

Preface

The aim of *Help!* is to critique a sinister class of trendy books that rears its ugly head time and again. In recent months, this class has gained popularity through the much-ballyhooed *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne. However, the content of this new mental atrocity has roots going back a long time ago. In the interests of brevity, the present book focuses on the works of three masters of the game: Dr. Deepak Chopra and to a lesser, but relevant extent the best-selling authors of *The Tao of Physics* and *The Road Less Traveled*, Dr. Fritjof Capra and Dr. Scott Peck, respectively.

Byrne and Chopra are the main targets. In particular, for reasons that will become evident, Chopra is singled out throughout because he is an amalgamation of Capra and Peck, and he is also the unacknowledged synthesis by which Rhonda Byrne shouts her secret. We will focus on two of Chopra's most famous (or infamous) books: *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind* and *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*. Where appropriate, scintillating connections to Byrne's recent travesty are posited, much like the answer in *Jeop-*

ardy is resolved by a question. What category you ask? Ah! That's the secret waiting to be exposed.

In the spirit of all this self-help, one segment of this book issues the following challenge to the reader. Sentences from Chopra and Byrne's books are listed without attribution, and you will be asked to match them to the correct author. Additionally, a slightly different challenge is posed to the two authors themselves and their followers: I dare them to beat the best score of any reader to the above-mentioned challenge! Interestingly, Byrne never acknowledges Chopra. Well done, Grasshopper, for Master fails to acknowledge Capra and Peck. Chopra and Byrne are to this culture what Michael Jackson and Britney Spears are to pop music culture. To deflate the student, it is necessary and sufficient to puncture the master.

The reader is likely to entertain the questions: Should I read or watch any or all of Dr. Chopra's books or DVDs to understand this book? Should I try to discover Byrne's secret? The answer is an emphatic no. Why not?

Some definitions and abbreviations are in order at the outset. Deepak Chopra shall be called DC; his book *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind* shall be referred to as a “footnote” because, as will emerge later, its 344-page contents could be debunked via a single footnote. Yarns are a key weapon in DC’s arsenal; I will label these Choprantics, which he uses to sway his followers (Choprasinners) and to promote his philosophy (Choprasin).

Anecdotes are critical in self-help books because they deflect attention or snap readers out of sheer boredom. *Help!* also employs anecdotes to drive home key points, mainly in the form of good-natured humor. My anecdotes are given names so that the reader may quickly recall the details if they are cross-referenced.

The style of argument in certain parts of this book is intentionally dismissive, because Ms. Rhonda Byrne and Dr. Deepak Chopra are consistently flippant and conceited. The severity with which I rap them on the knuckles depends on the audacity of their claims, or, as is more often the case, when they display a toad-like ability to leap from premise to conclusion with nothing in between to assist them in such a reptilian flight.

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The chapter numbers in this book progress through -1, 0, +1, and so forth. Nobel laureate Bertrand Russell's quote at the start

of chapter -1 is sufficient to demystify much of self-help literature. But if you engaged Russell's wisdom more leisurely, as I have done in chapters 1 through 7, you would eventually encounter chapter 0. At times, the number zero connotes "useless," "failure," "nada," or "zip." Deepak Chopra's "quantum healing" paradigm is useless and is therefore described and critiqued in chapter 0. Since the followers of Byrne and Chopra are mesmerized by bizarre interpretations of scientific ideas, these self-helpers might appreciate this newer math to understand the logic behind my chapter numbering: chapter -1 + chapters 1 through 7 = chapter 0. This equation is the kernel of this book. Chapter -1 presents a concise description of the entire book. The details are presented in chapters 1 through 7. Together, they add up to the "zero" ideas to be found in most self-help literature; this is the essence of chapter 0.



Some notes: *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success* will be referred to as *The Seven Laws*, *The Road Less Traveled* as *The Road*, and *The Tao of Physics* as *The Tao*.

In this book, the words i-puke and i-crap should be interpreted as intellectual-puke, and intellectual-crap, respectively. This is in line with our penchant for words like iPod, iPhone, etc.

And so, away we go on what I hope is an informative and enjoyable experience for you.

0. The Pustulates

What is Rhonda Byrne's secret? One answer is actually on a porn site. Let's try again. What is the secret Rhonda Byrne claims she knows but you and I don't? And therein lies the premise for this debunking.

You might ask, "Why not expose Byrne? Why Deepak Chopra?" When oozing sores in private areas of the body don't dry upon protracted treatment, doctors usually infer that the underlying problem might likely be syphilis. Byrne is the sore; Deepak Chopra and his quantum-Hinduism are the basis for the underlying condition. But this is a bad metaphor because it grants Chopra the honor of being the cause of intellectual syphilis, which, without loss of generality, would be unfair to all the gurus and prophets since the beginning of time. The one in vogue and who, like Chopra, was prominently featured on Oprah is Rhonda Byrne.

Did any book reviewer really read DC's book? Who were these critics that crooned over this kind of "prose"? According to the *Washington Post*, the book was "dazzling"; the *San Francisco Chronicle* called it "enlightening"; and the *London Daily Telegraph* went so far as to claim that it was "brilliant and exhilarating." But then read what the

reviewer from the prestigious *Kirkus Reviews* has to say: “A guide to longevity that’s also a thoughtful and sometimes inspiring reflection on our remarkable place in the cosmic scheme of things.”*

I am reminded of the last scene in the horror movie *Rosemary’s Baby* where all the devil worshippers gather and chant by Satan’s child, waiting for the reluctant mother to join them. One pictures DC and all his reviewers in a room chanting and holding hands as they release another one of his books or videos. The mother of all reviews is, of course, the *New York Times* and, like the Mia Farrow character, the mother was the last to unite. The *New York Times* waited for Chopra’s *Seven Spiritual Laws of Success* to be published before finally succumbing to the numbing comfort to be found in herd idiocy: “A must-read for anyone who missed *The Prophet*, by Kahlil Gibran.”†



† This blurb appears on the back cover of *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*.

The mythologist Joseph Campbell unwittingly came up with a perfect description of gurus and grasshoppers such as Chopra and Byrne in the title of his best-selling book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, to which we may add “and every one of them is ugly.” The guru culture has a disturbing agenda. It wants to sell recycled notions after dressing them up in gaudy non sequiturs and garbled statements. And it will succeed because societies—both Eastern and Western—are learning what to think as opposed to how to think. In the age of text messaging, Post-Its, and Cliffs Notes, brevity in writing and speech is now valued for a new reason: they must say little or nothing. To the list of just-isms, such as “Just do it,” “Just say no,” etc., must be added the guru’s dictum, “Just don’t think.”

How does one gain the title of “guru”? How does a person freeload without giving the game away? How do you write new “secrets” containing no secrets whatsoever or maybe many secrets? In other words, how does one become the next Paperback Guru?

Anecdote Secret Atoms: Consider the following from page 47 of DC's footnote:

I am not my atoms, they come and go.

I am not my thoughts, they come and go.

I am not my ego, my self-image changes.

I am above and beyond these; I am the witness, the interpreter, the Self beyond the self-image.

Now consider this from page 168 of Byrne's *The Secret*: "I AM receiving every good thing. I AM happy. I AM abundant. I AM healthy. I AM love. I AM always on time. I AM eternal youth. I AM filled with energy every single day...I am whole, perfect, strong, powerful, loving, harmonious, and happy."

If you have trouble swallowing the above atoms and secrets, there is an intelligent and succinct alternative spoken by Al Franken of *Saturday Night Live*: "I am good enough, I am smart enough, and doggone it, people like me!"

As we will see, without the piggybacking habit, no self-help book can be written. There will always be a Berlin Wall between this scheme and plagiarism. Consider any one of the three passages posed as a challenge a little earlier. If the content in that passage were, say, a formal idea from quantum physics or an original poem, then any unacknowledged attempt to piggyback would be squarely plagiarism. But since the content has no discernible meaning whatsoever, any type of unacknowledged piggybacking is fair game. For instance, many of the Choprasin postulates appear to be unacknowledged rephrasing of the postulates that are given in Capra's *Tao*; the latter, of course, is devoid of intelligent content. Hence, the Choprasin postulates suffer from the same disease. By discussing the piggybacking maneuver, in a most critical sense, the aim of this debunking has been realized. Pick any two general self-help books off the shelf and compare passages at random from them.* You will inevitably discover clever ways in which the two authors piggyback on other self-help writers' prose or on each other's. *The Secret* doesn't hide this! Byrne audaciously includes photos of prominent self-help writers whose piggybacked quotes comprise a major component of the book.

* Self-help books dealing with coping with illness, learning to eat right, etc., are not part of this critique. But even in these categories, suitably modified arguments along the lines developed here can be easily made. For example, you could start with *Coping with Cancer Stress*, written in 1986 by Basil Stoll and Avery Weissman, and *Coping with Cancer*, written seventeen years later by Holly Cefrey. Setting aside the virtually identical titles momentarily, Cefrey completes the piggybacking on Stoll's book title in the following: "There are things you can do to lower your stress level." Holly Cefrey, *Coping with Cancer*, (New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2003), 83. She could have spared herself the trouble of writing and simply referred us to Stoll's book, which is not even included in her list of recommended readings on the topic!

Chopra piggybacks on his own ideas by writing similar stuff in all his books!

“A youthful mind is playful and lighthearted. Laughter is the best medicine. We encourage you to have the intention to lighten up and be open to the wonder and delight of living a human life,” writes DC on pages 219–220 of *Grow Younger, Live Longer*. “Laughter attracts joy, releases negativity, and leads to miraculous cures.” This is Grasshopper on page 139 of *The Secret* piggybacking on Master’s laughable banality above. Note the wily manner in which Byrne introduces the phrase “miraculous cures” in her quote. Substitute this phrase with “quantum healing” and the piggybacking on Choprasin would be complete. Interestingly, “quantum healing” is not a miracle in the sense of the Second Coming. The latter is clearly understood (improbable as it may be); the former cannot because it is nonsensical. The Second Coming might invite tepid conversation at dinner. Quantum healing would ruin dinner altogether. This is perhaps why Bertrand Russell noted that modern dogmas are more harmful than old ones (see section 0.4 of this book).

1.6 Questionnaires

While all of the above should guarantee a successful self-help book, you can be totally assured of its success if you also included questionnaires in your book. Questionnaires, opinion polls, and satisfaction surveys, as we all know, are ubiquitous these days. Here I discuss this feature of self-help writing.

Not satisfied with his i-puke, DC launched yet another book. *The Path to Love* is the guru's invasion into psychobabble land. Note from the title of his book how this foxhog is coming full circle! One of the caveats to becoming a successful guru, I wrote earlier, is to avoid the word *God*. But the truly successful guru, DC, comes full circle in *The Path*. DC stated in an article in *Family Circle* magazine that "Love can heal. Love can renew...and bring us closer to God."¹⁵

The novelty of quantum mechanics that was needed to give an impression of scientific credibility to his pustulates, now pathetically raises its feeble head from a "black hole" into which DC stuffed it. DC claimed in *Family Circle*, "We know that black holes in space suck energy out of the universe. The psyche also has 'black holes,' which are really the fears we carry around with us." The novelty of quantum physics has been reduced to the status of a dubious analogy, the desire to continue with the ancient notion of a god is back in vogue openly, the search for the needle in the haystack has resumed, and the sales of sesame seed oil, ayurvedic herbs, and ghee continue to rise.

Recall from section 1.1 that you have to include practice exercises to promote your "theory." When you have mental cramps dreaming up such exercises, don't panic. There is a simple alter-

native—survey questionnaires. When your followers answer your questions, they'll start practicing your morals and ethics. How so? I'll answer this shortly.

DC has multiple questionnaires in his books, a few of which were referred to in the article in *Family Circle*. Some examples include “What Worries You Most?” “What Makes You Feel Secure?” and “How Independent Are You?” The three key words with popular appeal are: *worry*, *security*, and *independence*. One wonders if DC consulted the psychoanalyst Dr. Scott Peck before he invented his questionnaires; after all, answers to questions such as the ones above were part of Peck's labor of grace, diffidently titled as *The Road Less Traveled*.

DC uses the words *action plan* and *in practice* interchangeably in his books. On page 172 of his footnote, he bald-facedly asserts, “The following ‘In Practice’ section is devoted to ending this struggle by the technique that finally works...” The “struggle” to which he alludes is our “unrealized self.” And this “technique that finally works” is nothing more than a set of extemporized questionnaires that is supposedly going to help us realize our self. On reading this segment of his book, any reader, at a minimum, should have considered getting DC some serious non-stop non-quantum healing to assuage his peculiar cerebral spasms. Since when did questionnaires with invented scoring rules qualify unequivocally as instruments that “work” even in clearly defined contexts such as political opinion polls, let alone the fuzzy context-less context of transitioning from unrealized to realized selves?

I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that if you attempt to become a guru and are not successful, you would have, at the very least, acquired the skills needed to graduate from a business school, majoring in corporate strategy or organizational behavior. One of these “difficult skills” taught in

business schools, for example, is how to create an effective questionnaire, much like what the self-help guru does in his best sellers. The questions are designed to be repetitive, insinuating, and self-serving—the conclusions that you draw from the data should be no different than the insights of an astrologer. Why bother with business school? I will show you how it's done. But first let's take a look at a questionnaire that Chopra constructs on pages 293–296 of his footnote.

He writes on page 293: “To discover where you are on the scale of time-bound versus timeless awareness, answer the following questionnaire.” Note how cunningly he has collated two words from our list in section 1.1, namely “timeless awareness.” What does it mean? I don't know. Do you? The point is that he is going to help us draw inferences about an undefined idea! The i-puke starts with a dribble, namely the title, “How Do You Metabolize Time?” The dribble quickly becomes an uncontrollable deluge. He wants you to tick off statements that best apply to you. There are thirty statements in all, divided evenly into two parts: (1) time-bound and (2) timeless. Statements under (a) include, for example, “Life is a balance of losses and gains; I just try to have more gains than losses.” Under (b), for example, “I feel unique.” He advises, “Some of the statements in Part 1 may seem to contradict others in Part 2, but that doesn't matter.” Well, by George! Thanks for *that* clarification. So how well would you do on this diabolical test? “If you score higher on Part 1...for you, time is linear; it often runs short and will eventually run out...You are likely to value excitement and positive emotions more highly than inner peace and nonattachment.” He goes on, “If you scored higher on Part 2, you tend to be timeless in your awareness...You value detachment over possessiveness; your motivations tend to be internal rather than external.”

And to think this naked emperor has succeeded in attracting so many followers!*

In the following, I faithfully mimic Chopra, including the manner in which he invents scoring rules. For this example, I've developed a questionnaire on the topic of sex, which will not fail to lure readers in today's society.

* Recall that David Van Biema in his *Time* magazine article on Chopra titled his column as "Emperor of the Soul."

2. Insect Nation

The only regret I have in writing this book is the time I spent reading *The Secret*—time that was irrevocably lost. When I completed *The Secret*, I was left with the thought that Rhonda Byrne makes even Deepak Chopra appear intelligent. The Grasshopper is almost one up on the Master. Among the collection of self-help books, it would be safe to say *The Secret*, by far, is the most appalling. I am trying to set aside annoyance as I write, but at this moment it is the dominant emotion, much like the indignation that the prominent comic Lewis Black feels. And so, to use a tactic from the Grasshopper's *Secret*, I shall “go with that feeling” for a while and see where it gets me.

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Grasshopper begins with the gathering of insects that have appellations resembling human names, such as Bob Proctor, Bob Doyle, Dr. Joe Vitale, John Assaraf, Lisa Nichols, Marci Shimoff, etc. These are specimens from some strange world where their qualifications and professions include such oxymoronic combinations

as philosopher/author/personal coach; metaphysician/marketing specialist/author; entrepreneur/moneymaking expert; philosopher/chiropractor/healer/personal transformation coach; psychologist/trainer in the field of mind potential; author/teacher/life coach/motivational speaker; and investment trainer/teacher/wealth specialist. Recently, Chopra's qualifications on *Larry King Live* read as doctor/spiritual leader/healer. Could this be an abbreviation for endocrinologist/Hindu physicist/sesame-seed-oil-massage-parlor owner/Zen-Hindu-Buddhist-Christian-Sufi master/yoga instructor/ghee-recipe designer/mantra chanter?

2.3 Mantodea Sudoku

Attempts to visualize weird sounds and things are pet gimmicks in Master and Grasshopper's books; we saw some examples of these in chapter 1. Also, they have an unnatural and unhealthy obsession with wanting to be childlike. While humoring these features, this segment also constructs a contest for Byrne, Capra, Chopra, Peck, and their followers. Pretend you are watching the following skit on *Mad TV* or *Saturday Night Live*.

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Every weekend at their trailer park, the insects spend hours playing a favorite game of theirs called mantodea sudoku.* The goal of the game is to determine the author of the texts written by Capra, Peck, Grasshopper, and Master; i.e., who is the guru? This weekend at the boisterous gathering, Capra and Peck have decided to join the family fun, as they float in from their retirement trailer

* Mantodea is the insect family comprising of various praying mantis. The word "mantis" is from the Greek, meaning "seer" or "prophet." We translate it to mean "guru."

park. The trailer of the sesame-seed-oiled Desi is the Master's home in the colony by which, in a large tent, all the insects are humming.

Similar to human sudoku, but unlike it, this game has only two levels of difficulty. Budding insects that have read the gurus' works play the first level. At this easier level, the contestant will be presented with two statements. The contestant has to succeed in pairing them correctly to the correct author. The difficulty here is that it is possible none of the authors on the list wrote the statements, in which case the contestant should point that out. The reward is the privilege of writing a self-help book.

3. My Seven Laws to Combat the Seven Choprasin Laws

As noted earlier, the *New York Times* applauded DC's caricature of thought titled *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*. How could anyone at the *New York Times* have compared Kahlil Gibran's writing to DC's, especially given the Global Network for Spiritual Success pseudo advert that appears at the very end of DC's book? Whether or not one enjoys Gibran's epic, *The Prophet*, it is a work of sincere art, which its author nurtured through four years of anguish and failing health. Hence, nearly one hundred years since it first appeared, it remains one of the most popular gift items at any august occasion.

In contrast, in "giving" us his seven so-called spiritual laws, with a pretentiousness that is despicable, DC writes in his pseudo advert at the end of *The Seven Laws* that "I can wish you no greater blessing." How dare a pseudo-moralistic businessman wish the reader any blessing in light of the hypocrisy surrounding Choprasin and its practices! Journalism must have austere standards. Shame on you, *New York Times*!

3.8 Summary and Conclusions

You would have hoped that at this stage in spreading his i-crap, DC would come to a full stop. But no, he saves the worst for last. His “Summary and Conclusions” in *The Seven Laws* starts with—guess what?—another quote, this one from Albert Einstein: “I want to know God’s thoughts...the rest are details.”²²

There’s a pattern to DC’s pathology even in his choice of quotes. In the first seven chapters, he starts with a metaphysical quote or a quote from a mystic poet. And in his conclusions, he links these to a quote from a physicist in an attempt to establish a modicum of scientific merit to his ramblings. With spectacular egotism, he concludes on page 108 by saying: “[The applications of the seven spiritual laws are] the genius of nature’s intelligence. These are the thoughts of God—the rest are details.” The dullest Choprasinner should be able to deduce the pompous insinuation in that quote.

In the pseudo advert at the end of *The Seven Laws*, DC says he will send us a wallet-sized card summarizing his seven laws. His reason: to be able to reach a critical mass of people. Thus, he would like us to start a ritual that begins on a Sunday with the law of pure potentiality and ends with the law of dharma on a Saturday. The idea behind this rite is for the network of Choprasinners to discuss their experiences as they practice the seven Choprasin laws. To repeat DC’s quote from the last chapter, “If the experiences are dramatic, which at times they will be, I invite you to write them down and mail them to me.” The translation of this quote is translucent. Curiously, twenty-four-hour news channels are employing a similar ruse. With nothing worthwhile to report all day and night, CNN started I-Report wherein viewers send stories to the network. Most of these stories range from the absurd to the irrelevant. In the context of “dramatic experiences,” Byrne quotes Michael Bernard Beckwith on page 134 of *The Secret*: “I’ve seen kidneys regenerated.

Paul Damien

I've seen cancer dissolved. I've seen eyesight improve and come back." It seems like Beckwith is an elite Choprasinner with unique and unlimited access to some very sick people. Is Beckwith Jesus 2.0? This downgraded version apparently doesn't perform miracles; it merely reports them.

4. The Three Tenors

When the Three Tenors—Carreras, Domingo, and Pavarotti—first performed in Rome, it was not too shabby, given that their motive was to popularize opera. The second performance in Los Angeles had the flavor of souring cheese. Their last performance in New Jersey was downright foul. Unlike the Three Tenors, the

4.4 The Psycho-Hindu-Physics

In the following mock dialogues, the absurdity of some of DC's practices with breathing, oils, spices, and mantras is critiqued. In this regard, pages 261–276 of his footnote are stupefying gibberish or platitudes. For example, on page 275 he writes, "If you feel uncomfortable living in a dry, cold windy climate, consider moving to a warm one, which is more conducive to Vata balance." Man, are you for real? Additionally, the dialogues lampoon the promiscuous nature of the three men's prose and their unhinged obsession with "proofs" of non-ideas. Again, pretend you are watching this skit on *Mad TV* or *Saturday Night Live*.

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A pet of mine, a friendly fly, traveled timelessly through quantum space and found itself in a flat near Imperial College, London—the college where Capra was besieged by the idea of writing about his Siva visions. I graduated from Imperial College, but my colleagues and I were not privy to Siva's cosmic capers. Guess we weren't as lucky. Damn! Here's what my fly reported:

The Scene: Capra is sobbing hysterically. Peck looks at him dispassionately while DC is mixing sesame seed oil, ginger roots, and rosemary in a large porcelain bowl.

5. The Guru

On occasion, DC has said he doesn't like to be known as a guru. Indeed, according to *Time* magazine, "He hates the term guru..."³¹ The potential reasons for his dislike of the word are explored in this chapter. Also, an example of how to create a self-help video, not unlike DC's *The Way of the Wizard*, after building off just one buzz phrase, is described.

* Another connotation of the Sanskrit word *guru* could be "the one who shows or points."

6.4 The Safe Salman Shankara Rushdie

The main aim of this section is to demonstrate how Eastern born gurus like DC promote their i-crap to the West and East. DC attempts to glorify Eastern scriptures to the West. His Eastern audiences are likely to be pleasantly puzzled that an MD trained in the West could find value in scriptures that very few people care to understand. This ability to dip into everything everywhere is a safe way to appease and draw a wide range of people. If self-help gurus could attract Christians, Taoists, Buddhists, Hindus, corporate officers, etc., their target market is obviously widened. We teach this type of marketing strategy in business schools, using the catchword “globalization.” Thus, the all-embracing strategy of self-help gurus ensures brisk sales of their products globally. Hence, in conjunction with the other sections, this chapter is titled “Universal B.S., Deadened Buyers.”

It is interesting that you won't find many Muslims in the self-helpers' spiritual globalization marketing plan. This is not for lack of trying. Chopra has edited a collection of poems by Rumi, the Persian Sufi poet. The poems are as wallowing as a conversation at a *stammtisch*. But Chopra finds glee over cheesy, sappy verses such as this one from page 15 of *The Love Poems of Rumi*: “In the orchard and rose garden / I long to see your face. / In the taste of Sweetness / I long to kiss your lips. / In the shadows of passion / I long for your love.” The phrase *ageless body, timeless mind*, in one sense, describes the notion of eternity to be found in all religious beliefs. Obviously, different beliefs have different variations on the theme. The brain washing of young men by Islamic *madrasas* to partake in suicide bombings is driven by the Islamic version of *The Virgin Suicides*:

Islamic eternity = ageless body and timeless mind + 72 virgin girls. Self-help gurus can't promise the latter additive factor. Perhaps this is why their marketing plans have failed with this group of people. Hard as I have tried, I am unable to find the female version of the above equation in any Islamic religious text. Hence, young Islamic women that may be considering suicide bombing are one possible target market for self-help gurus such as DC.

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7. Some Final Thoughts

In this chapter, following the Grasshopper and Master's suggestion, I become childlike. I revisit a childhood song, "Old McDonald Had a Farm," but with new lyrics. I hope Grasshopper and Master, if they are true to their word, find my childlike attempt gratifying. But first let's take care of some unfinished business.

7.2 Old Man Chopra

Throughout, I have referred to DC's first and most famous book, *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*, as a footnote. Here, then, is the reason. As previously noted in some parts of *Help!*, Professor Ernest Gellner's form of argument was given, or modified, to accommodate the critique that this book has attempted. I saved the most telling for last.

Gellner's most debilitating attack on linguistic philosophers, particularly Ludwig Wittgenstein, is tucked away innocuously as a footnote. Gellner's book is extremely technical and unfortunately will not survive in popular literature. But his footnote warrants repeating because, with a minor change, it applies verbatim to DC's first book, which does not qualify even as a footnote.