

This month, we are pleased to interview **Mooji** (Anthony Paul Moo-Young), a disciple of the great Advaita Master, Sri H.W.L. Poonja or Papaji, as his followers call him. This is the first of a three-part interview with Mooji by Brian Creigh, the publisher and executive editor of Veritas.

Born in Jamaica, Mooji lived in London for over forty years. In 1987, a chance meeting with a Christian mystic was to be a life-changing encounter for Mooji. It brought him, through prayer, into the direct experience of the Divine within. Within a short period, he experienced a radical shift in consciousness so profound that outwardly he seemed to many who knew him to be an entirely different person. As his spiritual consciousness awakened, a deep inner transformation began, which unfolded in the form of many miraculous experiences and mystical insights.

Intrigued by this major shift in perception and wanting to merge fully in Truth, Mooji discovered the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. This connection prompted Mooji to travel to India where he was to meet his living Master, Papaji. There, at Papaji's feet, whatever still remained of a functioning ego was finally uprooted.

Recognising Mooji's radiance, people from various parts of the world began to approach him in search of the direct experience of Truth. The capacity to guide them arose spontaneously in him. Although Mooji's presence carries

a devotional fragrance, the words that spring from his being are of the nature of non-duality. His guidance evokes the love for, and the direct recognition of, the timeless Self we are.

Mooji dedicates his life to the calling of the Heart. It is this which has given rise to Monte Sahaja, an ashram and retreat centre being built in the south of Portugal. Mooji is the author of *Before I Am: The Direct Recognition of Truth*; *Breath of the Absolute: The Manifest and Unmanifest are One*; and *Writing*

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on Water: Spontaneous Utterances, Insights and Drawings.

BRIAN: Thank you for joining us today. It is great to have you here with us for this exclusive interview for our magazine, Veritas. I'm not sure if you know much about Australia.

MOOJI: I know that in Australia the search for truth is very much alive and fresh. We have a few Aussies here.

BRIAN: Mooji, for a lot of people, the concept of non-duality is fairly new. Can you explain to the readers the concept of non-duality?

Duality vs Non-Duality: The HUMAN Struggle with

“SELF” Expression

MOOJI: Non-duality really means that all that we can perceive—this world and universe, these myriad forms and beings, this whole field of the way we think, feel and see the world around us, the sense of the universe—everything is one unity. All of it springs from one single source. It is the source itself that expresses as diversity. In other words, what we regard as diversity or duality is in essence one unity portraying itself as diversity. The concept of non-duality

is sometimes perceived to be very complex or abstract, but for me, it is common sense, natural and very simple. Duality is not in opposition to non-duality. Duality is the expression arising within this non-dual truth. In the recognition and experience of non-duality, duality is very natural.

BRIAN: Most people are familiar with the concept of duality, particularly in this realm. But the concept of non-duality is being spoken about quite a bit by people such as yourself.

An interview with
MOOJI

MOOJI: If it is spoken about as a kind of teaching, then non-duality becomes duality itself. Even the term 'non-duality' finds expression only within the context and realm of duality because even to speak of non-duality is meaningless without reference to duality. However, let's avoid becoming stuck in intellectual, elitist or purist terminology. It simply means that all of duality is one wholeness, one reality, one vastness expressing itself as multiplicity or diversity. That's the most simple thing. Ultimately, duality and non-duality are both concepts arising in immutable awareness.

BRIAN: *I guess understanding these teachings and experiencing them can be quite challenging, especially when we identify so strongly with our individuality in physical form. What purpose does individuality serve if we are non-dualistic in nature?*

MOOJI: Well, first of all, if the understanding is there, then it makes the experiencing much more authentic, truthful. And it will not be a conflict. Some challenges will come. We are aware that there is so much conditioning imposed upon us and absorbed by us through daily life that in order to transcend the hypnosis of that conditioning, challenges, doubts and resistances will be experienced. In the search for our true nature, all that which is inconsistent or untrue will arise and be felt as great discomfort. But as understanding becomes more deeply established, we are less likely to run away in fear.

You ask, where is the place for individuality? Well, individuality is a very natural expression of life, of consciousness. If one awakens to the truth of what one's self really is—that we are that non-dual awareness—then if consciousness awakens to its own source in one body, it is seen that it doesn't automatically awaken to that recognition in all the bodies. What happens is that when consciousness awakens in one body, it somehow knows that it is the same Self in each body. But, in each body, consciousness must awaken to this truth for itself. That, for me, is true individuality. Individuality does not automatically

imply ego. When one comes to that profound understanding beyond merely intellectual or mental understanding, knowledge and experience become one. Here it is clear that one's self is only the immutable source that is the same in each body. However, there remains a perfume of uniqueness in each and every expression.

BRIAN: *That's interesting. So, what do you think is the mind-body trap and how can we actually avoid it?*

MOOJI: Well, what I try to point out is: there is an awareness of the functioning of both mind and body. We can observe this, we can speak about our minds, about disturbance or confusion that arises as mind, and the pains in the body, the functioning of the senses and so on. So, clearly there is an awareness, a space, behind the body-mind functioning, whereby they are perceived. A deeper seeing or awareness must be present in order that life in its most intimate functioning is observed. And that is really the aim of true spiritual striving: to discover the essence behind and beyond the

changeable. Is there such a thing at all, or is it merely imagined?

We each have to confirm this for ourselves until we cannot refute that the functioning of the body-mind appears in front of us. We must admit all of this is seen, something sees all of this. It's a fact. If we identify ourselves merely as the body and mind—and I am using *mind* in the broadest sense to include conditioning, education, culture, identity, all phenomena—then that which is behind all this cannot be trapped in the bubble of that limitation. It must be immutable.

This is not a casting away of our body-mind existence, but rather, it is an encouragement to proceed further, to go deeper—beyond the limitation of personal conditioning. It is not a question of *beyond* in terms of *distance*, but more *beyond* in terms of *subtlety*. It is possible to recognise that there is, you may say, a space beyond the familiar ground of our conceptual existence and its limited and distorted perception. So to only be aware of ourselves as our bodies and

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more open and flexible to embrace changes that lead to a higher state of consciousness.

So your question is a good one. How to alleviate or how to come out of this fear? We must

continue searching for what is true, for what is truth. Any authentic search for truth will invariably challenge our pet preferences, identity, social conditionings and attachments. True introspection, especially under the guidance of an awakened being, will expose what we have picked up and embraced in ignorance of our pure nature. Through such an auspicious connection we discard the unreal and merge with the timeless.

BRIAN: *A lot of people are struggling with knowing who they are and their life purpose. So many of us are troubled by this lack of life purpose, in a sense, and not really knowing why we are here. Is it necessary to have a purpose in order to live a full and happy life, do you think?*

MOOJI: This is also a good question. I think there are two ways in which I'm hearing this. One is the sense in which we feel that we must find what the purpose of our life is, and it can be conceived of as: *what is my role in life, what should I do, what is my next step, where should I be going in life?* But the way in which you put it, you also made a broader implication, that of life's purpose in terms of identity and *who am I?* and *why am I here?* That's a deeper sense of purpose.

We may start off with a sense experienced by some children—and some people remember that in their childhood they had this type of question, *why am I here?* Or they had a sense that I

cannot die or I am not from here—they have these types of feelings from a young age. Certainly, as people go through their own inner process of discovering more and more the truth, some of these feelings and child-like innocence returns to them. Some things come back to mind again, like, "I'm here for something much higher than merely paying rent or running around looking for a job or getting married." Matters concerning our terrestrial existence may have given us a sense of purpose for a while—for as long as a very strong identity as being a person was present with us—but this gradually changes as our spiritual consciousness awakens. As the game opens up and our minds become more absorbed in original being, we spontaneously come to know we are unbound, that we are more than we have been conditioned to believe we are. We come spontaneously to know we are timeless. Mind produces more subtle questions, and contemplation and meditation become natural phenomena for us. Higher questions will arise: *who am I, where did I come from, what and where is 'I'?* Such questions help to refine the consciousness.

Some people misconceive this thing about purpose, about their role in life. If you were told from the beginning that your role in life is to be a farmer, all your life you're going to be a farmer, that would be such a crippling limitation, isn't it? It is consciousness itself that creates all this play, all these roles. Each person is a portrait painted by consciousness. I think that our roles will continue to change and evolve. It may seem, in a certain part of our minds, that it would be really good to know ahead of time *what is my role, what's my purpose?* But if purpose was defined in such a limited way, we

would feel so imprisoned. You'd think, 'Oh my God, don't I have a chance to be a doctor?' So I feel there is much more space in not knowing, than we imagine in knowing what the future will be—if such a thing is possible in the first place. Some people have a clear

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sense, when they think of purpose, they think of career. But purpose is a much broader concept. As you have already indicated, it can stretch as far as to probe deeply into the nature of oneself and the universe. To find out *who am I and what is the point of being here?* Is it to live for 50, 60, 70 years, get married, have children and depart? So, depending upon one's spiritual maturity, the sense of purpose will change, becoming more subtle, more deep, more profound as we ourselves become more at one with our inner reality.

BRIAN: *It's fascinating. I think that the schooling system and many of the traditional systems that we've got currently haven't been able to really identify the strengths and weaknesses and things like that.*

MOOJI: I feel that it has also been a mis-education to limit this broader question of our purpose in existence to merely focus on career, marriage, having children, becoming a famous 'somebody' and so on. There is a

“Mind produces more subtle questions, and contemplation and meditation become natural phenomena for us.”

much broader question, that of: *who are you in the first place?* Even the one who gets married and procreates, who is that? One who is searching for meaning will ask such questions. Really, what arises as 'I' inside this body? It's clearly not the body. Is 'I' what you call mind? If it is mind—and it is clearly recognised that 'I' is mind—what makes this recognition? Such questions will begin to sprout naturally and spontaneously in one's mind as the search for the real deepens.

When we probe more earnestly into these questions, the attention is drawn deeper and deeper into a space, not so much of knowledge, but of insight, clarity and a kind of inner revelation. These very powerful points of seeing are transformative in their effect and replace the noise of personal thought activity with serenity. I would call such questions subjective rather than objective questions. Most people are inclined to ask merely objective questions. We are trained to ask objective questions. When we ask not *what is such and such a 'thing'?* But *'who' is it that wants to know it?* The whole way

and mood of questioning changes. The mind and attention turns inward and the mood of introspection takes over. I would call this subjective probing. This is far more exciting, far more profound in its impact. When one begins to move beyond mere intellectual understanding into intuitive and direct experience, the fragmentary force of duality quells.

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CALL TO EVOLUTION

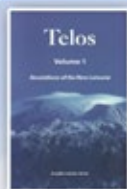
DUALITY VS NON-DUALITY: THE HUMAN STRUGGLE WITH "SELF" EXPRESSION
AN INTERVIEW WITH MOOJI

1. Find the sense of *I am*—the sense that I exist, I am here. This is a feeling that every being can attest to... *I am*. Stay in that sense without allowing it to link to any other concept or image.
2. Observe that things are happening just by themselves, that they are not happening especially to *you*. Exist as though you are only your eyes, with no interpreting faculty—you merely see. No judgment, no opinions.
3. Move through life with awareness of your personal mind-set and its tendencies—you cannot be these tendencies, you are the watcher of them. What you see is not stable. Identify with nothing.
4. Observe that there is only *experiencing*, there is no actual *experiencer*.
5. Be a presence, rather than identifying yourself as a 'person.'



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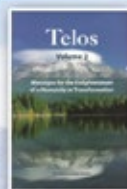


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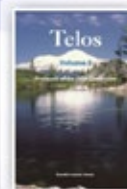
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