

HOW TO ATTAIN ENLIGHTENMENT ON THE
MAJOR DEEGAN EXPRESSWAY

By Dr. Stewart Bitkoff

*Are you a commuter fed up with the daily grind? Dr. Stewart Bitkoff was too until a light bulb went off in his head and he discovered a way to use the mind to overcome tiresome activities like long commutes. Last year he published his "Commuter's Guide" and it's not just for the commuter- the simple philosophy presented in this book is easily applied to other mundane activities! Dr. Bitkoff hopes **Integral Yoga Magazine** readers will enjoy these excerpts from How to Attain Enlightenment on the Major Deegan Expressway.*

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The Sufis have a saying, "The apparent is the bridge to the real." In part, what is meant by this is that, we need things of the world to help us experience, or see, the underlying unity. . . I wondered if it was possible to attain enlightenment traveling to work every day. Particularly if the highway was as crowded, dirty, and in need of repair as the Deegan? Of course it was! A Little unusual, perhaps, but anything is possible. . .

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Somehow, as I drove to work, focusing on the movements of the cars, trucks, and buses, my soul learned to sing. Part of me was busy trying to avoid the other cars, yet, another part sang of its place in the cosmos. While my eyes focused on the road, and my hands guided the wheel and shifted gears, the higher consciousness awoke. It was like listening to public radio, it had its own agenda and helped me realize, anew, we are more than the guy who sweats and curses the building traffic.

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Driving from Westchester County, the closer you come to the City, the less green you see. Gradually, trees and shrubs are replaced by asphalt and buildings. In some traditions, green represents the higher consciousness. The mystic guide of the Sufis, Khidr, is called the Green One. While God is everywhere and present in each heart, under some conditions, the communication is strained. On one level, the City represents those things which get in the way. Yet, as you look closer, there are parks, gardens, trees and shrubs throughout most urban areas. God is always present; we are the ones who forget- getting caught up in the asphalt and concrete.

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Living in the moment, is a mystical state, whereby the normal faculties of our consciousness are suspended. The ego, or I recedes and the higher consciousness operates. . . It is a state of acceptance of what is transpiring, awareness of the unifying mechanisms in events, and intuitive perception . . . So, how does this . . . relate to driving on the Deegan? When I find myself becoming overly anxious, annoyed, or distracted by negative thoughts, I enter this state of consciousness. The end result is that I become more fully integrated and able to accomplish what needs to be done . . .

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Do not let me mislead you; often my commute is boring and repetitious. Many days, I do not want to drive in the rain and snow. I would prefer to stay in bed . . . This is what life is like. Some days are better than others. Some commutes are easier; but you have to make do with what you are given. Often, it is a matter of attitude.

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