

Paul Hedderman #62

March 29, 2011

{BATGAP theme music plays}

>>**Rick:** Welcome to Buddha at the Gas Pump. My name is Rick Archer and my guest this week is Paul Hedderman, welcome *Paul*. I have a little chat group associated with www.batgap.com ... a little blog where I archive all these interviews, and just the other day someone said, "Hey, you should interview Paul Hedderman," and I said, "Well, it so happens that he's my next scheduled guest." And then several people chimed in and said, "Oh boy, Paul Hedderman, that should be interesting." So you've got sort of a fan base out there, I guess.

And in preparation for this I listened to quite a few hours of your Podcast talks and I have several observations: one is, you really have a gift for being able to carry on a sustained dialogue, or a sustained talk for an hour or so without repeating yourself and you keep interesting, so I'm impressed with that – I couldn't do it. And you don't repeat yourself from week to week, for the most part – I mean, every one I've heard is something new, so that's pretty cool.

The second thing is, I've sort of gathered bits and pieces from your story by listening to these, and we'll fill in the gaps, but you often mention that you have experience with recovery because you had been addicted to cocaine and perhaps other things, so that comes into it. And you mention several significant shifts or awakenings, one that happened on an airplane on the way to Australia, where you went deeper and deeper and deeper, and you also mention something about being in an audience where some teacher ... a woman - I don't know who it was, maybe it was Gangaji or somebody - and having a big shift.

And it's not so much that these little individual bits of the story are that significant; most people say, "It's not my story that counts, it's the reality underlying it." But what I find from hearing peoples' feedback from the show is that when they listen to several dozen interviews, and each person tells a slightly different ... their own life-story of what happened to them, they find that they can relate to more and more and more bits and pieces, or they see that awakening doesn't happen to show up any *particular* way; it can be as various as we humans are various.

And so they don't get hung up on the notion that, "Well, this guy almost got hit by a truck and had his awakening and therefore I should go jumping in front of trucks;" they realize that, "It could happen to me, just as I am, without me being like so and so or such and such." So with that proviso, I'm comfortable having people talking about their stories, as long as it's understood that it's not going to necessarily be that way for somebody else as it was for you.

So that's a bit of a long-winded introduction but we have plenty of time. So how would you like to unfold it Paul? Who are you? What do you do? How did you get to be where you are? And what's the essence of what you like to tell people?

>>Paul: Well first of all, the idea – can you hear me?

>>Rick: Yeah, fine.

>>Paul: The idea that "it happened to me" – yeah, obviously it doesn't "happen" to you. Awakening is happening now, it's just that it might not be looking the way you think it should look, but awakening is happening at the moment. All there is *is* awakening. Through conscious contact – through seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, touching – it awakens that.

>>Rick: Aha. So in other words, by conscious contact you mean just the experience of life?

>>Paul: Yeah. What's being demonstrated there but an awakensness? Yeah.

>>Rick: Right. Of course the average person in the world, you know, six or seven billion people are experiencing life and wouldn't necessarily know what the heck you're talking about when you refer to awakening, so what's missing for them?

>>Paul: Well the thing is, what we call "experiencing life" is really an interpretation," if you look at it. There's the experience of life, which is conscious contact, and then there's the mental processes – the interpretation of it as, "I'm the one who's having the conscious contact." So that to me is an experience in itself, but it's not really what you would call experiencing life; it's called "experiencing an interpretation."

>>Rick: Excuse me Paul, let me pause this for a second. Hang on for a second. Okay, so we just paused the video for a second because my cat knocked over the light that I use to help illuminate this, and Paul said "That's what I'm talking about," so let's take that incident as an example of what you're talking about and have you elucidate.

>>Paul: Well what was your reaction to that ... what was the reaction to the cat knocking over the light?

>>Rick: My reaction was I couldn't pay attention to what you were saying because I had to deal with the light, but I want to pay attention to what you're saying in order to interact with you, and so I felt I needed to pause the video to deal with the situation.

>>Paul: Yeah, that's an interpretation.

>>Rick: It's an *interpretation* ... yeah, I suppose I could have interpreted it differently and continued on even though the light was knocked over and the cat was getting in the way.

>>Paul: So what was the experience then? It was more of an interpretation than the cat knocking over the light. The cat knocking over the light was the catalyst and then the mind did everything else.

>>Rick: Yeah, but is there anything wrong with interpretation? I mean, we interpret things all the time.

>>Paul: No, nothing wrong with at all, it's just to me it's valuable to see that. Because to me, if I'm taking an interpretation to be my experience or that I'm experiencing something, *that's* the product of the interpretation – the feeling that it's "I experiencing" something.

>>Rick: Okay, I see. So what you're saying is ... let me just sort of get at what you're saying so that we'll understand it more and more clearly. It seems on the one hand interpretation is necessary in order to function – I mean, we have to ... is it a red light or is it a green light? Should I stop or should I go? – that we have to interpret what we perceive in order to function in life, but on the other hand there can false interpretations. We can misunderstand who we actually are or what other people are, or what they're saying or what they're doing, and we cause no end of difficulties for ourselves by falsely interpreting our situations.

So I suppose you're not dismissing the value of interpretation altogether but you're maybe saying that interpretation should be ideally more reflective of what reality is, is that what you're saying?

>>Paul: No, I don't think ... what I'm putting out is taht just see the interpretation that's based on the interpretation that there's a you having that experience, there's a you that life is happening to; that is what I like to see. The interpretation is fine but the product of it is there's a sense that it is *you* that's interpreting, the y-o-u. To me, that's the basic false interpretation: that there's a you interpreting. I don't care about the interpretations, that's what happens, but the sense of there's a *you* that is doing it is to me ... that's a little dicey. I don't believe that to be so.

>>Rick: Okay, so you're saying that there's sort of a fundamental error or mistake of the intellect, or whatever you might want to call it, in which we assume or perceive that there's a you doing these things, and then that fundamental error builds a whole house of cards in which we screw everything up.

>>Paul: Well the feeling of "we screwing everything up" is a product of that thing. In the sense that there's a me ... let's say, if my head is going crazy - driving me crazy, let's say – so the sense that there's a you being driven crazy, to me, is the product of that activity called "selfing" - not the driving crazy, but the you that's being driven crazy.

And I think a lot of times we don't see that level, we see, "Yeah, I'm being driven crazy, and I'd really like to have some relief from that thing that's driving me crazy," but we don't see that there's a sense that there's a you being driven crazy - that, I would say, is the dilemma.

>>Rick: Yeah, and if you could sort of get over that one, there's a big weight taken off the shoulders.

>>Paul: For sure! And then by the weight being taken off the shoulders, you know you're on to something.

>>Rick: Yeah, okay, and a lot of teachers are saying something along those lines. You have your own distinctive way of saying it, but you hear that echoed in what a lot of people are saying, that this false sense of self that life kind of rotates around is the core problem. Sort of like the old astronomers who thought that the earth was the center of the solar system, and they went to great pains to figure out why the planets moved as they did, because it didn't make sense ... they'd go in these loops and everything. And when they finally put the sun at the center, it all got a lot simpler.

>>Paul: See the thing with this is that it can be a true or a false sense of self - it's both of them are bogus to me.

>>Rick: Ha ... so is there any sense of self that's *not* bogus to you?

>>Paul: No.

>>Rick: So how would you define a true sense of self verses a false sense of self?

>>Paul: As being bogus.

>>Rick: So there's no distinction between them. So why would you call them true and false if they're both bogus?

>>Paul: I didn't, you did!

>>Rick: Oh, I thought ... I'm sorry...

>>Paul: You said "false," so I just used its opposite, which is "true."

>>Rick: Oh okay, so you're saying that *any* sense of self is bogus.

>>Paul: Well, you know, check it out.

>>Rick: So you, in your own experience - and of course words limit us because they refer to 'you's' and 'me's' and so on – but you no longer live with a sense of self? And again, part of the terminology ... I don't know how else to say it.

>>Paul: Well, there's selfing going on, but it's not the sense of being the one that it implies. Selfing is like a verb, yeah? Like a mental verb, but it implies a noun, or it's an activity that implies someone that's doing it or the activity is being done *to*. To me, that's the crux of the matter, not if it's good selfing or, quote, "bad" selfing, but the implied feeling of being the one that it's about, or the one that's doing something.

That implied sense is the product of selfing. So it doesn't say it's a thought; it's a *sense of self*. It's a vague feeling that you're a someone, and as soon as that someone becomes the center of the interpretation, then it's called "self-centeredness." And it's impossible for the mind while identified as a self, to escape the system of self-centeredness; self can't get out of self.

>>Rick: Right, seems to be a key word in that is 'identified?'

>>Paul: To me that's the act, that's the verb. To me, selfing is the act of being identified as a self, that's what it is.

>>Rick: That's a good definition. Are you aware the Buckminster Fuller wrote a book called *I Seem To Be a Verb*?

>>Paul: No.

>>Rick: He did, many years ago. You know Buckminster Fuller, he's the guy who designed the geodesic dome and all that.

>>Paul: Yeah.

>>Rick: I don't think I ever read the book but sounds like ... it seems like it might be germane to what you're saying here.

>>Paul: What did he say? That he's a verb?

>>Rick: No, he wrote a book and the title of it is *I Seem To Be a Verb*.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I would drop out the "seem" and say, "You are a verb."

>>Rick: Right. And so I've heard you use this term 'selfing' a lot, and I think it bears a little bit of elaboration or repetition, because it seems to be the crux of what you teach, or say. So let's dwell on that a little more. You said it a minute ago in a beautiful nutshell phrase, maybe you can dredge that up again ... say it again. What do you mean by selfing?

>>Paul: I don't know what I said before!

>>Rick: Well, make up a new one!

>>Paul: Well, selfing to me is an activity of a mental process, an activity I call selfing, which is the mental process that is attempting to produce a sense of being a noun. So if you're listening and attentive to that process, in a certain relationship with it, which is that you're identified with what it's talking about, which is a self, the selfing implies that there's a self.

So when you're thinking about something, you're thinking about something in relation to you. The something and the you are like in cahoots, and so let's say people want to get some relief from that "something" they're thinking about, but they want to get relief from it as a "you;" those two are joined. The something and the you are joined; it's not [a] you having something bothering you. The feeling of "you being bothered" is the whole scene.

>>Rick: Yeah, that's the crux of the problem.

>>Paul: That's the selfing. So for me to have an opinion about, "Oh, I wish this would stop bothering me," that's the pronunciation of the interpretation that there's a *me* that something is bothering. So while you're proclaiming your whine to escape, you're actually reaffirming your seeming imprisonment, that's what I see.

And it's done in language, it's done in concepts - the mind, in language, is almost hypnotizing itself. It's taking ... it's capturing the reflective quality of mind and having that mind lose itself in what it's reflecting, which is the selfing. So then in that losing itself in what it's reflecting, it becomes what it's reflecting, in a way. So now I take myself to be a body, and so this body puts me in a position, it's locatable. I can say, "Here I am, I'm here right now in this room," but see, then the mind uses that object and then it fixates it on somewhere else at some other time. It just goes into a mental realm about you as a body because it can't think of you as 'not a body,' so it takes you out of here. So now I'm here, sitting, but my mind is thinking about me somewhere else at some other time, and what could possibly

happen to me somewhere else at some other time, and it's producing physiological effects, while I'm sitting here.

So I can be flipping out talking to you on a Saturday morning, but there's no inherent threat in my room, because my head is in here (pointing to his body), for all intents and purposes. It's thinking about next week and [that] I'm going to be destitute next week.

>>Rick: Yeah, you could be worrying about radiation coming from Japan or something and getting all keyed up. So do you think that language is the culprit, that it's the actual way we use language that causes us to misunderstand or misperceive this whole structure of life, or do you think that it's more *organic* than that? In other words, that it is somehow hardwired into our makeup that we fall into this delusion and that we have developed language to just reflect the way we customarily experience life?

>>Paul: I wouldn't care about the answer to that question; I would just see if there's seems to be an effect, quote, like "irritable, restless, and discontent," and if I can just look at maybe what's causing it, not the reasons why, but seeing, "Oh, what's the cause of this effect," and then tell the truth about the cause, the effect will change.

I don't care *why* it's happening, all I know is that from the absence of that activity, from the punchline not being delivered, when it's selfing ... that when there's not a *sense* of being a self, there's a real freedom, there's an active freedom. It's like freedom-*ing*; it's not a freedom as if it's something that occurred and now it's *had*, but it's an activity of mind now; it's free from that bondage of being a self.

>>Rick: Yeah, I think "freed from that bondage" is a key phrase. So when you're giving meetings and having little satsangs with people and stuff, how do you help them shift in their orientation to sort of actually live what you're talking about as opposed to just listening to your words and having it be a nice concept? How do you actually effect some kind of alteration in the way they operate?

>>Paul: By not having any intention to do that.

>>Rick: But then somehow it does get done, in some cases.

>>Paul: Something happens, yes.

>>Rick: It does happen with people.

>>Paul: It seems to, yes.

>>Rick: Somehow just listening to you subtly alters their perspective or something?

>>Paul: Well, it's sort of like, let's say the mind is like in a mental yogic posture, I would it call it self-centeredness. So it's sort of in this twisted position so whatever it receives is based on how it holds it, so it's in a twisted selfing sort of way. If you can just entertain this possibility, then when the mind reaches for this possibility, it (the reaching) brings it out of that mental yogic posture, and then there's a sense of presence and people can feel it, it's obvious.

>>Rick: And do you find that in some cases at least, it matures out of being just a thing that they experience on Saturday mornings or whenever they meet with you, into something that abides?

>>Paul: Oh yeah, yeah.

>>Rick: So initially it may be sporadic and eventually it kind of stabilizes, for a lot of people?

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah. Fear ... this is a place of time and space, so it translates as it deepens, it can do that, yeah. I've seen it anyway, that's how it looks for people. I have a belief in ... not a belief I'd say, but in this whole ... I feel like I'm a mailman, so in a way I'm just inviting people...

>>Rick: Are you literally a mailman or are you just saying...?

>>Paul: No, no.

>>Rick: But not a bad job actually! So you're saying that metaphorically you're a mailman.

>>Paul: I'm just inviting them, I'm not doing anything other than that. But I found that repetition is helpful.

>>Rick: I think so too. You know, I listen to a lot of this stuff and sometimes I think it's just the way *my* brain works, but it helps me to hear even the very same point multiple times, because I kind of settle into deeper and deeper appreciation of it.

>>Paul: Well your mind is in a different posture when it hears it so it can "get it" in a different light, at a certain time.

>>Rick: Yeah, and the receptivity progressively grows, you kind of go, "Oh, I got it to that degree but oh, now I see there's a deeper value to this," it just matures.

>>Paul: As long as the "I know" doesn't come in; if the "I know" comes in, then it's neutered.

>>Rick: Yeah, that kind of makes a flowing thing static, as if it were something you could grasp and hold on to.

>>Paul: Well you know it now, it's dead. You're not going to find out anything about it, you know it, that's the dilemma.

>>Rick: That's a good point. I kind of like this idea of uncertainty and ambiguity, where there's never a final, absolute, "Got it, now I can just rest on my laurels," but always this, "Well, do we ultimately really know anything for certain?" That to me is a much more comforting place than the gripping on to some certainty.

>>Paul: Yeah, that's the whole thing: true security is insecurity.

>>Rick: Yeah, it's beautiful. It's a real paradox but I really think there's a lot of wisdom in that. So if you don't mind, let's kind of ... and I know this is your story and a lot of people don't like to talk about their

story, but if you don't mind, let's take the opportunity to let the dog in, and then talk a bit about your story, so to speak.

You've spoken about recovery and so on in your talks, how did you kind of come along? Obviously you were in a period where you were suffering from addiction, you've spoken about that, how did you get into that, how did you get out of that, first? How did you originally get inspired by the whole spiritual thing as opposed to just...?

>>Paul: Ah, let's see, when I share my story in recovery I always say, "My golden years were between two and four, and everything went downhill from there."

>>Rick: I think a lot of people could say that.

>>Paul: So in my life experience, in the story of the action figure, I have a very deep, contextual memory of what it was like when I was young. And when I was young, when I was playing I wasn't thinking, "Will I be playing next week?" because I had no idea of time yet. And I didn't walk around my house and say, "I should have a bigger room and my mother should look a lot nicer than she does" – none of that was going on. And I'd be playing with ants and that's all that was going on – playing with ants. And there was an immediacy and a spontaneity that was so present that there wasn't any observation of it being special.

>>Rick: Most kids have that, I would say.

>>Paul: I believe so. I really like when you see a baby and stuff.

>>Rick: Yeah, a lot of innocence.

>>Paul: Yeah, so I have a remembrance of that somehow.

>>Rick: I used to play with ants too. I used to pour sugar on the kitchen floor and watch them, make little trails for them to follow.

>>Paul: Yeah, I used to have wars between red and black by putting a cube of sugar near a curb where I used to live, and then seeing which army was stronger, and the reds used to kill the blacks easier than the blacks. It took two blacks to kill one red, it took one red to kill a black. So yeah, I'd be there for days watching this little Roman Empire ... watching it.

But yeah, there was a sense of something that wasn't made valuable, it was just the way it was. And there was then a growing out of it, it seemed, and then I got very caught up in the thought stream and this idea of who I was. And I didn't have a strong sense of who I was, so there was a feeling of discomfort there, and it just grew and grew.

>>Rick: You mean as you were getting into your teens and so on?

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah. So I remember one time I went to school, I was 11 years-old and a girl said hello to me in the hallway, and I went home and wondered what she meant by it, for about five hours. That's

what I'm talking about, that's what started to come up, and it became just overbearing. So I wanted relief and I found it by drinking.

When I drank ... what I call 'alcoholism' is that obsession and actually, now I believe it's an identification with the self, but at that point I was suffering from the obsession with self. And I needed relief and my first solution to that was alcohol, which actually just furthered the bondage to the idea of being a self and I became an addict.

My life took a bad turn, and as soon as I started to use, I found out I had a magnetic appeal to people in uniform. Soon as I started to use I started getting arrested a lot and having a lot of consequences. And I found that...

>>**Rick:** Using what? Cocaine, you mean?

>>**Paul:** Well everything. I used basically everything, a lot of hallucinogens at first and then I got into the narcotics as I grew older ... and I used it intravenously too.

>>**Rick:** I have a similar story but fortunately mine was compacted into a one-year period.

>>**Paul:** Oh yeah? Well that's good.

>>**Rick:** I also had a couple experiences with a man in uniform but somehow after about a year of it I was out of there.

>>**Paul:** No, I sort of had a ... it was going to be a long wrestling match. That's what happened. And then I got to be 36 years-old, which was an amazing event in itself.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, congratulations for making it that far.

>>**Paul:** And then I finally ... I spent 2 years in a drug and alcohol program – '85 to '87 – to try to become civilized, really; I was like a wild dog. And they didn't have what I was looking for. I didn't know what it was but I realized they didn't have it. So I left there, I graduated from there, and I went back to drugs and alcohol again for 10 months. I washed up on the shores of AA in 1988, March 21st, and I've been sober and clean ever since.

So what happened is that became the basis. In my life, whatever books I read or Scriptures or anything like that, the thing that really delivered the goods was recovery. And that book, identified with every problem it described, perfectly, and now I've experienced every solution they talk about, so it's the most living book that I've ever met here.

>>**Rick:** What book are you talking about?

>>**Paul:** The book of recovery – the *AA Big Book*, it's called.

>>**Rick:** Oh, it's an actual book that they talk about.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah. That whole program is based out of the first 164 pages of this book. So that became the platform or a basis of a life that ... in other words, it dealt with the functioning. I couldn't function here, I couldn't function.

>>Rick: Well I understand that AA is a very spiritual program, from what I've heard about it.

>>Paul: Oh yeah!

>>Rick: Pretty cosmic, they have these principles that go really deep.

>>Paul: Exactly. So my life has been based on those principles – I'm talking about the action-figure life - and then my life now, for all intents and purposes, from outside would look like it's quite manageable. Whereas in fact, how that occurs is I admit that I am not managerial quality; I can't run a life. And so that was a very big principle in recovery for me.

I had spent two years in this program and when I left there I didn't really like the people there, or the president, or much, or the program, but I had to admit, my life worked better with them running it than it ever did with me running it. So I got a sense of what the whole principle of recovery is, which is turning one's will and life over to the care of Something greater than self.

Now it was years later in the program when this information that I was receiving started really having a big effect out here, in the translation. Because 'self' is a really important word in recovery, they use it quite a lot in *The Book*, and there's this one statement ... you want me to go into this?

>>Rick: Sure, yeah! No, this is interesting, this is good stuff.

>>Paul: So there is this one statement in there ... so after some of these, let's say, "shifts" were occurring, you would see them in a reflection by how they translated, basically. Like Jesus says, "You'll know the tree by the fruits."

So I was involved in doing workshops in recovery about how to do the Steps of the AA Program, which is a program of recovery from alcohol, and it's a "spiritual program." So I would be speaking out this *Big Book*, the AA book, and I would run into the word 'self' and I saw it in a whole new light. And I got all these new downloads about it but the basic idea of it was that it was a foreign installment, so to speak. It was more a parasitical process of a mental process, in other words, its quality is parasitical, it sort of takes a life and makes it its life.

>>Rick: And even AA had that spin on it or that was just your take on it?

>>Paul: No, no, yeah, yeah ... the AA spin was that the root of the problem is obsession with self, and what I did is I just looked at it a little bit different and said, "No, I don't think that's the case; it's identification as self." And that's a huge difference, because if you're fighting self as something other than you, even if you win, you lose. You have to see it's not you, and to me, when that happened, when that was broken, then I knew it by its fruits because it had a radical relief. A *radical* relief from the bondage of self, which had spanned many years.

>>Rick: Was it a radical relief that just happened in a moment, like "Thursday the 14th at 8pm, bingo," or did you more evolve into it?

>>Paul: No, I had things like that but those things didn't really do it. It was more of like a leaking through a canvas, in other words, it just leaked through what I was calling myself, what my mind was calling myself, and what was leaking through undermined the mind's idea of what it was calling me. And so it was more of a collapse rather than something else, in other words, the floor eroded and it dropped off.

>>Rick: Yeah. They say in Zen that sometimes awakening sneaks up on you like a thief in the night.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah, exactly. So then I was doing these workshops but they shifted dramatically, and they never shifted back. I stopped doing the nuts and bolts of things and I was just speaking about the recognizing what you're not, because if you can see it as not you, the next thing the mind can do is entertain being free of it. If you see it as you, the best you can do is get therapy for it, do modalities, practices, which I have opinions about them, but you get into this doing and having to try to fix something.

But if it's not you, that whole drive of seeking can be abandoned and then there's a living as if there's "found ... now I'm found." So that is what sort of is occurring; it's not like it *occurred*, because it's a verb, it's just *occurring*.

>>Rick: Right, there's just a perpetual living as "having found." And would it be fair to say ... well, maybe we're getting ahead of the story a little bit but, this is a theme that comes up a lot in these interviews, where I sort of, in my own experience, feel like that the living as "having found" can actually paradoxically coexist with the notion that there's still progress – if you like that word – yet to be made ... or evolution, or growth, or whatever.

It's sort of like, we haven't necessarily reached the pinnacle of human evolution or spiritual possibility just because we've shifted into a sense of contentment and nonattachment to self. I mean, can you relate to that? Since you had this shift, gradual as it may have been, do you feel like the Paul Hedderman of 2011 is wiser or somehow a better mouthpiece for this truth than the Paul Hedderman of 4 or 5 years ago?

>>Paul: Do you mean Paul Hedderman as like the musical instrument action-figure?

>>Rick: Yeah ... the action figure.

>>Paul: I would say that the action figure, by having that note blown through it a lot, it's gotten a little more timber in it, yes.

>>Rick: Yeah, good way to put it.

>>Paul: But I don't see ... this space has nothing to do with this place. This is just a translation of that space.

>>**Rick:** Yep. There's a line from *The Incredible String Band* – an old group from the 60s that I sometimes like to quote – "Light that is one though the lamps be many." Or you could take the analogy of electricity. You have the same electrical field and you can plug all kinds of contraptions into it, different intensities of light bulbs for instance, and maybe as the action figure, as you like to use that term, we can go - really mixing metaphors here – but **you can go from a 10-watt bulb to a 20-watt bulb to a 50-watt bulb to a 1,000-watt bulb over the course of a lifetime, but you're not identifying with the bulb; it's more like you are the field.**

>>**Paul:** That's right. See, it's sort of like the wiring of the action figure can be rewired to handle more juice, but it's not quantifying the juice.

>>**Rick:** Right. And do you even find perhaps that since you've found yourself in this position of being a teacher that...

>>**Paul:** No, I'm not a teacher.

>>**Rick:** Okay, what would you like to call yourself?

>>**Paul:** **I'm just an inviter.**

>>**Rick:** Okay, since you're a fairly involved inviter, with a website and giving satsangs and all that stuff, do you find that it's almost as though the juice has begun to flow with greater volume? It's sort of like, "Okay kid, if you're going to play this role, here kid, we'll give you some more juice to play with."

>>**Paul:** I found that ... yeah, this is an interpretation of it. I found that when there's been an intimation of that juice in my life, I've been usually willing to open up to it. So I find that the whole point is that **when there's the willingness, the energy will come**, so to speak.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, yeah, like that old movie with Kevin Costner about baseball: "If you build it they will come," remember that?

>>**Paul:** Yeah, yeah, so I found ... like when I first started doing things in recovery, I didn't even want to do it, someone just said, "I think you'd be good at this." So I started doing it and all I did was show up, and I batted a thousand because I actually never showed up. I just had something that maybe people have a difficulty getting into that posture; that posture comes easy for me. I just sort of let go, yeah sure, let's see what happens.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, well that's what I was saying at the beginning of the interview, it seems you have a gift for expounding what you expound and it comes easily and it's good.

>>**Paul:** Yeah, so it gets to be used.

>>**Rick:** Yeah. So let's backtrack a little bit. So you went through recovery and you underwent this shift from an attachment to, or an identification with, individual, bound self to a much more relaxed, free condition. I'm sorry, go ahead.

>>Paul: No, see, all there was was the seeing that I am not that, there was nothing else that was done.

>>Rick: Right, but somehow that was seen, somehow you saw that.

>>Paul: Yes.

>>Rick: It was seen. Okay. But I think I also heard you elude in your audios that I listened to, to having gotten involved in some practices - like you meditated and you went to massages. What sort of things did you do along the way?

>>Paul: Well, when I was young I was with a guru from India, from when I was about 18 to about 22.

>>Rick: Who's that?

>>Paul: A guy named Guru Maharaji.

>>Rick: Oh yeah, I know him – the 14 year-old perfect dude.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah, and that was a really weird situation for me because he was the lord of the universe, and there I was. And so he was the lord of the universe, I don't like the lord of the universe, what does that make me? It was a very painful relationship!

I meditated, I like the meditation and everything. It's funny, I got run over by a car, twice in one night. I was in the hospital for a long time and I saw him quite a lot, in some realm. I saw tons of videos of his that were never made.

>>Rick: Just in your mind's eye?

>>Paul: Yeah, it was just on and on and on.

>>Rick: Hmm, did you get run over by the same car twice or two different cars?

>>Paul: Yeah, I got run over by the same car, twice, in one night. The guy hit me, didn't know what he hit, then he backed up over me.

>>Rick: Ugh! Geez! He just wanted to make sure.

>>Paul: Yes, so it told me a lot.

>>Rick: Yeah. So obviously the guru Maharaji thing didn't...

>>Paul: Well, did a lot of meditation and stuff, then I looked into Zen and stuff, but then I went back to drinking and using, pretty ferociously, for years. And then when I got recovered, when I started getting sober, after a couple of years, I went back to the things I thought had worked in my life, which was meditation, and I used to do massage and polarity therapy, tai chi, qigong ... so I tried to do that again.

And so I got interested in that and I started traveling to Asia, did some retreats in Thailand, did some retreats here, went to Zen center, meditated, had a nun I used to see - once or twice a year, she would give me an idea of how I was doing ... have like a little interview with her.

>>**Rick:** Is she the one who was Adyashanti's teacher by any chance?

>>**Paul:** No, no, no, I don't think so.

>>**Rick:** Because I know his Zen teacher was a woman also.

>>**Paul:** No, she wasn't a teacher; I would just go in and see her like twice a year and she would just tell me how I was doing, by listening to me.

>>**Rick:** Well, you're mentioning all those things in a sort of cavalier way, as though that was all entertainment and didn't actually have any value for you. Is that true?

>>**Paul:** That's your interpretation Rick!

>>**Rick:** Okay ... I just ... am I wrong or did you feel like, "Okay, this was actually somehow instrumental in bringing me to where I am now," or something? Excuse the use of the word 'me.'

>>**Paul:** Where am I now? - that's the thing. But yeah, say on that level of action figure, no, what I really liked about it was you couldn't really quantify it, but it was a sincere desire, let's say, a focus. And I was doing the best I could but what I found over years later, was there was a certain template going on that I wasn't aware of, which was the sense of being the one that was doing and having, and that was the fraudulent aspect of it all.

So no matter how much effort I seemingly did, no how much sincerity was conjured up, it was totally defined by the system I was moving in - coming from a doer and a have-er, and I saw that system fails. And therefore, when I saw that in its naked light, that personally or impersonally it fails for *me*, then there was a dropping of it.

>>**Rick:** Well you know there's that old saying, "It takes a thorn to remove a thorn," and there's another saying where a man is standing in the middle of a mud puddle, let's say it's a big one, and someone is standing on the edge. And the man says, "How do I get out of this mud puddle?" And the guy on the edge says, "Well, take a step." And the man in the puddle says, "Yeah, but you're asking me to put my foot in the mud again...?" And yeah, but you do that enough times and you'll come to the edge of the mud puddle and you'll be out.

And to throw in one more saying, there's a Zen saying: "Enlightenment might be an accident but spiritual practice makes you accident-prone." And finally, *one* more: you're taking a boat across the river, let's say, and you get to the other shore – it's time to get out of the boat. It's not that the boat was worthless, but it's no longer relevant.

>>**Paul:** Yeah. Well the funny thing is that ... the same space was on the other shore you left.

>>Rick: True, true, in this case; I mean, metaphors have their limitations. But I have a bias, maybe I'll drop it at some point.

>>Paul: Yeah, I know, I know.

>>Rick: Yeah, which is just that although there may not be any *ultimate* value to spiritual practices, they serve a purpose at the stage at which one is inclined to do them. And it's hard to say, "What if...?" but it could very well be that those things you did were instrumental in getting you to the point where you no longer needed to do them and they no longer seemed relevant, and the whole notion of an "I" doing some kind of practice seemed ludicrous. What do you think?

>>Paul: Yeah ... yeah.

>>Rick: And the only reason I emphasize *that*, is a lot of people will do some kind of spiritual practice for 20 years and they'll have this realization, and then they'll tell everybody, "You don't need to do spiritual practices," because from that perspective they seem superfluous, but at the stage at which the people they're speaking to are at, they may be useful.

>>Paul: Well the thing is, if you feel like you need to do it, you better do it.

>>Rick: Yeah, do it, whatever...

>>Paul: And if you no longer feel like you need to do it...

>>Rick: Don't do it! Yeah, that makes sense.

>>Paul: But if you feel like you need to do it and you're trying to use a philosophy to give you permission not to do it, you're going to be in the mental vice of selfing, because there's a sense that you really need to do something but now you're trying to overlay [it with] this idea of, "But there's no one to do," or "There's no need to do anything" – that doesn't work.

>>Rick: Very good point, yeah, I totally agree with you.

>>Paul: That doesn't work. That's the subtle doing of non-doing.

>>Rick: Yeah, and it can become a trap, I think.

>>Paul: Yeah, well, it's laid by the mind and it walks right in. Yeah, so no, I have no idea what's going on here, all I know is it's not going on to anybody, that's all. I'm on a need-to-know basis. My whole idea is that I don't know much, I find out. Like in Zen they say, "The highest form of mins is 'I don't know.'"

As soon as ... if the state of "I don't know" is active, then your experience here is "finding out," that's what it translates to here; "I don't know" translates into "finding out." And so I like that way of living, and the idea of thinking I know that this had an effect or doesn't, is all basically in the same box of interpretation, si I don't care about knowing. Whatever happened, in a sense, has no relevance because it's not happening *now*.

>>Rick: Yeah, and it's all theory, I mean, who knows? It's all theoretical. But as long as one doesn't make an "I know" stance about the not-knowing business - you can take anything and turn it into an absolute.

>>Paul: That's right, well that's what the mind likes to do. It wants to know, it has a drive to know and it doesn't, so it wants certainty when true certainty is being uncertain. It wants to have a sense of knowing but it doesn't realize that knowing neuters the activity of finding out. You're going to try finding out something that reinforces the idea that you knew. It's all contrived, it's all set up!

But see, when that thing is short-circuited, and to me the short-circuiting point is at the point of the identification "as". Not the *content* of that, not trying to partition the good and the bad content to see how it has affected me, but the "me" that is the center of all that dualistic interpretation, it's the false center.

>>Rick: Yeah, I heard a phrase that I thought was really clever, someone said, "The bad news is you're in freefall forever, the good news is, there's no ground."

>>Paul: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

>>Rick: You're not going to go splat at some point.

>>Paul: Well that's the thing, if you're falling, let's say, if you're in uncertainty, the mind is like hands trying to grasp at something, something, something, something. If it gets exhausted, when the hands stop "handing," what's found out there is wings, so to speak. As soon as the hands stop grasping or handing, then they appear to be wings. And so the whole point, your whole solution was not through the handing, but this exhaustion of the handing, then the wings appear. They were always there but they were being used as hands.

So that's the whole point, when the handing is dropped and I find ... well listen, even *before* the handing is dropped, if there's no one that's doing it, *that's* the dropping of the handing - in a whole different way. It doesn't mean the handing has to stop but it has still been dropped, so selfing is going on but it's not implying a self.

>>Rick: Yeah, it's like the action figure that you referred to that's doing its action figure thing, but that's not the identity.

>>Paul: No. Let's say so here's the selfing going on, the whole thing is, is there's a part of the selfing which is the feeling of being the self or the noun – that is just a verb, it's not a noun. If you see the whole selfing, the whole selfing is a verb, then there's the freedom. If part of the selfing appears to be a noun, then there's the bondage, that's the activity of being bonded from moment to moment, or free, from moment to moment.

>>Rick: And do you feel like a black and white, on-off situation, or there can be degrees of it?

>>Paul: There's *tons* of degrees of it!

>>Rick: Yeah, many, many, many gradations, right?

>>Paul: Yes, yes. That's like from the iron chain to the gold chain of bondage to self. So it can be really stark, cold iron, and then it can be really glistening, it can be very radiant gold, and there are all different degrees in-between, but it's all the activity of being bonded to the self.

>>Rick: And do you find in your own case that you have little discoveries every now and then where there's some residual bondage that you hadn't even been aware of that gets released, and then a new level of freedom dawns, or do you feel that there are no unfoldments like that anymore?

>>Paul: Well there are spikes and downloads, but the basic space is always...

>>Rick: Always there.

>>Paul: Yes, it's sort of like ... gravity, with people. Have you ever gone into a café and have you heard people talking about the effects of gravity?

>>Rick: Not that I can recall.

>>Paul: That's right

>>Rick: I've had both – I've gone into cafés and I've heard talks about gravity, but I don't know about the two together.

>>Paul: Yeah, see, so very rarely do people sense the effect of gravity on their body...

>>Rick: It's just taken for granted.

>>Paul: It's always happening, yeah, they would only know it by its absence. So if they were put in an anti-gravity thing, then they would know, "Wow, that was gravity!" So in the same way, in a way, there's a sense ... it's by the absence of self is the presence. When there's the absence of self, that's the presence, and then you know the absence of self by the presence.

>>Rick: Yeah, so if I understand what you're saying, it's like you can be gripped by identification with self without even knowing it, and then when that grip releases, then in its absence you notice, "Whoa, okay, this is..."

>>Paul: Well you get a sense of what it is when it's clearly *not*.

>>Rick: Yeah, yeah, and you didn't realize the extent to which you had been gripped by it, but no longer gripped by it, there's like this contrast.

>>Paul: See, you learn about it when you're not it; you never learn about it when you're it. In recovery we say, "Self-knowledge avails you nothing," so the more and more knowledge you gain about self as a self, it's not going to avail you anything because it's not going to lead to freedom from self. Because the whole move of selfing is the claim, so instead of seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, touching, I's "I'm seeing, I'm hearing, I'm feeling, I'm tasting, I'm touching." Instead of 'body,' "My body." Instead of 'time,' "My time."

So just put a word up on a board – sex, money, health – and everyone would have a meaning about that based on their condition, let's say, of money, sex, and health, but then just add one little word in front of it and you'll change the weight of it: "my money, my sex, my health." *Totally* different weight. That's the difference between travel heavy and travel light here – the "my!"

>>Rick: Yeah, good point.

>>Paul: The "my" is the act of being identified.

>>Rick: Do you find that in certain circumstances, let's say you stub your toe or something and you have a lot of pain, or a cop pulls you over for a traffic violation or something, do you find that there's a reemergence of a sense of self.

>>Paul: Sure! Oh, no, not a reemergence of a sense of self; just a physical reaction, contraction.

>>Rick: Oh, a physical reaction.

>>Paul: Yes, contraction in mind. But mind is in self, it's part of the body here and so it contracts. It's reliving something, that's all it does.

>>Rick: So in the midst of a traumatic experience like that – I don't know how you want to put it – but the sense of the non-self, the freedom, the presence doesn't get compromised or diminished?

>>Paul: I'll tell you the truth is, I would say that in my own life, particularly in the past, the greatest moments were in extreme traumatic situations, when I almost died. Back then when I almost died, that's the brightest it has ever been.

>>Rick: Why is that?

>>Paul: Because there is no selfing going on. Because the selfing is being produced by the system - the body, the mind - and so let's say I hit my head on the bottom surfing and my whole nervous system shut down, I almost got paralyzed, there was no selfing going on.

Let's say there's a trail of not being self, but at that point there was no self whatsoever. The verb of selfing stopped, it got startled into stopping completely.

>>Rick: Interesting.

>>Paul: So everything was bright as bright as can be. And there was absolutely no fear and no anxiety being provoked because there was no narration of the event. Then the mind shows up again, it comes out of its startled condition, comes out of the pause and then *claims* whatever is happening.

Yes, you notice it? Take an epiphany, you ever had an epiphany?

>>Rick: I think so, if I understand...

>>Paul: Did you ever make a reservation for it? Do you make a reservation for it? Did you call up ahead and ask for Kenny G. music and all this? Did you? No, no.

>>Rick: It just happened.

>>Paul: It just happens. But when it usually "comes to an end," it usually happens when the mind rises and goes, "Oh, I just had this incredible experience, this epiphany." As soon as the selfing claims it, that's it, it's neutered.

>>Rick: It's true, as soon as the mind rushes in, it kind of takes ownership.

>>Paul: That's it. That's the selfing. So that happens at a big event and it will claim its own absence – selfing. So it will take its own absence and make it into a spiritual experience it had. It's like they say, a thief in the night; this is a thief in the day and night. That's all it does is claim. It claims life as its own.

>>Rick: So I think this is going well, I think people are going to enjoy this talk. Do you still work with people in recovery or do you just work with people in general these days?

>>Paul: No, I work with some people in recovery.

>>Rick: Specifically?

>>Paul: Yeah.

>>Rick: And are you able to apply the kind of things you've been talking about here to their situation and offer something a little bit unlike what they're generally being offered?

>>Paul: You'd have to ask them.

>>Rick: But this is your approach, right?

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well no, if someone says their house is on fire, I'll talk to them about a pail of water. You ever hear of *A Course In Miracles*?

>>Rick: Sure, yeah.

>>Paul: I did a lot of *A Course In Miracles* at one time, and they talk about this place, here - this appearance - as many different levels, and there are solutions at each level. So let's say, if you believed your house was really on fire, then that solution would be a pail of water. It wouldn't be that "there is no fire" and "there is no house" and "there is no water."

>>Rick: Yeah, that wouldn't be very practical.

>>Paul: It probably wouldn't, so that's the point. A lot of times people, when they share, you can hear the format they're seemingly in and you have to take that into consideration.

>>Rick: Yeah, that's very good, I'm glad to hear you say that. It's like, you teach at the level of the listener, whatever is appropriate for them.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah.

>>Rick: And I think that that, in many cases, is not done these days. People *do* say "there is no fire, there is no water" to someone whose house is on fire, and it's really not that helpful to them.

>>Paul: But we don't know that, it could be in time. Sometimes a rigidity sets in, there's a subtle thing of being right or whatever, and then that causes you to be rigid in how ... where you stand with this. To me, this is a lot more malleable, and it's sloppy and dirty, you know? Because to me, in Advaita, there are Advaita Pharisees – they've got the letter of the whole "message" but there's no spirit in it.

>>Rick: Advaita fundamentalists, you might say.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah. And so I don't ... for me it's a living, moving activity; it's verbing, constantly.

>>Rick: No, that's good, I really appreciate that. How did you come up with the term 'Zen bitch-slap' for your website?

>>Paul: 'Zen bitch-slap,' well, it's a joke on an old Zen koan. You know the Koans, *you* do but I don't know about...

>>Rick: Which one?

>>Paul: The famous one of one-hand clapping - what's the sound of one-hand clapping? It's a Zen bitch-slap! And it also implies that selfing is a verb and it can be startled. Selfing stops quite a lot, and so the trance that you may be in by being attentive to it as awareness, consciousness, *that* trance can be broken because the selfing breaks, and that is what you would call "a pause." So in that pause, the sense of what's being implied to be you stops, but something continues, and it can be a really valuable moment, when there's a sense of what you were taking yourself to be has stopped but there is something that is still continuing.

>>Rick: Yeah, like you were saying earlier, when you hit your head on the bottom surfing, it's sort of like the shock of that situation knocked you out of your ordinary ... you know...

>>Paul: Well the thing is you, as representing a mental interpretation, is never going to get it; there's no way. In an extreme situation, "you" are not going to be cool, calm, and collected – the you; it is usually absent in extreme situations. You know what I mean?

And the thing is ... I always like to joke with this one. Let's just say ... in some Buddhist things they say your whole life is based on the moment of death; that's the whole point of living, is to be prepared for that moment when the body dies. So let's say in your life you've been listening to your head all day, every day. So you notice, some people, they'll go to work and then around 9 o'clock at night their mind will tell them they had a bad day. They were there the whole day and you would imagine they would be aware that it was a badding, but now the mind [says], "You've had a bad day," and you just go, "Oh yeah, I've had a bad day!" And you call other people, "Did you have a bad day?" [And they say], "Yeah, I thought so, I had a bad day."

So let's say you've been listening to that head - and it's a mental process, so it takes time, it takes time. So conscious contact is a timeless event, basically, and the interpretation of the conscious contact as "I'm the one who's seeing," takes time. Conscious contact is timeless, but the interpretation of that event takes time.

So let's say you've been displaced from being aware of the conscious contact and now you're just aware of the interpretation. So every day you're living and your mind is telling you what happened, but what it's telling you is about a moment that's already passed. So the moment that you're in right now is being used to interpret the *previous* moment, and so on and so forth.

Okay, so now you're living as this interpretation, then the moment of death occurs and when that death occurs the body shuts down, and yet, you were waiting for the next moment for your head to tell you what happened. So you're *never* going to be aware of your own death in selfing; the only one who is going to know you died is somebody else. You're never going to know you died because you are on a time lag ... the idea of you...

>>Rick: I see, you're always interpreting retroactively and you're not going to be in a position to interpret after you've died.

>>Paul: Exactly, exactly, exactly. And so when you have a big traumatic event, it just startles the whole system so there's no interpretation of that event for a period of time, then it comes back.

>>Rick: Kind of shuts off the interpreter.

>>Paul: Shuts it off, yet something continues. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So here I am and then that moment of death is like my friend says, "I'm never going to experience my own death; my death is only going to be experienced by others." Because with that time lag, that moment is going to pass and there's not going to be a voiceover; there's no you! There's no you that's going to stand over your dead body and go, "Oh, you're dead now;" there isn't a you, it's like a voice box of the apparatus – the narrator.

>>Rick: And so the practical implication of what you're saying now is what? How do we get on this track here?

>>Paul: Just see that's the case. If you see the activity that's presenting a "you," then there's a sense [that] you're not that; that's what you are, is the seeing of what you're not, in my experience. My daily experience is: I am the seeing of what I'm not. That's what I am, that seeing is what I am. The seeing of what I'm not *is* what I am, because all I can see here is what I'm not.

>>Rick: Hmm. Some people talk of an evolution of one's consciousness or development or whatever, to the point where when you see the world, you actually don't see it as what you're not, you enter a unitive phase where you begin to see everything in terms of the self – not the individual self but the universal self. You begin to see the universal essence which you already have known yourself to be – again, pardon the terminology – [and] that begins to expand out and encompass the whole environment as well. Do you have any flavor of that in your own life?

>>Paul: I don't see you can see your essence.

>>Rick: Not as an object. Not as an object but as a...

>>Paul: An intimation?

>>Rick: An intimation or an intuition or a *knowing* of the essential nature of the object as being the same as the essential nature of one's self, what one has known one's self to be.

>>Paul: Oh, a sense of emptiness. Yeah, yeah, but that's not how my apparatus sees things, as things, but there's a sense of – I don't know if you want to use 'emptiness' because even that is a concept, but there's a sense of ...

>>Rick: As if the emptiness kind of permeates everything; it's not just some abstract subjective...

>>Paul: I don't even want to go there with that 'emptiness' because that's a word, yeah? **I don't know what's going on, let's put it that way, but I don't have any interest in knowing** what's going on. I really don't.

>>Rick: *Well*, you do and you don't ... you devoted your life to that...

>>Paul: No I don't. **I have a great interest in what's *not* going on, but I have absolutely no interest in what is going on.**

>>Rick: Okay ... ha.

>>Paul: Because **when I know what's not going on, that's what's going on!** That's how it works for me, I'm sorry to say it that way.

>>Rick: Well what I'm suggesting is that the what's *not* going on is also the inherent nature of everything that appears to be going on, such that with that perspective, nothing ever happened, even on an objective level.

>>Paul: That's right, yes. And that's a strong sense ... nothing...

>>Rick: Yeah, it's a *sense*. And it's not like you don't see cars driving down the street and birds flying around, but that is all sort of *permeated* with a sense that even though that's happening, at the same time it's not happening; there's a kind of paradox there.

>>Paul: Yeah, yeah. That's just like demonstrations of travelling lighter ... you get demonstrations of it. To me it's an intimation, you can't put a finger on it, and then there's no desire to put a finger on it. There is just that, just me going like this (as he looks around the room). It's sort of like a calling, and you almost hear it and you sense it in everything but that's where it goes; that's **its level of appearance, is non-appearance**, in a way. It's nice, I like it.

>>Rick: You know, I'm glad you brought up the *A Course In Miracles* thing because it reminded me that when I mentioned you were going to be on this show, someone said, "Oh I hope he talks a little bit about his *A Course In Miracles* thing." Is there anything more that's worth saying about that in terms of your...?

>>Paul: Oh I loved the *A Course In Miracles*. It was one of the – in the action figure story, it was a radical fun. I mean, I just laughed more, I laughed like a lot when people were reading *The Course* with me or when I was at certain events, it was just a giant laugh fest because it was just hilarious the relief of seeing the structure of what I am not. It was incredible.

The structure is a *moving structure*, you see? It's not like you moved into a house called "what you're not;" it's a verb, it's an activity, but to have it so clearly drawn as if it appeared to be a stagnant structure you could look at and understand, that's an incredible act here, and that act was performed through the *A Course In Miracles* for me.

>>Rick: So you're saying that *A Course In Miracles* does that? That it sort of builds a static edifice of what this that which is not?

>>Paul: No, no. It produces, let's say, the selfing, which is a verb, it structures it so clearly and cleanly [that] it appears to be a noun to you so you can study it. It's difficult to study a verb, but that's what for me the *The Course* was, personally, or impersonally.

It took what was an activity called 'selfing,' and it drew it very clearly and laid it there for me to look at whenever I wanted to. In other words, it wasn't like I had to go out into the fields and see if the birds flew by and lay there birdwatching; it was like, "Hey, this is it, this is the structure of this, this is how this place is produced, this is what the mind is doing, this is what the Lessons do, they'll change your perceptions."

And in that shift of perceptions you realize the perceptions you had were f#@'in structures! They're artificial, they're not organic. They're contrived, they're a structured system, and I would say that system is self-centeredness, it's like putting on a helmet. And so they describe the contours of the helmet, how it's like to live in the helmet, and what it's like to take the helmet off. So yeah, I liked it.

>>Rick: Good, good. Is there any ... I know you're a little bit pressed for time because you have to go and do a lecture, so we'll wrap it up in a couple of minutes, but is there anything else that you feel is really worth mentioning that we haven't touched upon here? Either in terms of various things you've been through, or things you like to say to people that we haven't really said, or do you feel like we've pretty well covered it here, for now?

You're at a loss for words. I've never seen you at a loss for words!

>>Paul: No, the point is it's an invitation, so the invitation is really based on the other end of it ... [on] what's receiving the invitations. So I'm sure there's will do its thing. I sense it. Yeah, we could go on and on, there's a lot to delve into. But it's all about, for me, describing what I'm *not* and with the sense of, if I share that with others, they may see what was being taken to be them is what they're not, and it sort of

translates as a traveling lighter. Which is, if this place is a translation and it is dualistically contrived – so either you're travelling heavy or you're traveling light, and there are tons of degrees in-between. If you had a preference, I'd rather travel light.

What I found is that the thing that's causing it to seem so heavy is what wants it to be light. If you can just give up that, then it tends to get exactly what it wanted by not being there.

>>**Rick:** Hmm. It's interesting, you keep talking about that which is not and that which I'm not, and the word 'maya' actually means 'that which is not; it means 'which not.' And so it's kind of cool because that's the essence of what you've been saying. And this word 'maya,' which is translated as 'illusion,' really means that 'it's not what it appears to be.'

>>**Paul:** Yeah, yeah, so I like it that way, it works that way.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, great. Well this has been a lot of fun. I understand you might be coming to Fairfield next fall or something, my friend Radhika has been rooting for you ... so, get to meet you.

>>**Paul:** Yeah, he's on my payroll.

>>**Rick:** Get to meet you when you come here.

>>**Paul:** Yeah, I hope so, it'll be fun. Let's see what happens, yeah, if they invite me I'll come.

>>**Rick:** I think they're intending to. Radhika was talking about, I don't know – September, October, something like that.

>>**Paul:** Yeah, that would be great. I have a good feeling about Fairfield.

>>**Rick:** It's a fun place.

>>**Paul:** I'm looking forward to it.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, it'll be good to have you out here.

>>**Paul:** I'll forget about it as soon as I get off the phone with you.

>>**Rick:** My wife says it's a fun place unless you have to live here! Grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

>>**Paul:** Well I'm not planning on *moving* to Fairfield. Do you have any water around? I need water.

>>**Rick:** A few little reservoirs and ponds and things like that.

>>**Paul:** I need water with agitation in it.

>>**Rick:** Yeah, not much of that. You could get into windsurfing if you drive an hour and a half, but that's about the extent of it.

>>**Paul**: No, I think I'll probably be here. Who knows?

Well listen man, thanks.

>>**Rick**: Thank you, Paul.

>>**Paul**: Sounds good, and let me know.

>>**Rick**: Yeah, let me just conclude by telling people, you've been watching Paul Hedderman interviewed on Buddha at the Gas Pump. And there have been about 60 such interviews so far, you can see them all archived at www.batgap.com , B-A-T-G-A-P. And you'll find links there to a Podcast, to a YouTube channel, RRS feed - if you want to subscribe in your blog, and you can also sign up for an email newsletter - to be notified when new interviews are posted, as they are just about every week.

So thanks a lot Paul and...

>>**Paul**: Yeah, thank you.

>>**Rick**: And I'll see you when you come to Fairfield.

>>**Paul**: Yeah, take care of yourself.

{BATGAP theme music plays}