

MEDITATION 13



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TRADITIONAL practice of spirituality and a made-up, "new age" version is immense. Traditional rituals and images rise out of an historical fog in which founders and authorities are more mythological than personal, and in which so many different layers of meaning lie packed together that the sacred literature becomes genuine poetry. This inexhaustible richness is entirely different from one person's intentional program of spiritual progress.

Tradition is often confused with institution, yet we could be guided by countless generations of ancestors without becoming oppressed by the words and structures they have left behind. We could be members of an institution without sacrificing our intelligence or our capacity to think and choose.

Tradition is a pool of imagination, and not a basis for authority.