



CONFESSION

of an

UTTER BOZO

BY 44

The Sacred Books of the East are nothing but words.  
I looked through their covers one day sideways.  
What Kabir talks of is only what he has lived through.  
If you have not lived through something, it is not true.

--Kabir

The Kabir Book

Versions by Robert Bly

Beacon Press, 1971

## DEFINITION OF BOZO AND BOZO SOAP OPERA

Being a BOZO is a state of mind, a way of looking (and not looking) at things. We are all BOZOs some of the time. We are UTTER BOZOs when we get completely caught up in a BOZO SOAP OPERA, when no other reality seems possible or plausible--THIS SOAP OPERA IS IT. Other ITs are stupid false realities, "obviously" wrong. The implications of this narrow outlook are far-reaching, something a BOZO is incapable of appreciating. Already, BOZOs are losing interest in this essay. A few more complications and the document will remain a virtual secret from all BOZOs. The UTTER BOZO gave up on the title page because open-mindedness is too threatening--this document might challenge the UTTER BOZO to think.

You are a BOZO when you relate to people and events in terms of the fixed role you assigned them, rather than on the basis of your experience, your ongoing spontaneity, and your perception of persons in your situation. In a BOZO life, creative, unpredictable, humorous, spontaneous events are eliminated in favor of a simplified, fixed, serious, "What's the problem here?" narrow consciousness.

A person gets into an UTTER BOZO state of mind to cope with uncertainty, fear, and sometimes guilt and anxiety. It is an understandable posture, but it can lead to destructive consequences, by denying spontaneous, authentic, autonomous living in favor of predictable "excitement" or conventional "cleverness" and "originality" (personalizing bath towels by buying the letter B for the Bozo family). For an UTTER BOZO, sense of humor is almost totally missing at these times in one's life. A sense of spontaneous ecstatic awe is almost unthinkable (it's too weird; she's weird; that painting is too far out...and on and on).

BOZOs tend to think they are "practical". If you suggest to a BOZO that there is an alternative way of looking at things, or that he might re-examine his own assumptions, you and your suggestion are quickly dismissed. The reply almost always starts, "But...". Then you get the ritual deep bow to Saint Practicum, a sacred prostration at the Cross of the Feeble Reasons, with numerous pious pauses at the Stations of the Cross: St. Thinkus, St. Doubtus, St. Fearum, St. Science, and \*St. Statisticus (only recently canonized). No Bozo Holy Waters will be wasted on creative problem solving, personal feelings, intuition, or humility. When these evil entities arise, the BOZO retreats to the safety of Sister Mary Mother Practicum, Patron Saint of the Mundane.

A word of warning. It is useless to tell a BOZO that he is a BOZO. BOZOs are unaware! And the last thing in the world a BOZO will cop to is the statement, "I am the BOZO." Few will admit it. BOZOs are Good Guys, well liked, and fiercely deny any negative aspects of human nature, especially the dark side of themselves. This level of self-examination is too threatening for a Bozo mentality. It takes real courage to look into ourselves deeply enough to come to terms with our universal negative qualities. It takes real human strength to acknowledge in a most humble way, our human limitations, drawbacks, and even darker designs within.

The best thing we can do for ourselves and people around us is to ask, "Am I a BOZO right now? Is this situation a BOZO SOAP OPERA?" If so, something needs changing. Time to create a new situation for yourself where you can let some light and warmth in, where there is some breathing space for spontaneity and humor. Otherwise, the Cosmic Joke is on us.

Now, let's get the BOZO PROBLEM out of the way so we aren't confused between a genuine living process, and BOZOistic ambulatory death.

1. A BOZO is someone who doesn't understand what a BOZO SOAP OPERA might possibly mean. Context, inference, imagination, rich elaboration of the original idea, and intuition are missing. A BOZO is rigid, inflexible, limited, sees things in black and white, no shades of grey, and doesn't know it. A BOZO has no idea he might be wrong, or that there might be another way, another

set of assumptions, or another standpoint from which to view what is naively obvious to him.

A cosmic viewpoint is of absolutely no interest to a BOZO. The uncertainty of metaphysical systems and the tentative conclusions of science are only troublesome complications, to be dismissed so that an acceptable and secure level of comfort can be regained. Heaven forbid that any real risks be taken. BOZOs like it just the way things have always been, to the point of denying that they were ever any different than they are right now, nor are they prepared to change or examine their basic assumptions. To BOZOs, everything is understandable and already "explained".

2. A BOZO SOAP OPERA is an exaggerated drama, cartoonish in design, with fixed roles, predictability, practicality, and having a plot suspiciously similar to accounts of earlier Soap Operas the BOZO has been involved in. The characters act out cartoon appearances and speak stereotyped hackneyed phrases and "speeches" or "lines", contributing in predictable ways to a plot that sounds like life and death, but is no more than a petty grumble about things not going the Bozo's narrow way.
3. A BOZO is intimately related to his BOZO SOAP OPERA. A BOZO really takes this bullshit seriously, and thinks this stupid situation is really a big deal. It is very unlikely that a BOZO might stand back and see the humorous aspect of his drama. NO chance that a BOZO would ever laugh at himself and his predicament. THIS IS HIS SOAP OPERA by God, and nobody is going to take his precious serious predicament away from him.
4. When relating with BOZOs be aware that only BOZOs play in BOZO SOAP OPERAS; if you drop out of a BOZO drama, you will be quickly cartooned as "weird", or "what's wrong with you?", or otherwise put in a simplified format and dismissed in terms of any possible change outside your assigned role as deviant. In other words, if you won't play along in a BOZO SOAP OPERA, you will be assigned a role in their opera by them and be adapted to the BOZO needs to stereotype and keep everything predictable, petty, and conventionally "exciting."

If you leave a BOZOs Soap Opera, be prepared to be labeled "unusual" or "unique" or other terms that leave you feeling, "What did he mean by that?" Be cautious about interpreting these designations as compliments; they are subtle put-downs and nothing more than petty stereotyped cartoon gossip about you. Remember: a BOZOs life is OK, from the BOZOs point of view. Your life, on the other hand is quite...unusual...don't you think?

In a temporary Bozo anxiety attack, I have a fantasy of dialing the BOZO HOTLINE, 800-IMA-BOZO, 800-462-2606. The voice says, "Don't go back. Remember the dull Bozo days, predictable and boring and falsely exciting. Come back to the present, the sweet here and now, where it is all happening, has happened, and is about to happen. You only have your present, the best present of all; the past is dead and rigid, the future unconscious and unborn. Dance your present dance and you will be surprised what happens. Relax and enjoy your cosmic process. Learn what you can right now and let the past and future rest in your BOZO BOX. Your purpose here is still unfolding, but one thing for sure, you are not here to be pompous, perfect, or pious. Please. Be yourself. Be an ex-Bozo. A full human being. Please call again when a Bozo attack comes your way."

There. That feels better. It is usually a serene feeling to be back in touch with the BOZO HOTLINE. Something calming and reassuring about it. That voice... has a familiar sound to it... with a sort of echo sound effect...like it was in a shower stall, or a phone booth, or a box of some kind.... HMMMMMM....

## THE CONFESSION

Yes. I admit it now. I once was a full-time UTTER BOZO. I was addicted to Bozo Soap Operas. Now I am almost free of Bozo-istic domination. I have flashbacks occasionally, but I know these are only temporary.

When I realized I needed help, I tried everything. Encounter groups, therapy groups, psychotherapy, Gestalt, Rolfing, hot tubs, California, Zen, meditation, monogamy, serial monogamy, three marriages that went afoul of Bozo dramas, reading, study, scholarship, and finally a deepening cynicism about this vanity of vanities, our Bozo world. I was desperate.

At the bottom of this Bozo pit I discovered a strategy of self-programming, based on the 24 things I most frequently forget that a Wise Part of me knows I can remember and live by. Getting in touch with the Wise Part is the result of five behaviors: 1) slow down, 2) relax, 3) set no phony goals, 4) no Bozo Soap Operas, and 5) enjoy the Cosmic Process.

The result is that I am more and more frequently living a yumyum life, with fewer and fewer Bozo blank-outs. But it is more than a mere quantitative change. Life is far richer now. And there is room for my Bozo-istic lapses too; a reminder of my illustrious past as an unconscious Bozo, a psycho-archeological history of my Cosmic Joke.

## THE BIG PROBLEM

Memory is the Big Problem.

## THE "ANSWER"

(A.B.R.--Always Being Revised)

In order to solve the memory problem I began to make notes about things that I most deeply wanted to believe in and make a real part of my life. They were simple things, but my Bozo consciousness limited my thinking and behavior so much that I usually forgot the important things, especially when emotions would accompany my Bozo Soap Opera.

Here are 24 things I forget too often and wish I could remember and live by all the time. If only these items were chiseled in my bones (with opportunity for occasional revision)! Unfortunately, I forget. Hopefully this effort will remind me of what I wish to remember, and with deeper meditation I may become involved in this ex-Bozo life all the time. If not chiseled in my bones, then I will settle for mappings, directions, and improving trends in my behavior and consciousness. That will be better for me and the people around me.

The pronoun "you" was chosen because I wanted to listen to the quiet Wise Part of me, and I wanted the Wise Part to tell me a better way to live. The self-programming drama is: I need help. I am receptive, slowed down, relaxed, tired of phony goals, want no more part of Bozo Soap Operas, and am open to the Cosmic Process. Go ahead Wise Part of me. Speak. I am listening.

Following are seven daily meditations, based on the current 24 things my Wise Part reminds me of, as I seek out this wise old wizard within, lest I fall back into Bozo unconsciousness. Please note, THIS LIST IS A POST-BOZO LIST! It is flexible, it was changed, it is changing, and it can Always Be Revised--A.B.R.! Flexibility is an important step beyond Bozo consciousness.

(end)

## EVERYTHING IN A NUTSHELL

The purpose of this summary is to give an overview of the mind of an ex-Bozo.

## Cosmic View

All's fair. The Universe is impartial and open to creative change and creative solutions to your problems. The Dance of Life is a problem only when you wait for it to begin. Do your best in each situation, then let go. The Cosmic Delivery System teaches and provides continuously: learn what you can from each problem, or you must go through it again.

## Life's Absurd Conditions

It is unreasonable to expect life to be reasonable. Try looking at things another way. Suffering and misunderstandings are a real part of your life. Accept and relate with the Wacky World of your Bozo Soap Operas. Life is wacky, so learn to laugh. Sometimes you will find yourself in a reasonable situation, but don't expect it to be that way all the time. Reason is only reasonable. Life, on the other hand is Life!

## Living

Enjoy yourself one day at a time. Love and kindness are the most important human values; guard, cherish, and nourish them. Share whatever gentle love you have. Don't feel guilty if sometimes you have little to give (examine your motives if you rarely give!). Be yourself. Let others be. Reward yourself. The Universe needs a healthy, well-nourished, cared-for you. If you don't take care of yourself, who do you expect will do it for you? Enjoy feeling grateful when a loving, non-demanding gift is given to you! Enjoy giving without expectations.

## Being Human in a Cosmic context

Slow down. Simplify your life. Give up perfection (nobody's perfect). If you get in harmony with the Cosmic Rhythm, you'll know it and nothing will bother you. Don't take yourself so seriously. At least once a day, throw up your hands and cry, "Oy vay!", acknowledging your human limitations in the context of the REALLY BIG ALL-TIME SUPER-SIZE COSMIC ENERGY FACTORY AND COSMOGONIC DANCING DOUGHNUT (or bagel) SHOP.