You are, yourself, doing huge work to bring these matters of ultimate importance into the mainstream of more and more people's hearts and lives. It's a big deal. So, if it's Mickey Mouse, it's the divinely human version of Mickey Mouse.

BH: Well, I think Mickey Mouse is good.

LGB: We are very grateful to you, Bill and we are so honored that you invited us to be on the call with you today and we really look forward to a lot more connection with you and listening to the other interviews that you do with all of these other profound, beautiful people.

BH: Well, so, if people want to get involved with something that you do and they would do this for a variety of reasons of course, but we are speaking here about Eckhart Tolle particularly, I think that what you do offers a very practical and a very effective way for people to embody the things that he's talking about. So, how can people get a hold of you? How could they get involved with what you are doing?

SB: Okay, two basic things. We will keep it simple so that people can take this down easily. They can go to our website, which is one of several, but the main one we want to send them to is www.heartgazing.com and at that website, by the time you go live with this interview, we will have completed our work to create a free online course, multi-session course. We're not sure exactly how many sessions it will be, at least four, maybe as many as six or eight and that will be a free course that they can do, much like this one that you are doing here in terms of understanding Eckhart's work and so on. And what they will be able to do there is to plug into and find out about, kind of dip their feet into this transmission process that we are talking about that is so central to what makes our work, work and they'll also get their free instruction in several of the things we mentioned today including the Six Step Recognition Yoga, the Falcon's Glance meditation of awakening consciousness and also this Active Conscious Dreaming.

We will make all of that available and there may be other things as well. We haven't worked out all of the details. We may invite one or more of the members of our network of teachers, which now by the way, functions autonomously from us. We don't run the school, but we are very much a part of it and honored as me being the founder and being kind of central leaders.

LGB: And that is the Waking Down in Mutuality…

SB: Network or Community. Yeah, and so the other thing that they can do, Bill, is call us toll free in the U.S. at 877-783-3873. They will hear our voices answer. They'll get a return call from one of our wonderful assistants, who actually lives near you, Juliet Ameroso, most likely and again, www.heartgazing.com or 877-783-3873. If they want to call and ask for more information, Juliet or someone, ourselves perhaps, will help them out and through that, they can kind of plug in, find out about us and there are quite a number of things they can do. We have workshops and retreats happening around the country. We have other online courses. One around my book, *Great Relief* that Linda and I do together and another one called The Human Sun Experience about bringing that sun consciousness alive

and awake in the midst of your humanness, all together between the three online courses, people could have anywhere between a half-a-year and year's opportunity to plug in a go pretty deep as well as we will make available many opportunities for them to meet us and or connect with, find out more about the teachers in our wonderful network. I mean, I feel so blessed and privileged to have encountered such extraordinary people who are themselves, very powerfully established in living and transmitting this awakened state.

LGB: They can also have access to purchasing the books and CDs that have been written all along the way.

BH: Alright, well, unfortunately, our time has come to an end so I really appreciate you guys being here. This is really fascinating and I do highly recommend what you do to anybody that feels drawn to it. So, thank you guys so much. You have any parting, pithy words of wisdom that you want to leave people with?

LGB: Oh, I just want to send blessings to each and everybody on this planet. May each and everybody find their unique way and find this amazing awakening, this condition of being and move it into the world as Oprah has spoken on one of her sessions with Eckhart, this is what we're here for. You know, to awaken and to spread this into the world, to heal the planet.

SB: Yeah, I'll add to that a little bit. I just got a magazine, one of our favorite magazines called *What Is Enlightenment* and there is an article about, on the cover, about how we may very well be the center of the universe after all and I won't even try to summarize the science, we don't have time. My point here and my message, thank you so much for welcoming it, is to each and every person listening, you are a unique and really already divinely human being, actually, a divinely human animal, a primate, a man or a woman. Find out who you are, awaken to your full greatness and manifest your gifts, bring your great potential forward, dare to be true to the parts of yourself that you may fear, you can't even really show to anyone, but that are what you most deeply want to animate and express and realize. We need you here doing that. You can do it. There are growing networks of us who are doing it ourselves and helping others and it is going to keep on going.

BH: Alright you guys, well, thanks so much for being here and to everybody listening, until next time, be well.

Thank you so much for listening to this conversation in our Mastering Eckhart Tolle's The Power of Now series. I know this information will help you to master the ideas Tolle is sharing with the world. To thank you for listening, I have a very special free gift for you. As I've worked to master and implement these amazing ideas in my life, one of the most powerful tools I've used is Holosync audio technology, which, when listened to using stereo headphones places the listener in deep states of meditation, literally at the touch of a button. In addition to many mental, emotional, and spiritual benefits, Holosync creates an ability to focus your mind so powerfully that manifesting what you want becomes easy. I'd like to send you a free Holosync CD so you can try it yourself, along with a free Special Report explaining how it works and all the amazing benefits it has created for the nearly 300,000 people around the world who have already experienced it. To get your free Holosync CD, simply click here **http://www.centerpointe.com/FreeDemoCD/** or call 1-800-945-2741 and we'll send it out to you right away.