

The Translucent Revolution by Arjuna Ardagh
From Chapter Three:
Becoming Translucent

Webster's dictionary defines translucent as "letting light pass through, but not transparent." A transparent object, like a clean sheet of glass, is almost invisible. You see everything through a transparent object as if it were not there at all. An opaque object, on the other hand, blocks light completely. A translucent object allows light to pass through, but diffusely, while maintaining its form and texture. Objects on the other side cannot be clearly distinguished. A crystal is translucent. So is a sculpture of frosted glass: if the sun were to shine on it from behind, you would see the light passing through the sculpture, and it would appear to be glowing from the inside.

Translucent people also appear to glow from the inside. They have access to their deepest nature as peaceful, limitless, free, unchanging, and at the same time they remain fully involved in the events of their personal lives. Thoughts, fears, and desires still come and go; life is still characterized by temporary trials, misfortunes, and stress. But the personal story is no longer opaque: it is now capable of reflecting something deeper, more luminous and abiding, that can shine through it.

Contemporary transluents defy many of the spiritual concepts we have inherited from religious traditions. The thousands of people I have spoken to in researching this book are not recluses. They play vigorously in their relationships with others, their work, their creativity, and their political and environmental causes, but they play to play more than to win. Transluents display an above-average generosity of spirit. Giving to other people and to the environment replaces Iago's habits, based in lack, desire, and need. Above all, transluents have a humorous and often irreverent relationship to their personal life, beliefs, and identity.

Transluents do not fit established pigeonholes. They generally don't follow one particular teacher, teaching, or group, although many have in their past. They are not "spiritual" in any way that can be obviously recognized through lifestyle choices. As a group they display as wide a variety of occupations, appearance, and educational and cultural backgrounds as humanity itself. They generally don't identify themselves as "enlightened" or as having attained anything, and they are also not trying to become enlightened. They are not overly materialistic or spiritually cynical. Transluents are not uniformly vegetarians, political liberals, religious zealots, new age hippies, or self-improvement junkies. And they don't all wear Birkenstocks.

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You can buy the Translucent Revolution from all good bookstores, or from
www.transluents.org, from mid June 2005.