

Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out

Timothy Leary PhD

1966

First installment of a regular column syndicated by EVO [*East Village Other*] for *L.A. Free Press*, *Berkeley Barb*, *Fifth Estate*, & *The Paper*

Introduction

This is the first of a series of columns by Timothy Leary, Ph.D. spelling out a theory and method of becoming a conscious person. The blueprint for a new religion. The working plan for a new species. The subsequent columns will present detailed, practical, day-by-day, step-by-step instructions, for rearranging your life, for establishing a harmony with your nervous system, your cells, your molecules and the multiple energy networks around you.

The lessons are designed to be decoded at several levels of consciousness. They can be read when you are in a state of routine symbolic awareness. They can (and should) be read when your symbolic mind is turned down and your sense organs are turned on.

Check these words out with your naked sense endings; check them out against your cellular wisdom.

Lesson I

Turn on!
Tune in!
Drop out!

Lesson II

Turn on to your seven external sense organs and your seven internal sense organs. Turn on to your cellular wisdom. Turn on to your molecular blueprints.

Tune in to the natural energy that covers this planet.

Drop out. Your body is not designed to deal with metal, stone, symbols, machinery. Start an orderly, peaceful sequence of detaching yourself from artifacts. Your symbol-addicted society tells you to turn off, cash in, cop out.

Your cells tell you to turn on, tune in, drop out.

Lesson III

Turn on! The human body is a galaxy of energy systems, memory banks, communication networks. The current model of a billion-year experiment in receiving, decoding and harmonizing with energy. The history of evolution

is stored in DNA strands buried in your cells and available to consciousness. It is possible for the knowledgeable person to move consciousness precisely and planfully to these various levels. You can “turn on” with or (partially) without chemicals. In the next few months in these columns I shall teach you how.

Tune in! The human body is designed to adapt smoothly to the other energy systems in this planet. After you “tune in” you must be able to hook-up your expanded consciousness in a harmonious flow with the external world. In the next few months in these columns I shall teach you how to rearrange your movements and your environment.

Drop out! Modern civilization is a dangerous, insane process-destructive of man’s natural potential, murderous to other species of life, symbol addicted, anti-life. Drop out of the social game.

The generation of Americans under the age of thirty is a mutant species, sharing territory with a dangerous, deviant species (i.e. those over the age of thirty who are addicted to power, control and violence). To preserve your sanity and return to harmonious order you must quit your attachments to American society gracefully, lovingly, planfully.

Quit school. Present education methods are neurologically crippling and antagonistic to your cellular wisdom. Quit school internally by turning on and tuning in. When you have done this (and not before) quit school. For good.

American social institutions are made by robots for robots—lustful of and observed by materials, things, dead symbols. Quit your job internally and then (and not before) quit your job. For good.

It is possible to live in this planet without joining the anti-life social systems: I shall teach you how.

Exercise I

Go into a serene environment—a quiet room, a hillside, a beach, a garden.

Bring with you an unopened tin can, a candle, a piece of fruit (sliced open so the seed is visible). Have one shoe on and the other foot’ bare.

Observe these three objects and meditate on the fact that your body is two billion years old.

fifth Estate

Timothy Leary PhD
Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out
1966

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/9-june-1966/turn-on-tune-in-drop-out>
Fifth Estate #9, June, 1966

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net