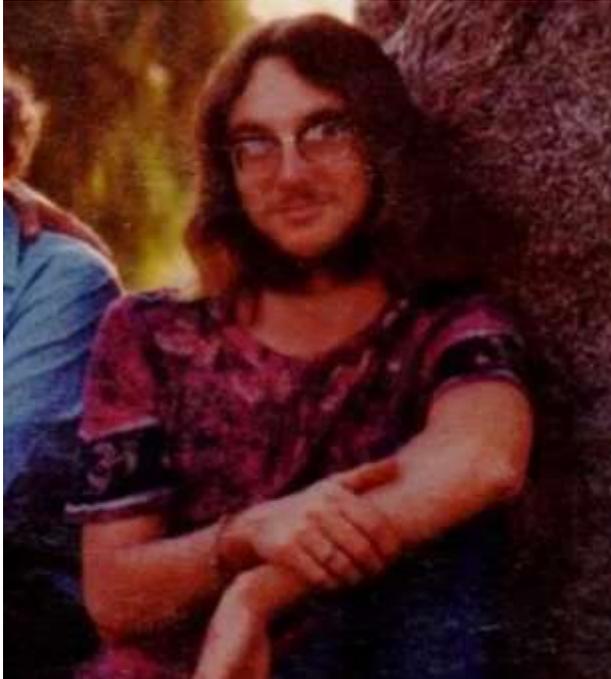


I was a Hippie who joined the Unification Church

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A couple weeks after turning 19 years old in Oxnard, California in September, 1974, my brother, my girlfriend and I left home in my brother's old 1956 bread-truck style camper that had a bed, stove and ice box. We left while my parents were away on a trip and I left them a note to not worry, we would be fine. That was my inadequate good-bye as an independent hippie, "thanks for raising me and now see you later." Our plan was to look for spiritual communes to live with, learn from and if needed, move on to find another one until we felt at home.

I was the glue for this unusual trinity, it was my girlfriend and it was my brother, Don, who had problems, mental, social who ended up living as a homeless man in this same van until he died in 2011. I wanted to take him away from our Dad because of their fighting. Don was good at auto mechanics which became extremely necessary right away as the van broke down. I had just

finished working at a summer camp at Griffith Park in Los Angeles for boys with problems: fighters, rock throwers, fire starters, etc. I called the camp up and asked if we could stay at the camp while we repaired the van. We weren't about to go back home even though it was less than a hundred miles away. It ended up taking several weeks for Don, with what help I could provide, to fix the van that had a bent drive shaft. Our money was running short by this time, but I kept encouraging them that everything would be alright. I was the spiritual one of the group having gone through my Christian phase at 14 to 15 years old then looking into Buddhism, reincarnation, and past life regression. I felt that we were being taken care of and guided by God.

Finally we were on our way again thinking to head towards Oregon first. We stopped in Berkeley because I remembered from an earlier family trip that on Telegraph Avenue heading out from the Berkeley University campus, hippies would sell their arts and crafts on the sidewalk. That is always a draw for me, arts and crafts, as I like to dabble in various crafts. The three of us also wandered on the Berkeley campus and saw two young women smiling and one was playing a guitar at a booth, with a poster board proclaiming a community where people contribute their skills and talents to make an ideal society while studying the teaching of Jesus, Confucius and Buddha. Well, of course, they snagged us. That's what we were looking for. That was Friday, October 4, 1974 that we first met Poppy Pavior (now Richie) and Nadine Hack. They invited us to come to a fraternity house on Hearst Avenue for an evening program.

The house was alive with music, food, happy people and love. We had never experienced anything like this before. During the songs people pulled out their musical instruments, some people singing hopped on chairs giving everything they had. Everyone in attendance was introduced to the evening speaker, Dr. Durst who gave a lively talk, including the story of the blind Buddhist monks who were brought to

different parts of an elephant and were later asked to describe what an elephant was. We were invited to hop on their bus to go to a camp to study more and that was leaving later that night.

In the time before the bus was to leave Don, my girlfriend and I took a break, smoked some dope and went to a coffee shop to decide what to do. I felt like I had entered the Twilight Zone in the coffee shop. Everyone looked distorted and dark in contrast to the bright high level love explosion at Hearst house. I wanted to go to the camp, but Don and my girlfriend didn't. I went to Booneville in their bus and stayed the weekend and the next week. Don and my girlfriend came up the next weekend, stayed a few days but then left and went back to Oxnard.

After two weeks up at Booneville I was brought back to the Bay Area. I gave them all the money I had, a few hundred. That was easier than giving up my hair and beard, so they cut it off in stages until it was short. While I was at Hearst house I heard there were other centers around the country, small struggling pioneer kind of places. That's where I wanted to go. I heard that the older members were praying each morning so I asked Poppy if I could join them. I found out they got up every morning at 4:30, took a shower, and met for a prayer at 5 a.m. In the prayer they passed out a paper with all their witnessing contacts on them and my name was on the paper. I was amazed at their sacrifice, how hard they worked and how full of life and love they later gave out for each evening program. They did this every day.

A bus came back from a campaign that I later learned was returning from the Madison Square Garden speech. Poppy saw that I really wanted to go out on the next campaign, so two weeks after returning to the Bay Area from Booneville I was on a bus to join International One World Crusade (I.O.W.C.) in Washington D.C.

In the Bay Area Church at that time they taught Principles of Education, a more secular version of Divine Principle geared to grab the traveling young people who were not interested in Christianity. Yet still the teaching was exactly what I was looking for and I was a bright spirit during the workshop. It was on the bus trip that I first learned about True Father. I had heard rumors from another new member that the Messiah was on the Earth. Now seeing a picture of True Father as the Messiah I was intrigued and since he was the one who found this incredible truth I had no problems with that. I was ready to do anything for God and my new Messiah.

On the trip we sold flowers a couple hours each day and then we asked shops, pizza places, donut shops for donations and whatever was collected became our evening meal.

One night while sleeping on the bus I had a dark spiritual dream where the brother driving the bus (I don't remember who he was) attacked everyone on the bus. His face was evil and distorted. I felt that Satan was trying to scare me. It shook me up and I got out of the bus and sat by the curb waiting for the morning. But I wasn't about to leave. This was where I belonged and I knew God had brought me here.

On the way we stopped in Denver, Colorado and some of the members got off there. They were also looking for people with musical abilities so one brother who played the guitar was taken to join "The New Hope Singers."

Those remaining joined Dr. Joseph Sheftick and Michael Beard in Washington D.C. and later in Delaware witnessing, street preaching, fundraising. I heard about MFT, how members worked so hard that they fell asleep counting their money, and I knew I wanted to go to MFT. After five months on I.O.W.C. I was sent to a workshop in Barrytown to join MFT. Oh, what a life! I never wanted to live a normal life and my wish was fulfilled.