

## A New Alternative

### A. Synthesizers

I got a synthesizer for Christmas this year. It's a fascinating new toy. Just imagine, to be able to create a new sound from the groundwork of basic frequencies. By turning each dial, I sort through each possible combination to find just the right amount of everything.

It would be convenient to have a dashboard like this for human consciousness; where we could turn up just a little bit of the highs, maybe a few of the lows, and oh, why not make the sustain longer than it needs to be? Instead of handy little buttons and knobs, we have a formless yet all pervasive thing known as our minds. It functions basically like a synthesizer. We experience a sound, and through interacting with different points in space and time we can morph it into perceptions, which color how we go about playing our music. Adding focus on one (Or many) of our six senses also spices up how we can experience our minds, and with it, our lives.

The hardest part about this device is often we have to work backwards from our perceptions in order to find the underlying sound. It's not as easy as starting a new patch, as our thoughts carry over as time progresses. This makes finding a new sound a difficult and complicated process, with intense undertaking needed to fully unroot what we considered to be ingrained in the hardware.

Our mind is constantly calling to be played with. It wants us to learn about all its different settings and possibilities, but when a certain sound suits us, we hold on to it. This is a short essay about fine tuning the frequency that we can all get on, and how to cultivate a New Alternative.

### B. Leviathan

The Alternative has been infiltrated by the Leviathan. (The Leviathan standing for Capitalistic-Cis-Hetro-Normative-Imperialist-Patriarchal-Race-Society) Due to social media and our innate desire for fame, the lifestyle that was once counterculture has now become commodified. Symbols and rituals that were once signs of power are now representations of passive passion. With the creation of the movement as a product, we have also become products. Our every move, want, and desire is accounted for in this massive market, holding up a mirror to ourselves. Does this mean we're trapped? That even our exit is a door back inside?

This is an external as well as an internal problem. The issues in the way our society works has effects on our bodies and minds. When we become products we become soulless, our unique life force is taken out of us. We are now another face, another resume, another opportunity. This leaves us feeling unfulfilled and worthless, as what makes our life special is not valued anymore.

We can all agree that we have worth as human beings, or at least that the concept of worth is irrelevant. This is the core of how to defend ourselves against the pressure of the Leviathan. We need to stay in touch with the force inside of us that is untouchable and

unknowable so we can follow the path to liberation. What we all have in the midst of the flames...

### *C. Energy*

The human soul has been a hot topic ever since we became conscious. What are the extents of the will to live? Where does goodness come from? We've constantly wondered where we get our ability to feel the burdens and the ecstasies of being human, and what the nature of all of this is. These are the questions that are outside the reaches of logic, forging only to areas of instinct and emotion.

The good news is we're not the only beings on this Earth with a soul. In fact, we share the same soul with every other thing on this planet. By tapping into this soul, we're able to connect with a constantly renewing source of energy that inspires the other things on this planet to get up every morning and exist. This source of energy is the World Spirit, a rhizome that is the very essence of existence on this planet. There's also the universal spirit, but because we haven't discovered life on other planets yet, we only need to deal with Earth.

For humans, inspiration is the spark that continues the creation of this spiritual energy. Inspiration can be found anywhere at any time, and can be acted on in the same circumstances, no matter what the resources at hand may be. As long as we are alive, we can tap into a natural, infinite amount of energy that is available to us all the time.

### *D. New Alternative*

What we're suggesting is a New Alternative, a discipline of devotion to being aware of our humanity and spirit. To be a part of a new alternative is to be a rock n' roll monk; a scientist experimenting with our spirit and all of the ways it can manifest itself. It is in our nature to express ourselves, and it would be a shame if we didn't use this life to explore the vast corners of our Self.

New Alternative is rooted in dharmic beliefs, mainly Zen Buddhism and Hinduism, as a focus on our duty as humans to work at our unique experience, and hold all aspects of ourselves as special. For this reason New Alternative is a sprawling philosophy (or lifestyle) that handles each part of our abilities equally, with an emphasis on our creative and mindful senses.

This is a contemporary alternative to what society prioritizes, which completely disregards our potential for activities besides work and home life. While these parts of life are important and shouldn't be ignored, it's equally important to work different muscles than the ones we are forced to focus on in our day to day lives. By taking wisdom from all parts of society, we can form new ways of living a more fulfilling life.

This is not a hypothetical spiritual movement. This is grounded work: karma yoga.

What we're talking about is creating art and promoting spaces for art, like venues and galleries where real people can display their real spirit for others looking to be inspired. These spaces can be our temples, where we meet and give offerings to our humanity and spirit. The music can sound like a combination of the freedom of jazz/noise, the rhythms of rock/electronic,

and the soul of folk/ambient. The paintings can use bright colors and dynamic shapes to stand out against the pastel-washed contemporary landscape. The literature will just escape realism, by implementing dream-like aspects to create a new, higher portrayal of reality.

We're talking about yoga, both of the body and the mind, to concentrate our efforts of thought to experience peace in our ground level consciousness. Finding this state with mind-altering substances is great, but what is more important is consistently cultivating mindfulness in everyday life, and taking refuge in our own teacher, teachings, and community. This also includes physical and nature activities like lifting weights and hiking, as these use the body more intensely, but can be equally as healing as sitting on a cushion.

We're talking about being kind to both friends and strangers alike, because we are all human, and deserve to be treated with respect. We should be recognized as not intimate parts of everyone's life, but real beings with lives of our own. Vegetarianism/veganism should be considered as an option, because we are animals just like the ones we eat; to say we are different from them is a violation of our ideals. This seems easy, but to truly cultivate a culture of kindness is a revolutionary act, especially towards ourselves. Indeed, may all beings be happy.

These are suggestions of what a New Alternative looks like. If you're already doing these things, then may you continue on the path towards the end of suffering with unwavering determination and devotion. As long as you are working with discipline for the betterment of all beings, and you're taking care of yourself, then it doesn't matter what label you use. What is important is that we are together on this planet, taking each day at a time for one and for all.