

## Music as Will

Everybody knows that music makes you smarter; the practice of music actually motivates your brain to create new hard-wired connections between hemispheres, thus making more brain space available for computational activity. I have written elsewhere about how music can be of practical value to you; putting you in contact with institutions that reward excellence in the arts, giving you the ability to play low-profile professional gigs, and providing you with the option of teaching for extra money. But there is a third way, perhaps the most important way, that music makes you a better person—it strengthens your will.

We often think of people using will power to break bad habits, like eating too much, or smoking, or watching too much TV. In all these cases, we have a situation where the body's lower consciousness is sending out cravings which, if satisfied, will give temporary relief, but which will do us no permanent good. When we exert will power, we motivate our higher mind to control our lower mind—to perceive our carnal cravings in the light of reason, and, thus, to better enable us to make good decisions about the things that we choose to do.

I am not saying that the will and the higher mind are the same thing. In my spiritual activities, I perceive about three or four or five states of consciousness which I routinely visit in my daily life. The will is a separate thing—it is not a state of consciousness at all, but a force, your essential self, free of the illusions of time and space. The Buddhists say that all of earthly life, physical being, consciousness, memory, is God's false sleight-of-hand parlor trick; they say that, after death, all these things disappear, and the only truly real thing that will remain is the blue light. In my ontogeny, I equate the blue light with will power. Thus, the will is our truest reality, the reality which, obscured behind the veils of maya, (illusion), we have lost touch with, in our physical-dimensional travels.

Indeed, getting in touch with the will may be said to be the prime object of religious practice. An enhanced feeling, of connectedness to a larger universe, is what enables us to deal with the petty challenges, and disappointments of life. Only in a cosmic context can consciousness achieve

a perspective capable of reconciling the vast, sometimes cruel, paradoxes of life. Thus, conscious perception of will gives us an intensified, clarified sense of self, at the same time diffusing or literal ego definition.

Let me say that again: the exercise of will power, in the practice of music, gives us an intensified sense of self by helping us to diffuse our literal ego definition; when you play music, when you surrender yourself to the higher spiritual energies of music, you let go of all the little things the fingers of literal consciousness cling to, the verbal expressions you use to define yourself, and make this world make sense to you; when you play music you can let go of these things, so that you can hop a ride on the lightning bolt of blue light that flashes through your body when you open up to it.