

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

Youth: Creators of the Future



Izvor Collection



P R O S V E T A

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Chapter One

Youth, a world in gestation

How can you help loving young people when you see all that profusion of life, vigour and enthusiasm and the magnificent aspirations of their hearts. The only question is what they will do with that over-abundance of energy.

If we remember that there is a correspondence between the life of a human being and that of nature, we can say that a young person's formative years can be compared to the period when the earth itself was being formed. At that time, millions of years ago, no organized form of life was possible on earth, for it was nothing but a seething mass of molten matter constantly racked by volcanic eruptions. Before life could appear, all these upheavals, all these chaotic forces, had to settle down and evolve into a calm, stable environment suitable for plants, animals and human beings.

The inner life of young people is exactly like the primeval state of the planet: their untamed and uncontrolled energies give rise to all kinds

of wild and contradictory manifestations. Their impressions and sensations, their likes and dislikes, their enthusiasm and their revolt, are all excessive. A generous, creative impulse will frequently be followed by a feeling of disgust and an urge to destroy – sometimes even to destroy themselves. Nothing solid can be built on such unstable ground, and this means that before they can become a hospitable environment, figuratively speaking, for plants, animals and human beings, young people have to introduce an element of moderation, control and harmony into their lives. It is this that constitutes the transition from youth to adulthood: the transition from an unorganized, chaotic, unstable life to a life that is rich and full and beneficial both to oneself and to others.

You must not imagine that becoming an adult means losing your youth, that is to say, losing all that constitutes the charm and dynamism of life. Not at all! Being young is one thing; preserving your youth is another. Young people possess an abundance of vital forces and new materials with which they must work consciously to construct their life. What happens if they fail to do the necessary work? Well, by the time they are adults, not only will they inevitably have lost some of their youthful vitality, but if they have also been self-indulgent – if, instead of using their minds and trying to control their energies and get some order

into their lives, they have allowed themselves to be guided by their instincts – they will be a barren soil, a ravaged land.

The origin of so many of the conflicts between young people and adults is the unconscious way in which the adults lived when they themselves were young. Having been entirely passive and never having done any work on their inner self, they now feel diminished and resentful of the young, who have something that they have lost. As for the young, when they see so many dreary, decaying, ineffectual adults, they quite naturally criticize or laugh or rebel, and little by little this situation creates insoluble problems. For my part, I advise young people to leave adults alone and begin an immense work of their own, a work of inner organization, control and harmonization that will enable them to contribute something better. If they really want to achieve this, they are capable of doing so.

As a matter of fact, in recent years many young people have begun to be active in public affairs. Very young boys and girls already have something to say about society, about life in their country and about world events, and they are starting to organize in order to make their voice heard. This has never happened before. It is quite a new phenomenon, a sign of the times. As you know, we are at the threshold of a new age, the

age of Aquarius, and young people sense and are already responding to the new currents that are flooding into the world. The often incoherent demonstrations we are witnessing today are only the first tentative indications of this new era; they are a trial run, as it were, and it is only normal that they should be accompanied by a certain amount of tension and disorder. But things will settle down before too long, and we shall see some real changes. What form these changes will take depends on these young people, who are already beginning to express themselves. Also, many adults are beginning to listen to them, so it is important that they give careful thought to what they want. It is no use their thinking that they will be breaking new ground by demanding nothing more than material ease and pleasure. There is nothing new in that; it is what human beings have been clamouring for since the beginning of time, and it is not a very glorious ambition. If they ask for nothing better, they will soon be just like the adults they criticize so readily. What should they be asking for then? They should be asking for education. And education is not simply a question of acquiring enough information to get a degree and a profession. To be educated is to be given the light we need to allow us to keep moving forward on the road to true freedom, strength, beauty and love, to keep advancing on the path of true life.

Also, if young people want their demands to be given serious consideration, they must have the right attitude. They will not convince their elders of the justice of their demands being rude and violent, by screaming and shaking their fists at them. I would love to see, at last, the advent of a new generation of young people that adults would feel compelled to respect; young people who would not even need to say anything to be understood. It would be enough for them to be present in the world; their ideal, their purity and their radiance would carry all before them; nothing could stand in their way.

To be sure, young people are not in a position to impose their will immediately, but there is one thing they can do: they can say ‘no’ to those who try to exploit and seduce them. In the first place, they can and must be very wary and selective about the things people propose to them. They must realize that they are an easy prey for all those who are trying to promote their own dishonest interests. So many adults are on the look out for anything that will excite the newly awakened instincts and appetites of young people and for lucrative ways of pandering to those appetites – from those who foster the aggressive instincts of young boys with toy weapons and war games, to those who flood the market with all kinds of useless or harmful gadgets and activities that adolescents would

never dream of wanting if they did not constantly see them advertised or on display in every shop window.

Such people are guilty of leading the young astray. In the first place, they create a need for material things which the young cannot afford, leading to feelings of frustration and often tempting them to use dishonest means to obtain what cannot be obtained honestly. In the second place, by trying to convince the young that all these things are indispensable to their wellbeing and fulfilment, they deflect them from the true quest for happiness and the meaning of life. For the only way to find happiness and the meaning of life, the only way to be inwardly nourished, strengthened and at peace, is to be open to the spiritual world.¹

Very few adults ever ask themselves whether the options they propose to young people will really be good for them, that is to say, whether they will help them to acquire greater insight and a greater degree of inner balance and strength. The only concern of most adults is to get the young to do what suits them, the adults; and what suits them is to make a lot of money! Think of all the books, films, records and other forms of entertainment which exist for no other purpose than to put more money into the pockets of certain business people. What do they care if the young are more and more

confused and unbalanced because of all that they see and hear? It is no concern of theirs. This whole question is very grave, for there are more and more criminals taking advantage of young people's distress – or simply of their curiosity – to offer them drugs. And with those drugs they condemn them to slavery and ruin and even to death. But what do they care as long as they get the money? Anything to get rich!

Let me tell you about my own experience when I was very young, in Varna. In the same town lived a man who had been a consul in America and had brought home from his travels all kinds of books and treatises on magic and occultism, as well as a collection of objects such as wands, magic mirrors and robes for use in occult rites. He was a kind of magician but not a very successful one, for he lacked certain faculties, certain elements. Realizing that he would never succeed in what he wanted to do without an associate, he was looking for a young boy to work with him... and his choice fell on me! In exchange for my help he promised me room and board in his house (he lived in a magnificent mansion) as well as money and anything else I wanted. He had a fantastic library, and he himself was a writer. He had written and translated several books on spiritism; in fact he was the first to translate Bulwer Lytton's *Zanoni* into Bulgarian.

I was still very young at the time – only eighteen – and I did not know much about human nature, about the cupidity and perversion of men or the fascination of danger. Fortunately, as I did not want to be led astray, I never did anything without consulting my Master, Peter Deunov (these circumstances arose, incidentally, not long after I had met him). When I explained this man's offer to the Master and asked him what I should do, his answer was categorical: I must have nothing to do with such an individual or with magic itself. What a good thing I asked him, for without that advice I might well have been led into great danger! I would certainly have gained a great deal – but at what cost? Once you begin to dabble in magic for the sake of material advantage, such as worldly success, money, fame or the possession of a man or woman, you are well on the way to practising black magic and, without realizing it, are inevitably led on until you end by 'selling your soul to the devil', as the saying goes.²

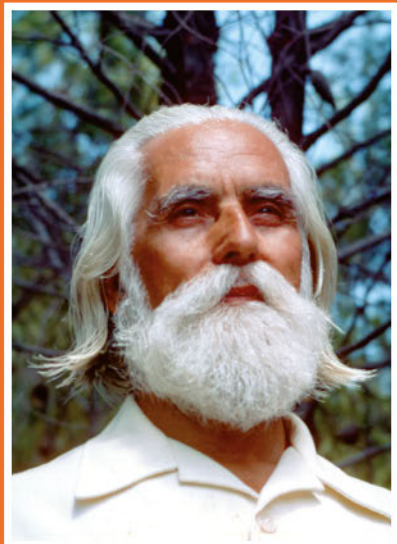
You are no doubt thinking that you, personally, are in no danger of receiving any such tempting proposition from a magician. Not in the same form, perhaps, but there are a great many different ways of selling your soul to the devil! You do not need to make the kind of pact with the devil described in books on witchcraft; you only need to obey the dictates of your own selfishness and

greed. Each time you do so your soul loses some of its light.

This is why I advise young people to examine every proposition that is put before them with great care. Whatever people offer you – material goods, clothes, music, activities or ideas – you must always begin by trying to see what kind of tendency they are trying to encourage in you. Never forget that you are still like a world in gestation. If you sense that they are trying to lead you to choose violence or despair, easy money or success, or any other negative option, you must remind yourself that these are destructive forces and reject them immediately. If young people genuinely want to do better than their elders and create a new world, they must accept only those things that stimulate their desire to build something good, beautiful, pure and strong, both in themselves and in the world around them.

Notes

1. See *The Seeds of Happiness*, Izvor Coll. n° 231, chap. 6: 'The meaning of life'.
2. See *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226, chap. 1: 'The danger of the current revival of magic'.



The French philosopher and spiritual Master, Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov (1900-1986), was born in Bulgaria and came to France in 1937. Although his work addresses many aspects of initiatic science, he explains: "The questions with which we are faced will always be the same: to understand who we are, to discover the meaning of our lives and to overcome the obstacles which we find on our path. So, do not ask me to talk to you about anything else; I will always return to the same subjects: our development, our difficulties, the path to be followed and the methods we need to follow it."

‘What kind of people are most likely to command our respect and admiration? Those who have struggled and transcended themselves, who have triumphed over all obstacles and ordeals. Why do young people admire athletes so much? Because they are continually striving to do better. Even if only in running or jumping or swimming or climbing, endurance and courage and a readiness to exert oneself are always considered admirable qualities. Would it not be worthwhile to try to manifest those same qualities in your everyday lives? Instead of focusing all your efforts on running farther, swimming faster, jumping higher, or catching and kicking a ball more accurately, it would be better to tell yourself, “I will be more patient when things are difficult; I will overcome grief and sadness; I will learn to control myself better!” Yes, it is possible to excel and to be a winner in this area also. Why not try it?’

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