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The Teachings of Don Juan Matus

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The Teachings of Don Juan Matus

The Teachings of Juan Matus were described in detail by Carlos Castaneda — our contemporary from Los Angeles. His books known to us were published in the period from 1966 to 1987. We also know the book by D.C.Noel *Seeing Castaneda*, which contains interviews with him.

It must be noted right away that in his books Castaneda describes the period of his relationship with don Juan that lasted for about three decades. Over this period, it was not only Castaneda who advanced in his development but also don Juan himself. Reading Castaneda's books, one can see both the early and the later personal spiritual quest of don Juan, which was not free from mistakes. This is why the spiritual concept of the School must be evaluated not based on what don Juan spoke and did over these decades, but on what he attained by the end of his earthly life.

So, the future author of bestsellers about the School of Juan Matus, Carlos Castaneda was an undergraduate student of a university in USA, majoring in anthropology. He had to collect material for his thesis, so he went to Mexico to study the experience of Indians in using medicinal and psychotropic plants. Upon arrival to Mexico, he started searching for people competent in this issue. He was introduced to an Indian, whose name was Juan Matus and who agreed to provide Castaneda with the data he needed free of charge.

So, they got acquainted, and their joint work began. In due course, Castaneda discovered that don Juan possessed the knowledge not only about the qualities of plants but also about the ancient art of Toltec Indians' sorcery. Moreover, don Juan turned out to be a sorcerer himself. For the first time in his life, Castaneda came across phenomena that were absolutely beyond the scope of his usual secular and religious notions. For example, it turned out that lizards could speak with human voices, people could fly with their bodies, extract various things "out of nowhere", and so on. Castaneda found himself captivated by all these and interested as a scientist in this, new for him, area of knowledge.

Once don Juan invited Castaneda to a meeting where his associates were taking self-made psychedelics. Castaneda tried them as well. And then happened that which for the first time made don Juan to view Castaneda as a promising disciple.

Don Juan was a mystic, and he perceived the whole world in a mystical way. In particular, he attached great importance to so-called *signs* coming to him from the *separate reality*.

It happened that Castaneda, upon swallowing a few pills of peyote, started playing a strange game with a dog. They began to urinate on each other... It was the dog's behavior, absolutely unusual for a dog, that was of significance there. It was interpreted by don Juan as a sign from God (Who was called the Power in this School) indicating the significance of non-Indian Castaneda for the School. Since that moment, Castaneda became a member of the party (that is, the group) of don Juan's disciples.

And don Juan started to initiate him gradually into the secret knowledge of his School.

So what was the conceptual outlook of the School?

The universe consists of two “parallel” worlds; the first of them is called the *tonal* (that is, the world of material things) and the second — the *nagual* (the non-material world).

We communicate with the world of matter through the so-called *first attention*, i.e. that carried out through the organs of sense of the physical body.

To become able of cognizing the nagual, one has to develop the *second attention*, that is, clairvoyance.

There is also the *third attention*, by means of which one perceives the Creator and His Manifestation, which don Juan referred to as the *Fire*.

According to the mythology shared by don Juan’s predecessors, the world is governed by the universal divine Eagle. This was their concept of God. However fantastic it seems, it is monotheistic.

This Eagle feeds on souls that leave human bodies. But the Eagle also confers the chance on some people to “skip” past His beak after death and to achieve immortality, provided that during the life in the body they acquired skills necessary for this, developed themselves as consciousnesses to the required degree, and gained the required power.

This concept contained a frightening element, which was supposed to force a person to make efforts on self-perfection. But, like Jesus Christ, don Juan strongly opposed this attitude toward God, which was based on fear. He said that in order to approach God, one has to take the *path of heart* — that is the path of Love. It is interesting that don Juan came to this understanding independently of the influence of other spiritual traditions. He was not familiar with the Teachings of either Krishna or Jesus Christ, nor has he ever read Sufi or Taoist books. It is evident that he did not read the New Testament; otherwise he would quote it for sure.

A person resolved to achieve immortality, first, has to become a “hunter”. Not a hunter who kills game, but that for knowledge, who walks the *path of heart* — caring, loving both the Earth and beings that live on it.

Having mastered the stage of spiritual “hunter”, he can become a spiritual “warrior” — that is the one who “traces” Power (God), striving to “stalk” and cognize it.

Don Juan often taught Castaneda and his other apprentices when they walked in the desert and in the mountains — in most natural conditions of direct contact with the world that surrounds us.

For instance, once they caught a wild rabbit. Don Juan knew that the life of this rabbit on the Earth was coming to an end, according to its destiny. And he suggested that Castaneda killed this rabbit with his own hands. Castaneda exclaimed, “I cannot do this!” Don Juan objected, “But you have killed animals before!” Castaneda replied, “But I killed them with my rifle, from a distance, without having to see them die...”

Castaneda refused to commit killing; for the first time he thought about his ethic right to do this, about the suffering of the creature being killed.

However, the rabbit died by itself before Castaneda’s eyes, because the time of its stay on the Earth had really run out.

Once don Juan and Castaneda were walking down the street and saw a snail crossing the road. And don Juan used this example to explain the philosophy of the role of a person in the destinies of other creatures.

In such a way Castaneda, who at the beginning was very proud of his being a learned and civilized person, became increasingly convinced that true wisdom belongs not to him, but to this old Indian, a great spiritual Seeker and Teacher, who lived the life of a hunter and a warrior in harmony with the world around him.

... After his disciples had mastered the basics of ethics and wisdom, don Juan would proceed to teaching them psychoenergetical methods.

It should be noted here that only a very limited number of students were accepted into the don Juan's School. The criterion of selection was the level of development of the energy structures of the organism — the chakras. Of course, Indians did not use such words as chakras and dantyan. But they spoke of segments in the energy *cocoon* of man. And only disciples with developed chakras were considered to be promising and able to withstand on the path of a hunter and warrior.

So, those enrolled in the School had a big experience in psychoenergetical work acquired in their previous lives on the Earth. That is, they were ready for serious work from the psychoenergetical standpoint.

This allowed them to start psychoenergetical training not with cleansing and development of the meridians and chakras, but immediately with development of the main power structure of the organism — hara (the lower dantyan).

When the work with hara was completed, the next stage followed: the division of the *cocoon* into two parts: the upper and the lower *bubbles of perception*. It is from these *bubbles* that one perceives the tonal and the nagual, respectively.

Division of the *cocoon* into two *bubbles of perception* was regarded as an important transitional step toward further stages of psychoenergetical self-perfection. One had to master concentration of the consciousness in both “poles” of the *cocoon* divided in such a way.

Then, further work was performed in order to develop the lower *bubble of perception*. But it was started only after the consciousness had been properly refined, or, as it was called in the don Juan's School, after the luminosity of the *cocoon* had been cleansed.

That is, as in all other advanced spiritual Schools, the techniques aimed at the refinement of consciousness preceded the large-scale process of its *crystallization*. However, Castaneda does not describe the methods of “cleansing the luminosity” except the one, which can be viewed only as a joke, namely — inhaling the smoke of a fire.

Thanks to the refinement of consciousness and the work with the lower *bubble of perception*, disciples attained the state of Nirvana (though, they did not use this term). First, they mastered the static variation of Nirvana in Brahman, and after this — the dynamic one.

Once don Juan slapped Castaneda on the back with his hand (he often used this technique to shift the *assemblage point*, that is the zone of distribution of disciple's consciousness) — and Castaneda, prepared for this by preceding exercises, entered the static variation of Nirvana in one of the Brahmanic states. At that moment, he for the first time experienced

the state of deep peace; for the first time he perceived God; he perceived that God is Love indeed...

But suddenly he heard the voice of don Juan saying that this state was, though fine, — not that to which he had to aspire now. You have to advance further! Do not think that this is the limit of your abilities... With these words don Juan suggested to Castaneda, who had cognized the supreme bliss of Nirvana, not to “get attached” to this bliss, but to keep on going further... At first, Castaneda felt offended and angry with don Juan, but the latter was unbending: one must advance further!...

And what is further? It is the dynamic aspect of Nirvana when the *crystallized* consciousness acts in the subtle eons. In this state, one can touch with the consciousness any being within the Earth and around it; in order to do this, one needs just to have information about this being.

Then the disciples of Juan Matus mastered the state of Nirodhi, known in all developed Schools of buddhi yoga. Don Juan described this state also in endemic terms specific to his School. Disciples were taught that there exist energy waves, which constantly roll on all living creatures and from which we are shielded by our *cocoons*. And that one can use the power of these waves for transferring oneself with their help into unknown worlds. These unknown worlds are other spatial dimensions. To make it happen, one has to allow the *rolling force* to flood the *cocoon*. Then one turns into “nothing”; one’s “I” dies.

It is only after attaining the state of disappearance in Brahman that it became possible to cognize Ishvara — and to disappear in Him forever, having conquered death. That is, as don Juan understood, one must not “skip past the Eagle’s beak” but to merge into the universal God-Power.

It should be noted that with the help of the Fire it is possible to master dematerialization of the physical body. Juan Matus and his companions performed this.

... So, we have considered the principal stages of work in the buddhi yoga School of Juan Matus. They turn out to be common for all Schools of buddhi yoga, regardless of the location of these Schools on the Earth’s surface or whether they are connected with each other or not, and regardless the languages spoken in these Schools and the terms used in them. It is so due to the fact that God guides the people who devoted their lives to Him according to the same laws of spiritual development.

And now, let us consider in more detail the specific methods of work in the School of Juan Matus, which have been described by Castaneda and which we can apply to ourselves.

They can be divided into two groups: preliminary and basic ones.

The first of the preliminary methods is the *recapitulation*. In essence, this is the same as repentance, which is one of the major practices in all major religions. Disciples had to recall — mainly in seclusion that lasted for several days — all the mistakes they had made in their lives, and to re-live those situations anew, this time correctly. So that disciples be more “interested” in this very hard work, they were told that during *recapitulation* they regain the energy wasted as a result of their incorrect emotional reactions. The quality of the penitential work did not deteriorate because of this trick, since its major goal — to learn to react in the ethically correct way and to avoid sinning — was achieved with due efforts.

They also had to destroy the feeling of self-importance and self-pity — since these qualities result in tremendous waste of one's personal energy. Indeed, if one views oneself very important and someone else encroaches on this importance with their disrespectful attitude, one reacts with emotional outburst of resentment, anger, and so forth. In this process, the energy of the organism is intensively wasted.

Here is an interesting fact of the Castaneda's biography: when his study in don Juan's School came to an end, he and his closest companion, la Gorda — though Castaneda became a millionaire thanks to his books and could live a life free from material concerns — in spite of this, he and la Gorda got hired under different names as servants to a rich man and suffered humiliations from rudeness and treachery of other servants. They resorted to this in order to destroy completely the feeling of self-importance, to erase from their memories their own "personal history"— so that to attain humility. Since everything that happens to the warrior on the physical plane, as Castaneda put it, *does not matter*; the only thing that matters is the state of the consciousness.

And it is of no importance indeed, compared to the Supreme Goal! That which is of principal importance is the ability to be naught, the ability not to *defend* yourself when someone is unjust to you, but to *be protected* — so taught don Juan. And the state of being protected comes only when "there is no myself", when there is only God.

One of the most essential preparatory elements of the work in the School of Juan Matus was "sweeping of the tonal", which is called observance of aparigraha in the ethics of Hindu yoga.

We have already mentioned wise don Juan's ability to explain the most complicated philosophical matters in an easy to understand manner using natural examples from the everyday life. He did it, for example, when explaining this principle to his disciples.

Once don Juan assembled the disciples, took a sack and put into it a radio, a tape recorder, and several other things that he found in the house of one of the disciples. Then he gave this sack to one disciple to carry, gave a table to another disciple to carry, and took them to the mountains. In the middle of a valley, he told them to put the table down and emptied the contents of the sack onto it. Then he took the disciples at some distance from the table and asked them what they see?

They told that they see a radio ... and so on and so forth...

Then don Juan came to the table and whisked everything off it. "Take another look and tell me what do you see now?", he said. Only then the disciples understood don Juan: he wanted them to see not only the things on the table, but the table itself and more — the space around the table. But the things on the table prevented disciples from seeing this by drawing the attention to themselves.

In this way don Juan demonstrated to his disciples that in order to cognize the nagual, and then — God, one has to cleanse the tonal around oneself.

Perhaps, it is appropriate to recall the example of observance of the same principle in the history of Christianity: monks had in their cells, beside icons and a few books, a coffin, in which they slept — so that to con-

stantly remember of the inevitable death, which urges those who remember about it to intensify their spiritual efforts.

Also, don Juan taught to destroy stiff patterns of material life, as for instance, strict observance of one's routines. For what purpose? In order to attain freedom. The destruction of unreasonable patterns of behavior, thinking, and reacting, instilled in us in the process of our upbringing, must result in the "loss of the human form", that is, in attaining the state when we learn to act not according to our reflexes or because it is customary to act so, but in accordance with advisability. The "loss of the human form" is not a short-term mechanic action, as some disciples of don Juan fantasized, but a prolonged process, accompanying the man's gradual approaching God. This process comes to an end when the seeker learns to look at all situations with the eyes of the Creator.

But attaining the "loss of the human form" does not mean that man starts to behave "not like everyone else" in the society, because, first, inevitable conflicts with other people would prevent him from fulfilling his main duty. Second, the conduct, which is "defiant" by form, in many cases turns out to be a breach of the basic laws of objective ethics — the non-harming of other living beings. This is why disciples were prescribed to observe conventional norms of behavior, sometimes secretly ridiculing them and resorting to the so-called "controlled folly".

To illustrate this, don Juan once astounded Castaneda by taking off his usual Indian garment and putting on an immaculate modern suit for his trip to the town!

In connection with this, don Juan also taught his disciples to talk to people in the language people can understand. For example, once he and Castaneda were sitting on a bench near a church and saw how two not very old ladies came out from the church and hesitate about descending a few steps. Then don Juan came and helped them to go down, and advised them that if they fall, they should not move until the doctor arrives. The ladies were sincerely grateful to him for this advice.

The next very important methodical technique is remembering about one's own death.

The majority of people today are accustomed to banishing the thought of their death. And even when we come across the facts of other people passing away, we never try to imagine ourselves in their place. We assure ourselves that even if this is going to happen to us, it is a very long time ahead.

If each of us asks oneself now: "When will I die?" — the dates will be very distant, though theoretically everyone knows that people die at any age.

So, don Juan suggested that we imagine that our personified death is always with us. And if one looks quickly back over the left shoulder, then it is possible to catch a glimpse of the death. "At that moment, death is sitting next to you on the same mat, waiting for your mistake", he said to Castaneda. And no one is aware of the moment when he or she is going to die; this is why we should not have any unfinished works.

Let me cite these remarkable words of don Juan, for it is one of his best theoretical developments:

“... How can anyone feel so important when we know that death is stalking us?

“... The thing to do when you are impatient is turn to your left and ask advice from your death. An immense amount of pettiness is dropped if your death makes a gesture to you, or if you catch a glimpse of it, or if you just have the feeling that your companion is there watching you.

“Death is a wise adviser that we have... One... has to ask death’s advice and drop the cursed pettiness that belongs to men that live their lives as if death will never tap them!

“If you do not think of your death, all your life will be just personal chaos!

“(The warrior) knows his death is stalking him and won’t give him time to cling to anything... And thus with an awareness of his death,... and with the power of his decisions a warrior sets his life in a strategic manner... and what he chooses is always strategically the best; and so he performs everything he has to with gusto and lusty efficiency!

“Life for a warrior is an exercise in strategy.

“Without the awareness of death everything is ordinary, trivial. It is only because death is stalking us that the world is an unfathomable mystery.

“You have little time and no time for crap. A wonderful state! The best of us always comes out when we are against the wall, when we feel the sword dangling overhead. ...I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Another important aspect of the work with disciples was mastering the *mental pause* or, in other words, stoppage of “inner dialogue” (the first term is preferable because besides “inner dialogues” there are also “inner monologues”).

This is an absolutely necessary prerequisite for mastering the nagual, because the nagual is mastered by means of meditation, and meditation, as Rajneesh put it nicely, is the state of *non-mind*. That is, to learn to immerse the consciousness into the nagual, one has to learn to stop, to switch off the mind.

For the purpose of attaining the *mental pause*, don Juan used the following techniques:

1. Psychedelics. It should be noted, however, that don Juan used this method only in the very beginning of their joint work, and later on he gave it up. Second, Castaneda complained afterwards that though he was immensely grateful to don Juan for everything that he had done for him, but nonetheless his (Castaneda’s) liver was still marked with scars. Hence, it is absolutely unadvisable to follow this example as to using psychedelics. All the more, there is other, far more effective and harmless means of mastering the *mental pause* at our disposal.

2. “Gazing”. One had to look at some object for a long time and in fixed manner, for example, at a ravine, flowing water, and so on. As a result, the *first attention* got exhausted and switched off leaving room for the *second attention*.

3. Prolonged suspension of one’s body on devices like a swing.

The training mentioned above resulted in attaining the state that in Chinese yoga is called *wu-wei* — *non-doing*, that is non-doing on the physical plane, when the mind (manas) stops, and we get the opportunity

for directed meditation, for activity of the buddhi. Manas and buddhi are in reciprocal relations: they cannot act simultaneously; at any point in time only one of them operates. (That does not mean that a person without a body or in the state of meditation loses reason. No. A developed *crystallized* consciousness thinks. But it thinks in another way, not in the “earthly” manner).

Another unique technique that was developed in this School by don Juan’s predecessors is intentional interaction with people-tyrants. The technique was employed for attainment of “impeccability of warrior”, that is the ability to follow ethical principles and adhere to strategy of objectively valid behavior in situations of urgency. Some time in the past don Juan himself was sent by his teacher to a fierce foreman-tyrant for such training. In Mexico such people were considered very rare, and to find one was regarded a big luck by warriors.

... Now let us list the methods of psychoenergetical work used in the don Juan’s School:

1. Cleansing of the inner luminosity (i.e. the refinement of consciousness).

2. Use of *places of power* — energetically significant zones favorable for mastering particular meditations.

3. *Dreaming* given much attention in the work of the School. What is it? Many people, having read Castaneda’s books, try to use their night sleep for this purpose without success. No, this is not the way it must be done. *Dreaming* is a synonym of the word *meditation*. Due to being unfamiliar with the terms commonly accepted in other countries, Central American Indians had to find their own words to denote techniques, phenomena, and objects of spiritual practice. This is how the term *dreaming* was born, since meditative images sometimes really bear similarity to the images one sees in dreams.

Special training in *dreaming* allowed the disciples, in the state of being detached from the body, to run on the walls, to climb along energy beams (the *lines of the world*), and so on.

4. Learning to act in extreme magic situations, created by the preceptor on purpose. For this purpose, ethical vices of disciples were used. For example, when a disciple still had an inclination toward selfish attacks on other people, he was suggested to take part in a deliberately losing magic fight, which turned out beneficial for all its participants.

5. The technique of shifting the *assemblage point* as a result of energetic impact of the preceptor (this was called the *nagual’s blow*; the term *nagual* had another meaning in this case: a leader who has mastered the nagual and is capable of acting in it and from it).

6. Practice of meditative leveling-off of the energetic *emanations* inside the *cocoon* in accordance with outer *emanations* of the highest spatial dimensions.

7. Work with hara aimed at development of the power aspect.

8. Use of *allies* (that is, spirits). This was done in two variants.

The first one — “taming” of spirits who had to, according to the plan, become assistants and protectors of the sorcerer. Both don Juan and his friend Genaro had such *allies* in the beginning of their spiritual quest.

But everyone must be warned that this is an erroneous and dangerous practice, which we in no way should try imitating. By the way, both don Juan and Genaro gave up this practice later on.

The other variant of the work with *allies* consisted in hunting them. No wonder that such tendency was invented by Indians who lived in a constant contact with wildlife. So, disciples were told that at some moment they were sure to come across some *ally* in the male human form who would challenge them to a combat. One can lose in this combat, giving way to fear, or one can win. In the latter case, the warrior acquires the power of that spirit.

And disciples prepared themselves for such a fight, which could take place any moment, by developing alertness (readiness) and other necessary qualities of warriors.

On the basis of this educational game, disciples performed, in particular, the work on development the lower *bubble of perception*.

... To sum up the above said, let us consider the basic aspects of these Teachings, which are exceptionally rich of most valuable theoretical and practical elements.

Don Juan pointed out three directions in the Teachings: a) the art of stalking, b) the art of intent, and c) the art of consciousness.

In the history of this Indian spiritual tradition, the art of stalking initially consisted in the ability to sneak, to stalk unnoticed among the people who do not understand you (that is, people of lower stages of psychogenesis) — and to achieve your Goal.

But later on, owing, in particular, to personal contribution of don Juan, this trend was significantly expanded and included also the stalking of one's own vices. We have discussed this enough. Let me just quote one brilliant formula, given by don Juan: God (in his parlance, Power) provides according to our impeccability. That is, God gives us an opportunity to approach Him, to immerse into increasing happiness of Mergence with Him — as we perfect ourselves ethically.

The second section — the art of intent. *Intent*, in this context, is the same as *aspiration* to the Supreme Goal. A true warrior, in don Juan's meaning of this word, is a person with the correctly developed *intent*.

The lifestyle of the warrior brought him or her to the "totality" of himself/herself, that is to the state of being "non-split" regarding the major and the minor things, the "integrity" in devoting oneself only to the Supreme Goal.

The third aspect is the art of consciousness — it is what buddhi yoga is.

So, we could see once again, that God leads all people who have attained a certain level of maturity in their psychogenesis, irrespective of the country and religious culture they live in, using the common methodological pattern. We should study these principles and trends and apply them to ourselves and to the people who follow us.

Appendix: Selected Excerpts from the Works of Carlos Castaneda¹

The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge

When man starts to learn, he is never clear about his objectives. His purpose is faulty; his intent is vague. He hopes for rewards that will never materialize, for he knows nothing of the hardships of learning.

He slowly begins to learn — bit by bit at first, then in big chunks... What he learns is never what he pictured, or imagined, and so he begins to be afraid. Learning is never what one expects... His purpose becomes a battlefield. And thus he has tumbled upon the first of his natural enemies: fear... And if the man, terrified in its presence, runs away, his enemy will have put an end to his quest...

He must be fully afraid, and yet he must not stop. And a moment will come when his first enemy retreats. Man begins to feel sure of himself... Once man has vanquished fear, he is free from it for the rest of his life, because, instead of fear, he has acquired clarity — a clarity of mind which erases fear.

By then man knows his desires; he knows how to satisfy those desires. He can anticipate the new steps of learning, and a sharp clarity surrounds everything. Man feels that nothing is concealed. And thus he has encountered his second enemy.

That clarity of mind, which is so hard to obtain, dispels fear, but also blinds. It forces man never to doubt himself... If man yields to this make-believe power, he has succumbed to his second enemy and will fumble with learning... He may turn into a buoyant warrior, or a clown..., but he will no longer learn, or yearn for, anything.

(If he defeats this enemy,) he will know at this point that the power he has been pursuing for so long is finally his. His wish is the rule. He sees all that is around him. But he has also come across his third enemy — power. Man at this stage hardly notices his third enemy closing in on him. And suddenly, without knowing, he will certainly have lost the battle. His enemy will have turned him into a cruel, capricious man.

The man who is defeated by power dies without really knowing how to handle it. Power is only a burden upon his fate.

He has to defy it, deliberately. He has to come to realize the power he has seemingly conquered is in reality never his. If he can see that clarity and power, without his control over himself, are worse than mistakes, he

¹ A back translation from unpublished Russian translations of V. Maximov.

will know then when and how to use his power. And thus he will have defeated his third enemy.

(The fourth enemy is) — old age! It attacks almost without warning. This enemy is the cruelest of all. The one he won't be able to defeat completely, but only fight away. This is the time when he has an unyielding desire to rest. If he gives in totally to his desire to lie down and forget, if he soothes himself in tiredness, he will have lost his last round, and his enemy will cut him down into a feeble old creature. His desire to retreat will overrule all his clarity, his power, and his knowledge. But if the man sloughs off his tiredness, and lives his fate through, he can then be called a man of knowledge, if only for the brief moment when he succeeds in fighting off his last, invincible enemy. That moment of clarity, power, and knowledge is enough.

A Separate Reality. *Further Conversations with Don Juan*

Power rests on the kind of knowledge one holds. What is the sense knowing things that are useless?

I am never angry at anybody! No human being can do anything important enough for that. You get angry at people when you feel their acts are important. I don't feel that way any longer.

(The path without heart)² entices men and gives them a sense of power; it makes them feel they can do things that no ordinary man can. But that is its trap. And, the next thing, the path without heart will turn against men and destroy them.

One must live strong, calm life.

To come into contact with allies³ is dangerous, because they can provoke the worst in man.

The apprenticeship can be long and hard, because one has to reduce to a minimum all that is unnecessary in one's life.

Feeling important makes one heavy, clumsy, and vain. To become a man of knowledge, one needs to be light and fluid.

... I go on living, because I have tempered my will throughout my life until it's neat and wholesome. And now it doesn't matter to me that nothing matters. Once man learns to see⁴, he finds himself alone in the world with nothing but folly.

I don't know what to change in the people around and for what purpose. Probably some day you will be able to see people from other plane and understand that there is no way to change anything in them⁵.

We need to look with our eyes to laugh. Because only when we look at the things, we can catch their funny edge. On the other hand, when we see⁶, everything is so equal that nothing is funny. Perhaps, there are men

² Without love.

³ With spirits.

⁴ Gains clairvoyance.

⁵ To change quickly.

⁶ With clairvoyance, i.e. with the "eyes" of the consciousness.

of knowledge who never laugh, but I know no one of them. Those I know see, but also they look and laugh. I don't like to be sad, so when I observe something which would make me sad, I simply shift my sight and see instead of looking at it. But when I come across something funny, I look at it and laugh. I am happy, because I choose to look at things that make me happy, and then my eyes catch their funny edge, and I laugh.

One must always choose the path with heart in order to be at one's best, perhaps so one can always laugh.

A man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, nor by thinking about what he will think when he has finished acting. A man of knowledge chooses a path with heart and follows it; and then he looks and rejoices and laughs; and then he sees and knows. He knows that his life will be over altogether too soon. A man of knowledge has no honor, no dignity, no family, no name, no country, but only life to be lived, and under these circumstances his only tie to people is his controlled folly. Thus a man of knowledge endeavors, and sweats, and puffs, and if one looks at him, he is just like any ordinary man, except that the folly of his life is under control. Whether his acts were good or bad, or worked or didn't, is in no way part of his concern.

It is the same to be a winner or to be defeated.

You're too concerned with liking people or with being liked yourself. A man of knowledge likes, that's all. He likes whatever or whoever he wants, but he uses his controlled folly to be unconcerned about it. This is in opposite to what you are doing now. To like people and be liked by them is far from all that man can do.

Our lot as men is to learn. And one must go to knowledge as one goes to war; with respect, aware that one is going to war, and with absolute confidence in oneself. Put your trust in yourself, not in me.

In the life of a man of knowledge, everything is filled to the brim. In order to become a man of knowledge, one must be a warrior, not a whimpering child.

If you do not think of your death, all your life will be just personal chaos.

People win or suffer defeat, and consequently they became persecutors or victims.

While (someone) thinks that he was a victim, his life is a hell.

That which makes us unhappy is our ("earthly") desires.

The results of using the will are astounding. Perhaps the first thing that one should do is to know that one can develop the will... Will is something very clear and powerful which can direct our acts. Will is something man uses, for instance, to win a battle which he, by all calculations, should lose.

Courage is something else. Men of courage are dependable men, noble men perennially surrounded by people who flock around them and admire them; yet very few men of courage have will. Usually they are fearless men who are given to performing daring common-sense acts; most of the time a courageous man is also fearsome. Will, on the other hand, has to do with astonishing feats that defy our common sense. Will is a power. Will is what can make you succeed when your thoughts tell you that you're defeated. Will is what makes you invulnerable. Will is what

allows a sorcerer to go through a wall, space, to the Moon, if he desires. Will is a force which is the true link between men and the world. What you call will is character and strong disposition. What a sorcerer calls will is a force that comes from within and attaches itself to the world out there. It comes from within through the abdomen...

The frightening nature of knowledge leaves one no alternative but to become a warrior. By the time knowledge becomes a frightening affair, the man also realizes that death is the irreplaceable partner that sits next to him on the mat. Every bit of knowledge that becomes power has death as its central force. Death lends the ultimate touch, and whatever is touched by death indeed becomes power.

Man who follows the paths of sorcery is confronted with imminent annihilation every turn of the way, and unavoidably he becomes keenly aware of his death. Without the awareness of death he would be only an ordinary man involved in ordinary acts. He would lack the necessary potency, the necessary concentration that transforms one's ordinary time on the Earth into magical power.

Thus to be a warrior, man has to be, first of all, and rightfully so, keenly aware of his own death. But to be concerned with death would force any one of us to focus on the self, and that would be debilitating. So, the next thing one needs to be a warrior is detachment. The idea of imminent death, instead of becoming an obsession, becomes an indifference. Now you must detach yourself from everything... Only the idea of death makes man sufficiently detached...

And thus with an awareness of his death, with his detachment, and with the power of his decisions a warrior sets his life in a strategical manner. The knowledge of his death guides him and makes him detached and silently lusty; the power of his final decisions makes him able to choose without regrets, and what he chooses is always strategically the best; and so he performs everything he has to with gusto and lusty efficiency.

When man behaves in such a manner, one may rightfully say that he is a warrior and has acquired patience.

His death sits with him on his mat; they are friends. His death advises him, in mysterious ways, how to choose, how to live strategically. And the warrior waits. I would say that the warrior learns without any hurry, because he knows he is waiting for his will. And one day he succeeds in performing something ordinarily quite impossible to accomplish. He may not even notice his extraordinary deed. But as he keeps on performing impossible acts, or as impossible things keep on happening to him, he becomes aware that a sort of power is emerging.

We are men and our lot is to learn and to be hurled into inconceivable new worlds.

Seeing is for impeccable men. Temper your spirit now, become a warrior, learn to see, and then you'll know that there is no end to the new worlds for our vision.

Life for a warrior is an exercise in strategy.

A warrior... never stands on the road waiting to be clobbered. Thus he cuts to a minimum his chances of the unforeseen. What you call accidents are, most of the time, very easy to avoid, except for fools who are living carelessly.

A warrior is never idle and never in a hurry.

... Death has two stages. The first is a blackout. But it is at the second stage that one really meets with death; it is a brief moment, after the first blackout, when we find that we are somehow ourselves again.

I have heard you say time and time again that you are always prepared to die. I don't regard that feeling as necessary. I think it is a useless indulgence. A warrior should be prepared only to battle.

I have also heard you say that your parents injured your spirit. I think the spirit of man is something that can be injured very easily, although not by the same acts you yourself call injurious. I believe that your parents did injure you by making you indulgent and soft and given to dwelling.

The spirit of a warrior is not geared to indulging and complaining, nor is it geared to winning or losing. The spirit of a warrior is geared only to struggle, and every struggle is a warrior's last battle on the Earth. Thus the outcome matters very little to him. In his last battle on the Earth a warrior lets his spirit flow free and clear. And as he wages his battle, knowing that his will is impeccable, a warrior laughs and laughs.

A warrior treats the world as an endless mystery and what people do as an endless folly.

... You think and talk too much. You must stop talking to yourself. In fact we maintain our world with our internal talk. Whenever we finish talking to ourselves the world is always as it should be. First of all, you must use your ears to take some of the burden from your eyes. We have been using our eyes to judge the world since the time we were born. We talk to others and to ourselves mainly about what we see. A warrior is aware of that and listens to the world. He listens to the sounds of the world. He is aware that the world will change as soon as he stops talking to himself and he must be prepared for that monumental jolt.

The world is such-and-such or so-and-so only because we tell ourselves that that is the way it is. If we stop telling ourselves that the world is so-and-so, the world will stop being so-and-so.

The Journey to Ixtlan.

The Final Lessons of Don Juan

To assume the responsibility of one's decisions means that one is ready to die for them.

What injures the spirit is having someone always on your back, beating you, telling you what to do and what not to do.

... I have no personal history. One day I found out that it is no longer necessary for me and, like drinking, I dropped it. If you have no personal history, no explanations are needed; nobody is angry or disillusioned with your acts. And above all no one pins you down with their thoughts.

It is best to erase all personal history, because this makes us free from the encumbering thoughts of other people.

... You take yourself too seriously. You are too damn important in your own mind. That must be changed! You're so damn important that you can

afford to leave if things don't go your way. You think that shows you "have character". That's nonsense! You're weak and conceited!

Self-importance is another thing that must be dropped, just like personal history.

How can anyone feel so important when we know that death is stalking us?

... The thing to do when you're impatient is to turn to your left and ask advice from your death. An immense amount of pettiness is dropped if your death makes a gesture to you, or if you catch a glimpse of it, or if you just have the feeling that your companion is there watching you. Death is ... a wise adviser that we have. Whenever you feel, as you always do, that everything is going wrong and you're about to be annihilated, turn to your death and ask if that is so. Your death will tell you that you're wrong; that nothing really matters outside its touch. (You) have to ask death's advice and drop the cursed pettiness that belongs to men that live their lives as if death will never tap them.

... When man decides to do something, he must go all the way, but he must take responsibility for what he does. No matter what he does, he must know first why he is doing it, and then he must proceed with his actions without having doubts or remorse about them.

Look at me, I have no doubts or remorse. Everything I do is my decision and my responsibility. Death is stalking me. Therefore, I have no room for doubts or remorse. If I have to die as a result of taking you for a walk, then I must die.

To assume the responsibility for one's decisions means that one is ready to die for them.

It doesn't matter what the decision is. Nothing could be more or less serious than anything else. Don't you see? In a world where death is the hunter there are no small or big decisions. There are only decisions that we make in the face of our inevitable death.

A warrior assumes responsibility for his acts, for the most trivial of his acts.

The world of precise acts and decisions is infinitely more effective than the blundering idiocy that you called "my life".

My interest has been to convince you that you must assume responsibility for being here, in this marvelous world, in this marvelous desert, in this marvelous time. I want to convince you that you must learn to make every act count, since you are going to be here for only a short while, in fact, too short for witnessing all the marvels of it.

There is one simple thing wrong with you — you think you have plenty of time. You think your life is going to last forever.

If you don't think your life is going to last forever, what are you waiting for? Why the hesitation to change? You don't have time for this display, you fool. This, whatever you're doing now, may be your last act on the Earth. It may very well be your last battle. If this were your last battle on the Earth, I would say that you are an idiot. You are wasting your last act on the Earth in some stupid mood! You have no time, my friend, no time! None of us have time! Don't just agree with me. Act upon it.

Happiness is to act with the full knowledge that there is no time; therefore, the acts have a peculiar power. Acts have power, especially when the person acting knows that those acts are his last battle.

There is a strange all-consuming happiness in acting with the full knowledge that whatever one is doing may very well be one's last act on the Earth. I recommend that you reconsider your life and bring your acts into that light. You don't have time, my friend! That is the misfortune of human beings. None of us have sufficient time. Your continuity just makes you a timid man. Your acts cannot possibly have the flair, the power, the compelling force of the acts performed by man who knows that he is fighting his last battle on the Earth. In other words, your continuity does not make you happy or powerful. Focus your attention on the link between you and your death, without remorse or sadness or worrying. Focus your attention on the fact you don't have time and let your acts flow accordingly. Let each of your acts be your last battle on the Earth! Only under those conditions will your acts have their rightful power. Otherwise, they will be, for as long as you live, the acts of a timid man.

... You have to learn how to make yourself accessible to Power⁷.

... Any warrior could become a man of knowledge. As I told you, a warrior is an impeccable hunter who hunts Power. If he succeeds in his hunting, he can become a man of knowledge.

A warrior is guided by his unbending purpose and can fend off anything. No rat, or snake, or mountain lion could bother him.

Self-pity doesn't jibe with power.

A warrior could be injured, but not offended. For a warrior there is nothing offensive about the acts of people as long as he himself is acting within the proper mood.

The other night you were not offended by the lion. The fact that it chased us did not anger you. I did not hear you cursing it, nor did I hear you say that he had no right to follow us. It could have been a cruel and malicious lion for all you know.

To achieve the mood of a warrior is not a simple matter. To regard the lion and the water rats and our fellow men as equals is a magnificent act of the warrior's spirit. It takes power to do that.

You are going in search of power, and everything you do counts.

I'm as young as I want to be. This again is a matter of personal power. If you store power, your body can perform unbelievable feats. On the other hand, if you dissipate power, you'll be a fat old man in no time at all.

There are worlds upon worlds, right here in front of us.

Death is always waiting, and when the warrior's power wanes, death simply taps him. Thus, to venture into the unknown without any power is stupid. One will only find death.

The world is a mystery. This, what you're looking at, is not all there is to it. There is much more in the world, so much more, in fact, that it is endless. So when you're trying to figure it out, all you're really doing is trying to make the world familiar. You and I are right here, in the world that you call real, simply because we both know it. You don't know the world of Power, therefore you cannot make it into a familiar scene.

⁷ In this context — to God.

A warrior is a hunter of power. I am teaching you how to hunt and store it.

Power does not belong to anyone. Some of us may gather it and then it could be given directly to someone else. You see, the key to stored power is that it can be used only to help someone else store power... But when it came to giving it directly to another person, it was useless unless that person utilized it for his own search of personal power.

A warrior lives his life strategically. He would attend a party or a reunion like that only if his strategy calls for it. That means, of course, that he would be in total control and would perform all the acts that he deems necessary.

... Nothing is gained by forcing.

... If you want to survive you must be crystal clear and deadly sure of yourself.

Tales of Power

A warrior takes his lot, whatever it may be, and accepts it in ultimate humbleness. The humbleness of a warrior is not the humbleness of a beggar. The warrior lowers his head to no one, but at the same time, he doesn't permit anyone to lower his head to him. The beggar, on the other hand, falls to his knees at the drop of a hat and scrapes the floor to anyone he deems to be higher; but at the same time, he demands that someone lower than him scrape the floor for him.

(A man of knowledge sees and takes measures to avoid danger). If there is something dangerous for him, his seeing will let him know. If his seeing cannot help, then it is his fate that no one can escape.

... The body must be perfection before the will becomes a functioning unit.

We are fluid, luminous beings made out of fibers...

We can see death whirling around a person, setting its hooks deeper and deeper into his luminous fibers. We can see the luminous strings losing their tautness and vanishing one by one.

... When you come, you should come prepared to die. If you come here ready to die, there shouldn't be any pitfalls, or any unwelcome surprises, or any unnecessary acts.

The warrior's way is harmony between actions and decisions.

When an ordinary man is ready, power provides him with a teacher.

A warrior learns to tune his will. And he wants to direct it to a pinpoint, to focus it wherever he wants, as if his will, which comes from the midsection of his body, is one single luminous fiber, a fiber that he can direct at any conceivable place. That fiber is the road to the nagual⁸.

... Do not focusing your attention on past events. We may touch on them, but only in reference.

⁸ The non-material worlds. The other meanings of this word are the developed and able consciousness of a man; also a leader of a group who possesses such a consciousness.

... The self-confidence of a warrior is not the self-confidence of the average man. The average man seeks certainty in the eyes of the onlooker and calls that self-confidence. The warrior seeks impeccability in his own eyes and calls that humbleness. The average man is hooked to his fellow men, while the warrior is hooked only to himself. Maybe you are hunting for rainbows. You're after the self-confidence of the average man, when you should be after the humbleness of a warrior. The difference between the two is remarkable. Self-confidence of a warrior entails knowing something for sure; humbleness entails being impeccable in one's actions and feelings.

... You must push yourself beyond your limits, all the time.

Act consistently and without reservations.

Do you know that at this very moment you are surrounded by eternity? And do you know that you can use that eternity, if you so desire? Do you know that you can extend yourself forever in any of the directions? Do you know that one moment you can turn into eternity? This is not a riddle, it's a fact. But only if you mount that moment and use it to take the totality of yourself forever in any direction.

You don't have enough personal power to utilize my revelation. Yet if you did have enough power, my words alone would serve as the means for you to round up the totality of yourself and to get the crucial part of it out of the boundaries in which it is contained.

... We are luminous beings. And for a luminous being only personal power matters.

To change our idea of the world is the crux of sorcery⁹. Stopping of the internal dialogue is the only way to accomplish it. It should be noted, however, that such a change cannot be forced.

A warrior takes his lot, whatever it may be, and accepts it in ultimate humbleness. He accepts in humbleness what he is, not as grounds for regret, but as a living challenge.

... Any thought that one holds in mind in a state of silence is properly a command, since there are no other thoughts to compete with it.

... The world doesn't yield to us directly; the description of the world stands in between.

... A warrior is in the hands of Power, and his only freedom is to choose an impeccable life.

A warrior is always ready. To be a warrior is not a simple matter of wishing to be one. It is rather an endless struggle that will go on to the very last moment of our lives. Nobody is born a warrior, in exactly the same way that nobody is born a reasonable being. We make ourselves into one or the other.

There is no flaw in the warrior's way. Follow it and nobody can criticize your deeds anymore.

... The body must be perfection before the will becomes a functioning unit.

... The crux of sorcery is the internal dialogue; it is the key to everything. When a warrior learns to stop it, everything becomes possible; the most farfetched schemes become attainable.

⁹ By the word *sorcery* don Juan denoted work with the consciousness on the stage of buddhi yoga.

(But) as long as you think that you are a solid body you cannot conceive what I am talking about.

We are consciousnesses; we are not objects; we have no solidity. We are boundless. The world of objects and solidity is a way of making our passage on the Earth convenient. It is — only a description that we create in order that it helps us. ... We forget that the description is only a description and thus we entrap the totality of ourselves in a vicious circle from which we rarely emerge in our lifetime.

... You would be amazed at how well you can act when you are against the wall.

Only as a warrior can one withstand the path of knowledge. A warrior cannot complain about, or regret, anything. His life is an endless challenge, and challenges cannot possibly be good or bad. Challenges are simply challenges. The basic difference between an ordinary man and a warrior is that a warrior takes everything as a challenge, while an ordinary man takes everything either as a blessing or as a curse.

A warrior must be fluid and must shift harmoniously with the world around him — whether it is the world of reason, or the world of will.

Without the awareness of death everything is ordinary, trivial. It is only because death is stalking us that the world is an unfathomable mystery.

It is not enough just to want to walk the path of knowledge; your efforts have to be impeccable to make you worthy of this knowledge.

... Life can be merciless with you if you are careless with your tonal¹⁰.

The sorrowful fact is that all of us have learned to perfection how to make our tonal weak.

To make yourself so miserable you had to work very hard. But you haven't understood that also you can work hard in order to make yourself whole and strong.

The tonal begins at birth and ends at death, but the nagual never ends. The nagual has no limit. The nagual is where Power hovers.

“Creativity is this,” he said and brought his hand with a cupped palm to the level of my eyes. It took me an incredibly long time to focus my eyes on his hand. I felt that a transparent membrane was holding my whole body in a fixed position and that I had to break it in order to place my sight on his hand. I struggled until beads of perspiration ran into my eyes. Finally I heard or felt a pop and my eyes and head jerked free. On his right palm there was the most curious rodent I had ever seen. “Touch it,” don Juan said softly. I automatically obeyed him and ran my finger on its soft back. Don Juan brought his hand closer to my eyes, and then I noticed something that threw me into nervous spasms. The squirrel had eyeglasses and big teeth. The rodent started to grow in don Juan's palm, until eventually it got so huge that disappeared...

... One of the acts of a warrior is never to let anything affect him. The control of a warrior has to be impeccable.

You have little time and no time for the crap. A wonderful state! I would say that the best of us always comes out when we are against the wall, when we feel the sword dangling overhead. Personally, I wouldn't have it any other way.

¹⁰ The tonal is the body plus manas. The other meaning of this word is the world of solid matter.

... During our conversations, I spoke addressing your tonal and your nagual. It is in this way that one should teach. First one has to talk to the tonal, because it is the tonal that has to relinquish control. But it has to do it gladly. In other words, the tonal is made to give up unnecessary things like self-importance and indulging, which only plunge it into boredom. The whole trouble is that the tonal clings to those things when it should be glad to rid itself of that crap. The task then is to convince the tonal to become free and fluid. That's what a sorcerer needs before anything else, a strong, free tonal.

Because of its inherent weakness the tonal is easily destroyed, and thus one of the balancing arts of the warrior is to make the nagual emerge in order to prop up the tonal. I say it is an art, because sorcerers know that only by boosting the tonal can the nagual emerge. That boosting is called personal power.

Whenever you are in the world of the tonal, you should be an impeccable tonal; no time for irrational crap! But whenever you are in the world of the nagual, you should also be impeccable; no time for rational crap! For the warrior, intent is the gate in between. It closes completely behind him when he goes either way.

If there are too many unnecessary items on your island, you won't be able to sustain the encounter with the nagual. You can die. No one is capable of surviving a deliberate encounter with the nagual without a long training. It takes years to prepare the tonal for such an encounter. A warrior must be taught to be impeccable and thoroughly empty before he could even conceive witnessing the nagual.

A warrior spends years sweeping his island until a moment when he could, in a manner of speaking, sneak off it

For the nagual, there is no land, or air, or water. Therefore, the nagual glides, or flies, or does anything it can do in the time of the nagual, which is not related at all to the time of the tonal. These two things do not intersect.

... A warrior is, let's say, a prisoner of Power; a prisoner who has one free choice: the choice to act either like an impeccable warrior, or to act like an ass. In the final analysis, perhaps the warrior is not a prisoner, but a slave of Power, because that choice is no longer a choice for him.

A warrior cannot be helpless, or bewildered or frightened, not under any circumstances. For a warrior there is time only for his impeccability; everything else drains his power, impeccability replenishes it.

Impeccability is to do your best in whatever you're engaged in.

When you feel and act like an immortal being that has all the time in the world, you are not impeccable; at those times you should turn, look around, and then you will realize that your feeling of having time is an idiocy.

There's no future. The future is only a way of talking. For a sorcerer there is only the here and now.

Now you have to stop, look back, and recapitulate your steps. Sorcerers say that this is the only way to consolidate your achievements.

Everything that I've done with you was done to accomplish one single task, the task of cleaning and reordering your island of the tonal. This was

my task as your teacher. (Another task is)... to present you with doubtless demonstrations of the nagual and to show how to enter into it.

I've told you countless times that a most drastic change is needed if you want to succeed in the path of knowledge. That change is not a change of mood, or attitude, or outlook; that change entails the transformation of the island of the tonal.

The years of hard training are only a preparation for the warrior's devastating encounter with whatever lies out there, beyond this point.

You don't have any time, and yet you're surrounded by eternity. What a paradox for your reason!

Power provides according to our impeccability.

... After the internal dialog of the student is stopped, inevitable moment comes. The student doubts the entire apprenticeship. Even the most keen ones feel loss of the interest at this point.

In the life of a warrior there is only one thing, one issue alone which is really undecided: how far one can go on the path of knowledge and power. That is an issue which is open and no one can predict its outcome.

The freedom a warrior has is either to act impeccably or to act like a nincompoop.

You have learned that the backbone of a warrior is to be humble and efficient. You have learned to act without expecting anything in return. Now I tell you that in order to withstand what lies ahead of you beyond this day, you'll need your ultimate forbearance.

... The fate of all of us here has been to know that we are the prisoners of Power. What a great fortune!

The life of a warrior cannot possibly be cold and lonely and without feelings, because it is based on his affection, his devotion, his dedication to his beloved... The Earth knows that he loves it, and it bestows on him its care. That's why his life is filled to the brim and his state, wherever he'll be, will be plentiful. He roams on the paths of his love... This Earth... Only if one loves this Earth with unbending passion, can one release one's sadness. A warrior is always joyful, because his love is unalterable and his beloved, the Earth, embraces him and bestows upon him inconceivable gifts. The sadness belongs only to those who hate the very thing that gives shelter to their beings. This lovely Being, which is alive to its last recesses and understands every feeling, soothed me, it cured me of my pains, and finally when I had fully understood my love for it, it taught me freedom. Only the love for this splendorous Being can give freedom to a warrior's spirit; and freedom is joy, efficiency, and abandon in the face of any odds.

The Second Ring of Power

The peculiarity of human beings is that they love to be told what to do, but they love even more to fight and not do what they are told, and thus they get entangled in hating the one who told them in the first place.

... Personal power depends on impeccability. Impeccability consists in efforts to change, in order to scare the human form¹¹ and shake it away. After years of impeccability a moment will come when the form cannot stand it any longer and it leaves.

One can stalk his own weaknesses in the same way as a hunter stalks a prey. You figure out your routines until you know all the doing of your weaknesses.

Sadness of leaving and other similar feelings is that on which the human form feeds itself.

The fight is right here in this chest. It takes all the time and all the energy we have to conquer the idiocy in us.

Sorcerers have two cycles. The first is when they're human... Each of us has been given a task and that task is making us leave the human form. The second cycle is when a sorcerer is not human anymore.

The detail explanation is necessary when we speak about the tonal. When the sorcerer is dealing with the nagual, he must give the instruction, which is to show the mystery to the warrior. And that's all he has to do. The warrior who receives the mysteries must claim knowledge as power. The tonal and the nagual are two different worlds. In one you talk, in the other you act.

... For a warrior, the hardest thing in the world is to let others be.

... Power comes only after we accept our fate without recriminations.

... When one has nothing to lose, one becomes courageous. We are timid only when there is something we can still cling to.

A warrior doesn't seek anything for his solace.

... Do you think that your useless affection is so worthy as to keep you from entering into that realm?

... The art of a sorcerer is to be inconspicuous even in the midst of people. He had demanded that I concentrate totally on trying not to be obvious.

... The only deterrent to our despair is the awareness of our death, the key to the sorcerer's scheme of things. The awareness of our death is the only thing that can give us the strength to withstand the duress and pain of our lives and our fears of the unknown. I have to make up my mind to bring that awareness to bear witness to my acts.

... More than anything else, the art of sorcerers is never to waste their power.

Sorcerers were obligated to watch their tonals from a distance in order to have a better grasp of what is really around them.

A sorcerer doesn't hold another sorcerer by the arm. Each of us is very capable.

¹¹ A complex of learned patterns of behavior, thinking, emotional reactions which prevents one from learning new.

The Eagle's Gift

One has to carry nothing to defend, not even one's person. One's person should be protected, but not defended. By displaying arrogance you were defending yourself, but were not protected.

I am already given to the Power that rules my fate. And I cling to nothing, so I will have nothing to defend.

The recommendation for warriors is not to have any material things on which to focus their power, but to focus it on the spirit, on the true flight into the unknown.

Your compulsion to possess and hold on to things is not unique. (But) everyone who wants to follow the warrior's path has to rid himself of this fixation.

A warrior is someone who seeks freedom. Sadness is not freedom. We must snap out of it.

To be under siege implies that one has personal possessions that could be blockaded. A warrior has nothing in the world except his impeccability, and impeccability cannot be threatened.

... Certain places of power are holes in this world. If one is formless, he can go through such a hole into the unknown, into another world.

The Fire from Within

Self-importance is our greatest enemy. Think about it: what weakens us is feeling offended by the deeds and misdeeds of our fellow men. Our self-importance requires that we spend most of our lives offended by someone. Without self-importance we are invulnerable.

Impeccability is nothing else but the proper use of energy. To understand this, you have to save enough energy yourself. Warriors take strategic inventories. They list everything they do. Then they decide which of those things can be changed in order to strengthen their energy. The strategic inventory covers only behavioral patterns that are not essential to our survival and well-being. Self-importance figures as the activity that consumes the greatest amount of energy. Actions of rechanneling that energy lead to impeccability.

Nothing can temper the spirit of a warrior as much as the challenge of dealing with impossible people in positions of power. Only under those conditions can warriors acquire the sobriety and serenity to withstand.

Forbearance is to wait patiently — no rush, no anxiety — a simple, joyful holding back of what is due.

The degree of awareness of every individual sentient being depends on the degree to which it is capable of letting the emanations in Great carry it.

The third attention¹² is attained when the glow of the consciousness turns into the Fire from within: a glow that kindles not one band at a time, but all emanations inside man's cocoon.

¹² Perception of the Creator.

Seers who deliberately attain total consciousness are a sight to behold. That is the moment when they burn from within: The Fire from within consumes them. And in full consciousness they fuse themselves to the emanations in Great, and glide into Eternity.

Warriors prepare themselves to be aware, and full consciousness comes to them only when there is no more self-importance left in them. Only when they are nothing do they become everything.

The glow of the consciousness increases and intensity as the emanations inside the cocoon are aligned with the emanations in Great.

That which is called the key to everything is the firsthand knowledge that the Earth is a sentient being and as such can give warriors a tremendous boost; it is an impulse that comes from the Consciousness of the Earth itself at the instant in which the emanations inside warriors' cocoons are aligned with the appropriate emanations inside the Earth's cocoon. Since both the Earth and man are sentient beings, their emanations coincide, or rather, the Earth has all the emanations present in man and all the emanations that are present in all sentient beings, organic and inorganic for that matter.

When the assemblage point moves beyond a crucial limit, the results are always the same for every man. The techniques to make it move may be as different as they can be, but the results are always the same: the assemblage point assembles other worlds, aided by the boost from the Earth. The speed of that boost will dissolve everything about you. Under its impact we become nothing. Speed and the sense of individual existence don't go together.

Genaro was five or six feet away from me. Suddenly his shape became diffuse and in one instant he was gone like a puff of air. "Genaro is separated from us at this moment by the force of perception," don Juan said quietly. "When the assemblage point assembles a world, that world is total. The Consciousness of the Earth can give us a boost to align other... bands of emanations, and the force of that new alignment makes the world vanish. This world disappears like a puff of air when a new total alignment makes us perceive another total world."

... Warriors live with death at their side, and from the knowledge that death is with them they draw the courage to face anything.

(Five of the attributes of warrior are): control, discipline, forbearance, timing, and will. They pertain to the world of the warrior who is fighting to lose self-importance. The sixth element, which is perhaps the most important of all, pertains to the outside world and is called the petty tyrant. A petty tyrant is a tormentor. Someone who either holds the power of life and death over warriors or simply annoys them to distraction.

(The first) four attributes are all that is needed to deal with the worst of petty tyrants. My benefactor used to say that the warrior who stumbles on a petty tyrant is a lucky one. Nothing can temper the spirit of a warrior as much as the challenge of dealing with impossible people in positions of power.

The perfect ingredient for the making of a superb seer is a petty tyrant with unlimited prerogatives.

By understanding the nature of man, seers were able to reach the incontestable conclusion that if seers can hold their own in facing petty ty-

rants, they can certainly face the unknown with impunity, and then they can even stand the presence of the unknowable. The average man's reaction is to think that the order of that statement should be reversed. But that's not so. However, a seer who can hold his own in the face of the unknown can certainly face petty tyrants. I told him that in my opinion tyrants can only render their victims helpless or make them as brutal as they themselves are. He retorted: "They are victims, not warriors".

(My petty tyrant) was nothing in comparison to the real monsters that the new seers faced during the Conquest. By all indications those seers enjoyed themselves blue dealing with them. They proved that even the worst tyrants can bring delight, provided, of course, that one is a warrior.

The mistake average men make in confronting petty tyrants is not to have a strategy to fall back on; the fatal flaw is that average men take themselves too seriously; their actions and feelings, as well as those of the petty tyrants, are all-important. Warriors, on the other hand, not only have a well-thought-out strategy, but are free from self-importance. What restrains their self-importance is that they have understood that reality is an interpretation we make. That knowledge is their definitive advantage.

He became convinced that I could defeat the foreman using only the single realization that petty tyrants take themselves with deadly seriousness while warriors do not.

I had the proper equipment to deal with him; I had control, discipline, forbearance, and timing. My control made me fulfill the man's most asinine demands. What usually exhausts us in a situation like that is the wear and tear on our self-importance. Any man who has an iota of pride is ripped apart by being made to feel worthless. But I gladly did everything he asked of me. I was joyful and strong. And I didn't give a fig about my pride or my fear. I was there as an impeccable warrior. To tune the spirit when someone is trampling on you is called control.

My benefactor's strategy required that instead of feeling sorry for myself as I had done before, I immediately go to work mapping the petty tyrant's strong points, his weaknesses, his quirks of behavior. The other two attributes of warriorship, forbearance and timing, which I did not yet have, had been automatically included in my benefactor's strategy.

Forbearance is to wait patiently — no rush, no anxiety — a simple, joyful holding back of what is due.

Timing is the quality that governs the release of all that is held back. Control, discipline, and forbearance are like a dam behind which everything is pooled. Timing is the gate in the dam.

Not once had I felt sorry for myself or wept in impotence. I had been joyful and serene. And I had not once wished the man to die.

Forbearance means holding back with the spirit something that the warrior knows is rightfully due. It doesn't mean that a warrior goes around plotting to do anybody mischief, or planning to settle past scores. As long as the warrior has control, discipline, and timing, forbearance assures giving whatever is due to whoever deserves it.

The new seers used petty tyrants not only to get rid of their self-importance, but to accomplish the very sophisticated maneuver of moving themselves out of this world. To be defeated... is not deadly, but devastating. Warriors who succumb to a small-fry petty tyrant are obliterated by

their own sense of failure and unworthiness. To act in anger, without control and discipline, to have no forbearance, is to be defeated.

Don't feel sorry for the poor Yaqui Indians — think about the entire mankind. In the case of the Yaqui Indians, I can even say they're the lucky ones. They are oppressed, and because of that, some of them may come out triumphant in the end. But the oppressors, the petty tyrants that tread upon them, they don't have a chance in hell.

... Our familiarity with the world we perceive compels us to believe that we are surrounded by objects, existing by themselves and as themselves, just as we perceive them, whereas, in fact, there is no world of objects, but a universe of the emanations.

There are scores of imbeciles who become seers — seers full of foibles, or rather, human beings full of foibles that were capable of becoming seers.

Our flaws remain with us even after we become seers.

... (Allies cannot kill us), but can frighten us to death... They are attracted to emotions. Animal fear is what attracts them the most. It releases the kind of energy that suits them. The emanations inside them are rallied by animal fear. Allies enjoy animal fear more than anything else.

... Certain geographical areas not only help that precarious movement of the assemblage point, but also select specific directions for that movement.

... The task of realigning all those emanations paves the way for the peculiar maneuver of lighting up all the emanations inside the cocoon. I do light up all the emanations inside my cocoon we will all be gone in an instant.

... Any warrior can be successful with people, provided he moves his assemblage point to a position where it is immaterial whether people like him, dislike him, or ignore him.

The position of the assemblage point dictates how we behave and how we feel.

When seers shift their assemblage points, they are not confronted with an illusion, they are confronted with another world; that new world is as real as the one we are watching now.

In the process of preparation, a warrior shifts the assemblage point to as many places as possible.

The only force that can temporarily cancel out alignment is intention. You will have to cancel the alignment that keeps you perceiving the world of daily affairs. By intending a new position for your assemblage point and by intending to keep it fixed their long enough, you will assemble another world and escape this one.

The solution is not simply to choose an alternate world in which to die, but to choose total consciousness, total freedom.

To assemble other worlds is not only a matter of practice, but a matter of intent. And it isn't merely an exercise of bouncing out of those worlds, like being pulled by a rubber band. You see, a seer has to be daring. Once you break the barrier of perception, you don't have to come back to the same place in the world...

In essence, we are assemblage points fixed on a specific position.

He asserted that entering into the third attention is a gift, it is more like a reward for an attainment.

The Power of Silence

There is a connecting link between a sorcerer and Power. In order to revive that link, sorcerers needed a rigorous, fierce purpose — a special state of mind called unbending intent. Nagual is the only being capable of supplying unbending intent.

War, for a warrior, is the total struggle against that individual self that has deprived man of his power.

Only sorcerers are capable of injecting movement into the spheres of static luminosity. In a millisecond they can move their assemblage points to any place... That movement and the speed with which it was performed entailed an instantaneous shift into the perception of another totally different universe. Or they can move their assemblage points, without stopping, across their entire fields of luminous energy. The force created by such movement is so intense that it instantly consumed their whole luminous mass. He said that if a rockslide were to come crashing down on us at that precise moment, he would be able, by using the speed with which his assemblage point would move, make himself change universes or make himself burn from within in a fraction of a second.

Sorcery is a state of the consciousness.

Absolutely everything that exists in the entire Cosmos is attached to the intent of God by the connecting links¹³. Sorcerers are concerned with discussing, understanding, and employing these connecting links. They are especially concerned with cleaning them of the numbing effects brought about by the ordinary concerns of their everyday lives. Sorcery at this level could be defined as the procedure of cleaning one's connecting link to the intent of God.

The aim of sorcerers is to reach the state of total consciousness... This state of consciousness is considered as an opposite to death.

Naguals are intermediaries. Their energy allows them to channel peace, harmony, laughter, and knowledge directly from the Source and transmit them to their companions.

*Comments of Carlos Castaneda*¹⁴

The best way of learning, I think, is to place oneself in the situation when you discover that you are nothing. The other ways have roots in one's pride. If we do not follow this, we spend our lives finding out who loves us and who does not. (But we must understand), that it does not matter.

¹³ These are structures that connect each incarnate human consciousness with the Creator. Krishna and apostle Paul called these structures *roots*, the Chinese Taoists called them *stems of golden flowers*.

¹⁴ From the book of D.C.Noel and appendices of the books cited above.

Don Juan depicted pride as a monster with 3000 heads. It does not matter how many heads you cut off; thousands of them remain. The main task is not to react. If you react, you have lost. You cannot feel offended when a tiger attacks you; you simply step aside to let the tiger pass.

Without enemies we are nothing. To have enemies, to live with awareness of calamity, misfortune is one of the forms of our existence. We have to free ourselves from this form, but it may take time. First, one has to become a fighter. This is our first level.

My freedom depends on my impeccable living; only by this can I change my fate and leave this world completely.

Neither technology, nor government can change this world significantly enough for satisfying the needs of the people who understand that they are going to die. The new mysticism declares that the Enlightenment should be given priority over the prospects of social changes.

In order to destroy the certainty that this world is that as you were taught, you have to learn a new description of the world — the sorcery — and then hold the old and new ones together.

Europeans treat their bodies as if they are objects. We fill them with alcohol, bad food, and anxiety. When something wrong happens, we believe that the body was attacked by microbes. Don Juan does not think this way. For him, an illness is disharmony between the man and the world.

We live closely related with all the living. Something changes every time when we intentionally harm vegetal or animal life.

We feel ourselves so important and take ourselves so seriously that forget that this world is a great mystery, which can teach us if we listen to it.

If there is no way to know whether I have one more minute of my life, then I must live as if this is my last moment. Every deed of a warrior is his last battle. Therefore, he has to do everything impeccably. Nothing has to be left unfinished. This idea was very liberating for me. I have no unfinished affairs, nothing is postponed, and nothing binds me. I speak with you here, and I can never return to Los Angeles again. This would be of no importance, because I took care about everything before coming here.

It does not call for courage to blow up some building (in case of revolutionary terrorism), but in order to give up smoking, or give up being anxious, or give up internal dialogue one has to transform oneself. The real reform starts here. (Once) don Juan told me, “I cannot imagine how (this man) can take care about bodies of other people while he does not like his own body.” (That man smoked all the time).

The recommendation for warriors is not to have any material things on which to focus their power, but to focus it on the spirit, on the true flight into the unknown.

(Having lost human form), I felt myself detached, with no sense of influences from outside. No dislike to anyone left in me. It was a feeling of staying aloof, the ability to submerge into the moment and to think about nothing else. The deeds of people had no influence on me, because I had no expectations. A strange calm became the guiding power in my life. I felt that I have grasped one of the principles of the warrior’s life — detachment.

Don Juan said that detachment does not necessarily imply wisdom.

We are discussing the mastery of the consciousness. The truths we are discussing are the principles of this mastery.

The first truth about the consciousness is that the world around us is not really as we think it is. We think it is a world of objects and it is not.

The meaning of existence of all sentient beings is growth of the consciousness.

Everybody falls pray to the mistake that seeing is done with the eyes.

Seeing is not a matter of the eyes. Seeing is alignment. The alignment of emanations used routinely is the perception of the day-to-day world, but the alignment of emanations that are never used ordinarily is seeing. When such an alignment occurs one sees. Therefore, seeing results from unusual alignment.

The trick of the consciousness is to let the fixating (external) emanations merge with those inside us. Seers believe that if we let this happen, we become what we really are — fluid, forever in motion, eternal.

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