



## **Becoming Truly Independent, by Andrew Cohen**

Many people have told me that they find something and then lose it. They wait and they seek, and then find and lose it again. Most of the time, seekers are trying to rediscover or re-attain something that they tasted but lost touch with. The reason that we lose touch with that which is most important, precious and sacred, is not that it's far from us or distant, it's because it's not the most important thing for us. Often people take things for granted that are very near to them. Wives take their husbands for granted, husbands take their wives for granted, parents take their children for granted, children take their parents for granted. That which is most dear and so close to us is easy to forget the significance of. This also has to do with our own heart. It's the easiest thing to move away from, even though in certain states of consciousness it appears to be the most important thing there is. Sometimes something is so close that we tend to not give it the kind of importance that it deserves. We live in a world in which most people give the greatest importance to things that are impermanent and ultimately insignificant, and very few people give the greatest importance to that which is imperishable and has the greatest significance. This is about a willingness to re-educate ourselves. If we recognize ourselves to be unfree or not as free as we know is possible, it is because of choices that we make all the time, without being aware of it. If that's the case, we have to make the effort to find out which choices take us away from where we think we want to be. We have to remember that the goal is never moving from where we always have been, never straying from there, and never losing touch with what's most important -- always allowing that to come first before anything else. When we get to that point, our work is over: there is nothing left to do. Then we will become truly independent individuals.

--Andrew Cohen