



MEMBER STORY

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I grew up in Southern California and had a normal childhood. Like most children, I lived in a world all my own. I enjoyed playing and learning new things. In many ways, I felt as though my life was a dream.

That changed on the day that I call my “Awakening.” It was a Saturday morning; I was about nine years old. I was still in bed. My three younger brothers were outside playing. I was lying there, half-asleep and half-awake, thinking about what I might like to do today. I was startled by a man’s voice that spoke very clearly and said, “This is not a dream!”

I sat up in bed and looked around. I did not recognize the voice, yet it did not seem like a stranger, if that makes sense. I got up and searched the house. The only other person in the house was my mother, in the kitchen on the far side of the house. I was puzzled by this, but not frightened, and I spent a lot of time thinking about it. I came to the conclusion that what was meant was that “Life is Real” and I should take it seriously.

Up to that time, I was a good student in school. Afterwards though, I began questioning everything. I was not afraid to call out a teacher for making a mistake, or pressuring them for a better explanation. I didn’t want to know a bunch of facts, I wanted to know “Why” and “How.”

One day, like many others before me, I saw an ad in a magazine for “The Mastery of Life.” I thought, “This is it! This is what I should be learning in school.” I mailed off a request for my free copy, but never received a response. I assumed that either I was too young to qualify for membership, or my parents had intercepted the mail.

My mother was raised a Baptist, but did not attend church. My father was an atheist, believing in math and science more than spiritual matters. So in my search for answers, they were not much help. My questions did not go unnoticed and they decided that all of us children should start attending Sunday School. We were told that it was not optional, but when we turned 10, we could decide for ourselves if we wanted to attend church or not.

In Sunday School, I was fascinated by the stories of wondrous miracles. I loved to hear them, but quickly became frustrated when I could not get answers to simple questions. “How did He do that?” “Why would He do that?” The answers were always the same... “Just have faith.” Well, that was not enough for me. I needed more. I needed proof that these were not just fairy tales.

In my mind, I sensed that I had a mentor. In my mind, I could see him and often thought he was the voice that had awakened me. I pictured him dressed the way Jesus would dress (white robe and sandals), but he didn't look like Jesus. He was early 40s with dark black hair and full beard. When I would meditate on a subject, he seemed to be there with me. When I got older, I no longer felt his presence. (I now believe that he was not external to me, but the Master Within).

All through high school, I studied the occult and various religions. I went to many churches and listened to the sermons. They were all the same, talking about doing good, love thy neighbor, etc. But nothing in what I considered "useful" information. After the sermons, I would meet with the pastor, minister, priest, or elder and ask very specific questions. I always got the same answer... "have faith". I became convinced that none of the "experts" actually had any answers. Too often their answers were merely quotes from some authority, but without any proof, logic, or reasoning. I began to doubt that there was anything spiritual at all. Man was an animal and nothing more. That I could prove!

When I turned eighteen in 1975, I joined the Army. I was stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and I met a Japanese man who was a missionary and taught classes on the weekends in a local park. I often walked in the park and would pass by listening to his lectures. He told stories of Adam and Eve, and the spiritual war between good and evil. I would roll my eyes and continue walking.

One day, when I was walking by, he had already finished his class and he ran over to greet me. We talked for a bit, and I told him that I didn't buy any of it. He pressed, asking what would it take to convince me? So I decided to put him in his place and end the conversation quickly. I told him that I wanted proof that God exists. I don't want to hear, "have faith." Give me something I can put in my hand that will prove that God is real.

He thought for a minute, then asked me to follow him. We walked further down the path to a large meadow. It was a beautiful place with green grass and tiny purple flowers. He picked one of the flowers and put it in my hand. I just looked at him. I was not convinced.

He said, "Can you make one of those?" I admitted that I could not, but I also can't make a television. This proves nothing. He explained to me that scientists have studied this very flower. They know everything about it. What it is made of: what chemicals, proteins, and in what proportions. They assembled all of these ingredients, in the correct amounts, and they made a seed. But they cannot make it grow. Why is that?

He then explained the Law of Biogenesis, that living things can only come from other living things. He explained how living things have a Vital Life Force that non-living things do not. He went further and said, whether you believe in Creation or Evolution, somewhere back in time, there was a First Living Thing. Where did it come from? Life can only come from Life.

This put me back on track. I began researching excitedly. I had a direction now and wanted to learn all I could. If God exists, then so do angels and other spirits. I began reading everything I could. My quest for answers was renewed.

In 1983, I was stationed in Germany. I was in charge of our company training programs and often interacted with our Headquarters Personnel Sergeant. We got to know each other pretty well; not really close friends, but knew each other well.

One day, we were both over at the Mail Room sorting mail and he handed me an envelope. It was rather large and addressed to him. He said it was for me and that he thought I might find it interesting.

The return address was The Rosicrucian Order, San Jose, California. Inside was a copy of "The Mastery of Life." I have been a member ever since.

The Headquarters Personnel Sergeant told me that he was a Tenth Degree (at that time). He was often helpful in helping me to understand things in my monographs. But when I would ask for a "glimpse" of what lies ahead in future degree lessons, he would just smile. He would always tell me to try not to run before I could walk.

Very soon, I will be starting my Tenth Degree. The Rosicrucian Order changed my life. It provided me with the answers I worked so hard to find. It also provided me with the health and peace needed to enjoy this journey.