

From the Desk of John Van Auken

February 2017

Dear Soul Group Sojourner,

How's your 2017 going so far? In the beginning of any year, many of us make resolutions that we hope will reinvigorate us. Maybe you did or will recommit yourself to this wonderful spiritual work? Lots of us A.R.E. members have been journeying with the Edgar Cayce readings for 25, 35, 50 years or more while others may be new to this work. But you all have one thing in common—you have begun your journey to finding love, healing, wholeness, and acceptance with the help of the A.R.E. and all its resources.

And, still, many more folks will begin their journey just this year. It's on their behalf that **I would like to ask you to join me in financially supporting the A.R.E. Your donation will help ensure that all of these sojourners (and those in the future) have access to all the resources that have helped you along on your journey.**

Please consider, as part of your recommitment to this work, becoming a member of the Good Karma Club, our monthly giving club, with a donation of \$20 or more per month. Or, if you prefer, you can donate \$85 or more to become a member of our Golden Circle. Being a member of the Golden Circle has special benefits like receiving unique gifts and event invitations throughout the year.

I have already renewed my financial commitment. *Will you join me?*

Thank you for all you do to support this great organization. Last summer, when I was reflecting on my own journey of support (both giving to the A.R.E. and benefitting from it), I wrote this reflection. While you may have seen some of this then, I hope you enjoy reading it now at least half as much as I've enjoyed following the path itself.

Today, I paused to reflect on how my journey began with this wonderful organization and how I benefited from its life-enhancing content—just like you have. I remember it as if it were yesterday, but in fact it was 54 years ago!

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It was 1962. I was 16 years old, just got my driver's license, and was reading a life-changing book entitled There Is a River—you may have heard about it (I'm smiling). How I came across this wonderful book is lost in the fog of time but it touched me deeply and set my life on a happy path.

I did not immediately join the A.R.E. It was the era of Vietnam and the draft. Fortunately, I had some good karma when it came to war. When I came out of boot camp for the Naval Air I saw two buses waiting for us. One was a bright, silver Trailways and the other was a grey Navy bus that was carrying those of us who were going to Vietnam. I looked at my orders and saw the name Pensacola. Naively I thought it was some place in Vietnam so I headed toward the grey bus. The boatswain (the boss) asked me where I was going. I said Pensacola in Vietnam. He laughed

and said, "Van Auken, get on the silver bus, you're going to Florida!" Out of 32 young men, only two of us got on that silver bus.

My good karma extended further when I got to Pensacola Naval Air Station. When it came my turn for a job assignment an elderly lady called me forward and asked, "Where do you want to work, honey?" I was amazed but didn't skip a beat, replying, "The airport and air operations!" That was where the action was. And she stamped my orders to air operations. I was thrilled.

And, the good karma continued, only two years into my required duty, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara offered to let certain active duty personnel go to college if we agreed to be in the Reserves for four years. Four years later I received my honorable discharge! I had forgotten that I was in the Navy!

While attending the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia I reread There Is a River, and subsequently read Sleeping Prophet, Many Mansions, Dreams: Your Magic Mirror, Meditation: Gateway to Light, and every other Cayce book I could find.

I then joined "A Search for God" study group in Newport News, about 20 miles from my campus. It was Edgar Ball's group. When I walked in the door it was filled with grey-haired old people (like me now)! I hesitated but I could see in their eyes what I was seeking, so I began attending weekly and meditating with them.

Back on campus I was meditating most every afternoon after classes to achieve "deep meditation". After many months of trying I experienced a breakthrough. My body, mind, and soul were enlivened with the Life Force and an awareness of the infinite, eternal Spirit of God. When the meditation ended I sat for probably another hour in the afterglow of that life-changing meditation.

Then, I reached for my meager checkbook and wrote a \$1,000 check to the A.R.E.! This was a lot of money for me. When my girlfriend learned of this, she suspected my priorities were not hers and stopped seeing me. But I was so happy, that didn't bother me.

On weekends, I would ride my motorcycle to the A.R.E. headquarters in Virginia Beach for more study and training (about 60 miles from my campus). Hugh Lynn Cayce was holding meetings for young people to help them with their dreams and meditations. It was at one of these meetings that he read one of my dreams and decided to hire me! Here is that dream:

I woke in a huge orchard where Hugh Lynn was leading me through the orchard. The trees in this orchard had the most beautiful fruit I had ever seen, but the trees themselves were gnarled and ugly. Hugh Lynn said to me, "Our job here is to change the trees without damaging the fruit." I turned to him in shock and said, "That's impossible." He smiled and replied, "That is our job here." I turned back to the trees and then began reflecting on how we might do that seemingly impossible assignment.

When Hugh Lynn finished reading this dream he told me to go to the human resources department and tell them that he said to hire me. Well, you can imagine how that went over. Despite the human resource manager's initial dismay, he hired me, and I have been working here ever since. I was 24 years old. My first job was sorting zip codes in the mail department for \$2.20/hour. It wasn't long before I became a printer for A.R.E. and began printing every book the A.R.E. Press published (and reading them as they were coming off my printing press).

After some time, I became manager of A.R.E. Press and a member of the A.R.E. Publishing Committee. Eventually I became a director and continue in that role today.

Initially Hugh Lynn was my boss and, after him, Charles Thomas Cayce became the president of the organization. When I first came to the A.R.E., Charles Thomas and I were both in our mid-20s. We both enjoyed spending summers at A.R.E. Camp where the nighttime stars were a hundred times brighter than back in the city. We loved all the activities with like-minded souls—dreaming, meditating, hiking, and playing.

One day a lovely young lady from California with the old-fashioned name of Doris came to Camp for an Atlantic University session. She and I met a few times, meditated together, and when I returned to my job at headquarters I found that she worked in the A.R.E. Library as a research librarian. Well, as you can imagine, one thing led to another and we grew to love one another, and in our early 30s we were moved to marry and grow a family. Throughout our marriage we used the wisdom in the Cayce readings for everything from how to ideally conceive and raise children to how best to cook vegetables! Remember Patapar paper?

We had three children. We chatted about the purpose for life's journey and the importance of soul growth. We worked to become better people, spouses, parents, coworkers, and friends.



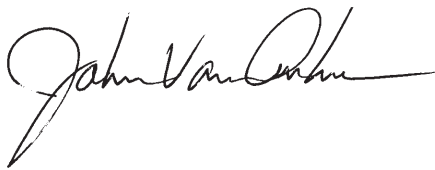
We prayed and meditated together, attended many of the programs at the A.R.E., and our children went to A.R.E. Camp. Each of us grew as souls as well as stewards of this rare and important organization. Our eldest son, James, is now the director of Atlantic University!

If there was one key obligation we each felt personally, it was our role as stewards of the Cayce organization and its mission. We worked diligently to keep the Association fiscally sound and a source of help to souls seeking guidance physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Doris was an accomplished pianist and played at a fundraiser for the organization. In my role as director I also sought to raise contributions to support this work, this light on the hill overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, once home to ancient Atlantis. I remember how we used to talk about past lives in Atlantis and Egypt and other important time periods in humanity's soul growth. And we were all so thankful that the A.R.E. was here today for us as our resource and sustenance for soul growth.

I know the information and inspiration in the Edgar Cayce readings has touched your life too, as it has mine and my family's. **[I hope you will join me in making a donation today to keep this light on for other souls seeking a better life—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Thank you for being part of this great work.](#)**

Yours in keeping the light on for others,



John Van Auken, Director
A.R.E. and Edgar Cayce Foundation

P.S. **[Please join me in renewing your commitment to the Cayce work](#)**—including your financial commitment—by becoming a member of the Good Karma Club with a monthly donation of \$20 or more.

