

## The Learning Project

by Lincoln Stoller

### **Gudrun Sperrer, Butterfly Farming, Wild Animal Rehabilitation**

Interviewed near her home in Iquitos, Peru. July 6th, 2006

Born: 1961, in Steyr, Austria.

*“Muhammed says, ‘I come before sunrise to chain you and drag you off.’ It’s amazing, and funny, that you have to be pulled away from being tortured, pulled out into this Spring garden, but that’s the way it is. Almost everyone must be bound and dragged here. Only a few come of their own.”*

— *Jalal ad-Din Rumi, 13th century Persian poet, Islamic jurist, and theologian, from The Illuminated Rumi, by Coleman Barks. (Broadway Books, 1997, p. 50, p. 74)*

#### **GS:**

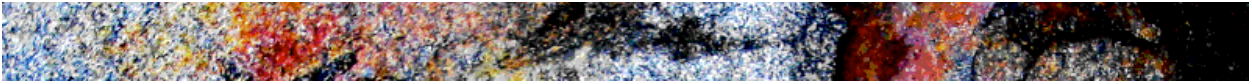
What I wanted to do was a little bit similar to what I am doing, but it concerned human beings. I’m a social worker, that’s what I studied, and when I came to Peru I thought I’d go around, do some tourism and, as I got a 1-year ticket the idea was doing some social work here. People need so many things, there is so little health care or security. That was the original idea when I came in 1982.

I’d finished school and worked for a few months with drug addicts and alcoholics. You want to do something, you want to do some good, and they don’t want it, or the drug is stronger than you. I wanted to go away from Austria, thinking of doing some social work in South America.

From the time when I was small I had wanted to be a veterinarian, and I always walked the dogs of our neighbor who was a veterinarian, and he was actually the reason I did not study veterinary medicine. He told me “you’re not strong enough, you’re a woman.” I believed him. And one more reason was a guy, a friend of mine, an older student who studied veterinary medicine, who told me that in Austria after you finish studying you have to work for one year at a slaughter house.

I came to Peru with a friend of mine, she had been studying social work with me. She had quit working in a psychiatric hospital. She couldn’t stand the way they treated the patients, and as we were very good friends we decided to go somewhere else. I wanted to go to South America, so I convinced her. She wanted for us to go to India. And then we didn’t know where exactly to go — I was actually thinking of Mexico first. We looked at our money and the cheapest thing was a 1-year ticket with Aeroflot to Peru. And that’s how we came here.

She fell in love quite soon with a Peruvian guy and I still wanted to travel and come to the Amazon. So she stayed around Cuzco and I came here. Here I just loved the animals, and I loved nature, and I also I loved the people. More than people in the Highlands or in the Coast, you might have noticed, they’re just so sweet. I mean they can be a nuisance too because they’re so curious. You have absolutely no privacy, they want to know everything. And if you give them an answer they still want to know “... but *why*... but *WHY?!*” (laughs). It’s somehow like children: naive, nice, open.



That was the first impression, but now I'm sometimes angry at them because they're not into learning things, which is something I hate: to be happy only with what you know. To want to change things, that's what I miss a little bit. I notice this with my students. Everybody hates politics, and I say "But you're in the middle of it!" But it was definitely part of the reason why I stayed here: the people and how they treated me ... well besides, nature.

I first looked for a place to stay outside of town because I couldn't afford a hotel. I spoke a little Spanish and I went to the villages where they told me there was a family with a house on the river where nobody lives... but maybe I could live there. The house was on the river, nowhere, no village nearby, nothing, and they raised pigs and hens there. They had an old Indian there taking care of the animals, but the problem was the Indian was a drunkard and — phst! — he would disappear for two days taking a chicken to sell so he could afford to drink, and meanwhile a pig was stolen. So they wanted someone to look after him, or to be there when he was gone. So I started to live there, with the guy in the house, and I started to learn Spanish.

I had seen people selling earrings, as I'd been to Cuzco before, and I had things to make earrings with both the ceramic and the beads, so I started to do those things when I had time and exchange them for food, firewood. And I also came to Iquitos to sell them. That was in the 1980's and at that time there was nobody. It was really different: a gringa selling earrings in the street. I used to come barefoot because I like to go barefoot. One day somebody came by and they took me a pair of sandals and they put them in front of me and they said "you have to use shoes in town." (laughs)

**LS:**

*So how did you slip from taking care of chickens and pigs on the street to owning a butterfly farm and rescuing animals?*

**GS:**

I'm not an artist, I got bored just doing earrings. And when I went with the old Indian to the village where he'd get his booze I noticed there was a school and I asked him about it. He said "Yes, it's a school, it's a primary school with about 70 pupils and there is one teacher."

And I come from a teacher family, my mother is a teacher and my father is a psychologist but he taught too, and I thought that's something I'd like to do: help children and maybe teach something. If it's just one guy with 70 children for up to 6<sup>th</sup> grade they would need some help. I didn't speak much Spanish but the teacher told me to teach 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> level. I was quite lost and I asked him if he had any books and he told me no, he has one book for 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade but he used it.

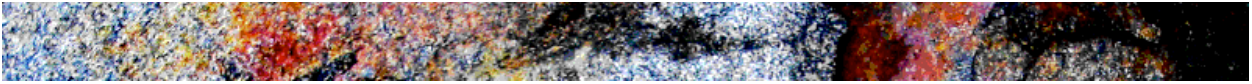
I asked if they had a map, and he had a map of the world. They had never used it and I remember when I unrolled it, it was the first time, and I showed them where Austria was just to tell them where I come from. It was useless: they had never seen a map (laughs)!

**LS:**

*But he wasn't paying you, was he?*

**GS:**

No. No, the people of the village paid me with fish or with firewood. Then I started teaching 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, instead of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. And in the first few weeks I did a lot of walks through the



village to get to know the village. That's how I learned more Spanish: the children just told me that's that, and that is that, and that is who and who, and I got to know the people and I got to know the things. And they learned mostly to wash their hands after going to the toilet...(laughs)... basic things they hadn't known before. And then I taught them writing and counting and a little bit of reading.

**LS:**

*Are you a good teacher?*

**GS:**

People say I'm a good teacher, I don't know, I'm never content with what I'm doing. They didn't learn everything I wanted them to so much. Later on, when I taught kindergarten, I'd think, "What have I done in one year? What have they learned?" And it's very little, for me it's little. For the kindergarten the only change that I thought I'd done for these children is that maybe they wash their hands after going to the toilet and they brush their teeth (laughs). At least when they had a toothbrush — normally they don't have one. That's not much.

**LS:**

*You still haven't gotten to the animals.*

**GS:**

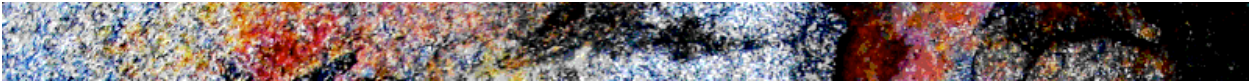
Ahhh! Then I wanted to do something for the village, for the school as there were no materials. I wrote to Austria to ask if they could help us and I found an aid organization that was interested and they told me to make a project. I wrote the project with the people with the village, they told what they wanted to do and what we could help for it. They wanted some program for vaccines, and they wanted to make money breeding pigs or hens. And our proposal was accepted.

We got the wife of the teacher to teach people so they could become nurses, public health, we got vaccines, we made a water tank, we made toilets for the school because people have no toilets. And then the people wanted to start breeding pigs, so we started breeding pigs.

I got tired, not tired but disappointed when I noticed that with the money coming from somewhere else the people did less and less on their own initiative. They were just waiting.

For example, we had gotten money to build a big, beautiful pig stie. Really solid with declining floors so they'd be easy to wash it. We bought water pumps to make it to easy to get water from the creek. Everything was perfect, but they had to plan things for the food because the grant did not include money for the feeding of the pigs. The project was working until money stopped coming from Austria, and then they let loose the pigs so that they could find their own food. Then a few pigs were killed by yucca farmers who were not integrated in the project: the pigs were going and eating their yucca.

I left then, in the middle of all this because I had the last chance to take a paid flight to Europe, so I went away for 3 weeks. When I came back after three weeks I had the surprise that not only all the pigs had gone, they had sold them without even getting them big, they had also sold the water pump for less than a tenth of the price we had bought it. They got just enough so that each member of the association could get drunk once. And they had removed the water tank -- — which was to have drinking water for the children — and had put it into the church. It was the



time of the feast of the patron of the village, and so they had filled the water tank with masato, the yucca beer.

Now I can laugh about it because if you think about it it's really funny: it must have been great: you have a 500 liter tank and you open the tap and masato comes out just like beer — great! But I was really angry at them then, I mean that wasn't the idea!

**LS:**

*Did they put it back afterwards?*

**GS:**

No, I think it's still up in the church.

And I noticed how they treat the animals, and I had raised a few and released them and if they stayed in the area they'd be killed. Mostly wild monkeys and sloths, but also capybaras. When people kill the mothers and are left with the baby animal they feed the baby animals water and sugar, since they don't have milk for their own children. The animals take it for a few days and then they die, or they run away. And as I don't have any children, and I had some money, I'd spend it on milk and vitamins and I raised the baby animals I got from them.

**LS:**

*And the land, where did you get the land that you now have?*

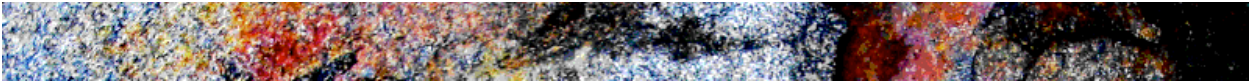
**GS:**

The land I bought from a German lady. I had worked at that place when it was a zoo and a lodge. That was in the late 80's, a German lady started it. And then her husband left her and she married a Peruvian guy and he spent all her money and in the end, he made I don't know how many women pregnant in the village and she wanted to go away with him. And I had worked with her for about 2 months, helping her with the monkeys because she needed somebody who really cares for the animals, not just for the money.

She then tried to sell the place but she wanted US\$500,000 for it because that's what she had spent. There were 12 hectares of land and I think 10 bungalows with furniture. She had lots of cages and she had the animals, she had walkways, she had a restaurant, she had a solar energy generator. But still it was too much. I think the first time she noticed it was too much was when she started offering it for \$300,000. But that was the time of terrorism in Peru and nobody was even interested. She had her mother-in-law from the next Peruvian husband in charge of the house.

There was somebody who was willing to pay \$30,000 which she thought was an offense, but they told her that there wasn't much left, so she asked that I should have a look. So I went out there and there was nothing left but the house. The cages were gone, the animals were gone, the bungalows were still standing but had no more furniture. They had scavenged the materials, sold or eaten the animals, sold the furniture, taken out the toilets. Everything was gone.

And then she said, "You know what, if I sell it to somebody I would give it to you, because I know you're going to do something good with it." In the end she sold it to me for US\$18,000,



which I paid using money that my grandfather left for me, and now I'm not owing her anymore. So we got 12 hectares of land in 1996.

We were thinking still of only butterflies — I did not want anymore to raise any animals I get attached to. When I had the animals, a monkey and a capybara that I raised from babies to adults, and when they went away and later came back with babies of their own, then the neighbors killed them. And I was very sad and very upset.

I actually took one of the guys who had killed them to the police in Iquitos because he had killed a spider monkey that was within days of giving birth. She was like a woman, with big breasts and a big belly, she couldn't even climb up the trees any more and that damn guy killed her on my land. First I took him to the head of the village and he told me, "Well, there's nothing we can do, take him to town." And in town they asked him what's the reason he killed it, and he told them the same thing that my neighbors in the other village had told me before. He said that this lady's raising animals and she doesn't eat them, so what for?

My argument was that this is my business, I didn't ask you to raise them, it didn't cost you any money, that doesn't give you the right to kill them. The police told me that if I would want to make a real charge it would have to be written down, and that would cost time and money and nothing would happen.

I was very, very, very sad, and very angry. I remember that I ran out crying and then the police officer came after me: "Gringita, gringita, don't be sad! Don't be angry! Give me 10 soles and I'll really beat that guy up!" (laughs). But I didn't give him the 10 soles because if he beats him the next time he kills another monkey.

**LS:**

*You'd have to beat him up regularly.*

**GS:**

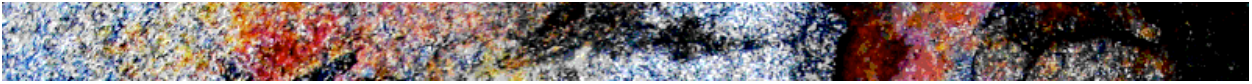
Uh huh, well, you'd have to put him in a cage and beat him up. (laughs) Treat him like he treats the animals.

So I thought, "I don't want to raise animals, but I want to do something with animals". That was in 1995 and I thought about one of my visits to Austria, when I went back to the zoo in Vienna where I had volunteered when I was studying.

The new attraction was the butterfly house and I asked the guy who was showing me around how they raised the butterflies and he said, "We cannot raise them here, we do not have the host plants, we buy the chrysalis. We buy them mostly from Costa Rica, also from Malaysia." And I thought that would be something that I could do, butterflies are beautiful and the whole transformation is very interesting. And I don't get attached to them, and you don't eat them; you can release them. The idea also was that I thought it would be a way of making a living, to work with those animals, to breed them, and to export the chrysalis. That was the original idea.

Then when we started to try to find the host plants it was a little bit complicated, but we finally know now how to breed 43 species.

We wanted to export them, but the problem now is that we cannot export because it takes too long to get the permit. We tried two times sending the chrysalis to Lima, because you don't get



the permit here. Only Lima has the authority for giving export permits. We have to send the chrysalis there, and there they think about it. They certify after 5 weeks, and then we noticed that our butterflies hatch before they even get out of Lima and die in the box.

And then we said, “Well, we’ve got a cage now” — because we had to protect the butterflies from parasites and predators — “lets try it with tourism.”

**LS:**

*So how do you like it now that you’re a zoo keeper?*

**GS:**

I like to live with animals, and to be with animals. It’s not something that you can imagine. It’s not a question of how satisfying it is if you get an animal that is almost dead and you see it some weeks later happily crawling in the trees and jumping around... just like a wild one. It’s a big satisfaction.

**LS:**

*Well, describe it as best you can, because I have no idea.*

**GS:**

(Laughs) Well imagine that you have a child — it’s stupid to compare it but actually similar with monkeys — and you get it as a baby and it’s crippled almost, and it’s got injuries, and you think it might die and, if it’s a monkey, you carry it around for months sitting on your back, because normally it would be on the mother’s still, and you know it still really needs the contact. That’s really true, I notice with the baby monkeys here at the primate center, there’s a primate center where they have all the means, they have incubators and now, actually — I’m so angry at that damn vet — it’s the fourth time he gets a red uacari baby (*Cacajao calvus*, an endangered monkey species) and I told him “Give it to me!” And again it died because he said, “But no, we’ve got the incubator...” He wants to be the one who rescues the baby, but he doesn’t know how. It really makes me angry.

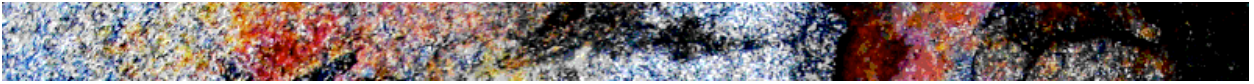
So you carry them around and you get attached to them. What’s so beautiful in some of the animals, especially the monkeys, is once they get over their injuries or their disease, it’s incredibly fast how they develop. With each day you see progress. At first they can’t even crawl, and then on one day he starts jumping from here to here, and on the next day already they jump from here to there. And then they get independent and you can leave them with the other monkeys. It’s great.

**LS:**

*What about ecology? What relationship do you have to that situation: the destruction of the habitat.*

**GS:**

First, too much thinking about it makes me depressive. If you think of everything that’s really happening and how little you can do, you’ll have to kill yourself! (Laughs) That’s my feeling!



**LS:**

*But you're so close to it I wonder how you stake out a part of the world that you're going to be concerned with...*

**GS:**

Un huh. Sometimes I still feel so bad — helpless and frustrated — I know that's not good for my health. When I come back to home on the boat from a trip into town and I see those floating rafts of cut trees, some with 50 trees that I know have lived maybe 100 years to get as big, and I know they're bringing them here to make toothpicks, or to make plywood. I just hate it. I can't get used to it, but that's how it is.

**LS:**

*What's going to happen here? What do you project? Are you going to stay here and grow with the city or is there a limit to how much you can take?*

**GS:**

The problem is, like I said to a friend, I'm living out there almost in the jungle. Like on weekends now the village has two discotheques, and the loud speakers are outside. They turn it up to full volume and, as my house is high, I could dance the whole night! (Laughs) And my friend said "Yeah, but even if you move maybe 10 kilometers, maybe, further up, in about 10 years you're going to have the same situation. So you cannot run away from it. So I just have to try to get used to it. Try to face it, or fight it. I try to fight it.

I try not to think too much about it, some things you cannot help, but I try to do something with the students because what's frustrating really, what's sad, is how little interest the people who live here have in ecology. Well, they have no idea!

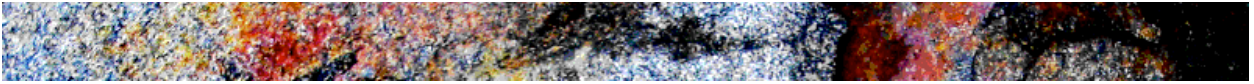
**LS:**

*What's carried you through these difficult transitions of yours?*

**GS:**

The love I get from the animals, I think. Not even the love, or the love I give them, the joy of seeing them and thinking, "You have done something small but you have done something good."

Sometimes it is very sad when an animal dies. Like the last animal that was killed a few months ago — I was very, very sad — was a kinkajou, also known as a Honeybear (*Potos flavus*), a night active animal of the raccoon family. Very naughty, very active, hyper-active, but cute! I had raised it from very small, and also crippled. She was a nuisance because she broke into the house every night, through the mesh. In the end we didn't fix it anymore. She slept in the daytime. When she was grown up she slept on the roof. But at 1 in the morning, 2 in the morning, she came in and wanted to play, and she just got into your bed and would jump on you, biting you, and whatever. But besides that she's so soft and so nice. It's the only animal that I know that is incredibly nice smelling... it smells like vanilla. They have some special glands, and they produce a scent that smells like vanilla... so soft and so nice. And then somebody shot it.



**LS:**

*Really?*

**GS:**

Uh huh, in the night... on our land. Well, they eat them. She was two and a half kilos maybe. And then I was angry and sad. That's why we're making a fence now because, when the water is high, hunters come in with the canoe. It's easy. And my dogs are not there, my dogs are at the house, or the porch, but they don't go to the end of the property.

And then when I'm very sad I think at least she had a good life... a good life. I think, "It's bad now, but she would have been dead in a day if we hadn't got her." My partner took it away from children in the port of Bella Vista because they were playing around with it like a puppy, in the daytime, an animal like this... the end is the same now: it's dead. But I think she had a really nice life.

**LS:**

*Yeah, her life was much better than she could have expected, if she could have expected anything!*

*Do you think you're going to make a lasting impression, or do you care?*

**GS:**

I care, for sure! And I'm not sure if I do, but sometimes I think, "Yes." But it's very little, like in the village there are two children, they're actually in the same family, a girl and her little brother, when they find caterpillars now they tell us, they don't kill them. They tell us to go and get them. The other day the little boy came with this big caterpillar, he's still a little bit afraid. That's not much, but it's something. They brought a caterpillar because now it's not just a worm that you have to kill. And, that's my hope: little bits of change.

**LS:**

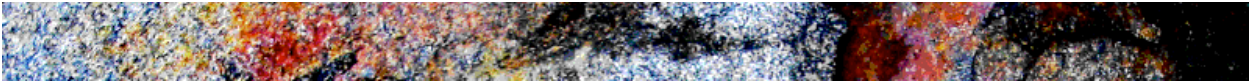
*It's surprising to me that with all this fascinating stuff going on in the natural environment, that people don't get interested. No one gets interested, even the kids don't.*

**GS:**

Well, they're much too busy getting the food for the day. And if you look around you notice what they do in their spare time, if they have spare time, and you see them sitting around without doing anything. And I was always asking them — typically a woman question — "What are you thinking about? What are you planning?" They answer "nothing," or "just looking", which is great. I mean others go to India to learn not to think. Here people know how to relax, or how to get a blank mind. I believe that really, I didn't believe it in the beginning, but they can really sit in a hammock and I can say, "What are you thinking about?"

"Nothing!"

They haven't much stimulation when they are small; they have no books. They don't tell stories anymore, like they used to do in the older culture. Like in Padre Cocha (the closest village to the animal center), those are people from different tribes that have come to the village to be near to Iquitos, but there isn't really anymore identification with the cultures they came from.



And like with the students, sometimes I'm not even angry I'm just surprised, I say "How don't you know!" and "Why don't you know!" and "Why aren't you interested!" For example, "Why don't you ever go out in the country side?"

We get the biology students and they don't even know what a tapir is (*Tapirus terrestris*). And when I asked them if they've ever been to any place outside of the town many would say no.

A few who've visited me told me it was the first time they'd ever crossed the river. And they are 20 or 25 years old. And they've lived in Iquitos and all around is water. Now there's a road to Nauta (a small city), a new road about 80 km, but a few years ago no roads led outside of town. To go anywhere you had to go by boat. But most of the students told me that visiting my place, just 2 km from town, was the first time they had crossed the river.

And sometimes with my German language students, when I talk to them, and with them I am more familiar, I say, "What the hell do you know! I mean you're living there, have you never been out! Don't you have a grandfather, grandmother with a farm house?" And then one told me "Yes", but it seems they're ashamed of it, they want to be really from town. Those who don't go out say "Oh no, there's so many mosquitoes out there!" (laughs)

There's much more fear than interest. Well the fear is OK, there's some reason for it. If your grandfather has been an Indian they were afraid a little bit of the jungle. Like the people in the village where I was first living, further up the river, and they just couldn't believe that I was swimming in the river, in the lake – they don't swim. Children swim, a little bit for fun, but adults they bathe themselves in the canoe by pouring water over themselves, because in the water there might be something attacking you.

It's not so much of ignorance as it is of believing in things. Actually, now I think more about it since I've been here so long. I'm not as naïve or as brave, or whatever you want to call it, as I was before. Not just because of my age but because I've heard so many stories (laughs) ... you start thinking you don't know and what there *might* be in the water. The more you hear the more you imagine.

**LS:**

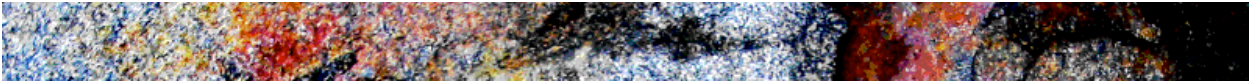
*And is there anything to be afraid of?*

**GS:**

I don't really think so. I mean it would not be nice to get into contact with an electric eel because it might touch you and it might be frightening or so shocking that you might drown, I could imagine. Besides that there's nothing to be afraid of.

There aren't any dangerous animals around here anymore. Even in town sometimes there appear boa constrictors, or anacondas, but they are not dangerous, I am not afraid of snakes.

I lived once with the Choco Indians in Columbia. I enjoyed it a lot because it was so different from being with the Peruvian people. They were really proud. The jungle goes down there, more or less to the sea. I hadn't asked for permission to visit them, I had asked only how could I get there when I was on the coast. And the people of the village on the coast, the black people, told me there's a village up there and we can take you there, but I don't know if they receive they you. They don't like foreigners, and anyway the black people feel themselves above the Indians.



So I remember when the guide took me there. You cannot use power in the boat, we had to pole it because the river is not deep and there's lots of stones. And we were going for a few hours and suddenly he stopped and said "OK, you get out here." But I said "There is no village here?" And he said "No, I don't go any further. It's just around the next curve, and there you will see the village and you go near."

I had a strange feeling, it was around evening, I was this stupid gringa that was going to get lost in the jungle. So I walked and I found lots of people in the river washing. The men use the loincloths and the women used a wrap. They didn't run away but many of them turned away when I came.

Then I stopped and a guy came up to where I was walking. He was all painted black on his arms and his face. And he asked me in Spanish who I was. And then I said my name, which doesn't say much. And he asked, "Where do you come from?" And I said, "I come from Peru." And he asked "And what do you want?" I said I don't want much of you but I would ask if I could maybe stay with you and learn something from you. The first question then was "Are you a missionary?" I said "No!" Then he said, "OK, come on." (laughs) They didn't want any missionaries anymore.

**LS:**

*Yes, they're lovely. I also lived with them but on the other side of the mountains in Panama. That was around 1984. But it was no paradise. They had their problems.*

*I remember we went down the river one day and they saw an iguana in the top of the tree, they shot it but it wouldn't fall because it hung on with its claws. So they cut the tree down, you know, just for their fucking lunch! (laughs). They'd spent a bullet, and a bullet is very hard to come by. They were not going to let that bullet go to waste. But the tree was wasted.*

*They had no idea about conservation, they all wanted to get chain saws so they could cut more trees down. I remember we went to a congress in a larger village where the Panamanian Army brought in some people to lecture about ecology. Elders from all the villages sat there listening and then one guy puts his hand up and says, "What's ecology?" But they could learn quickly. They noticed they can't shoot deer from their back porch anymore. That's ecology!*

**GS:**

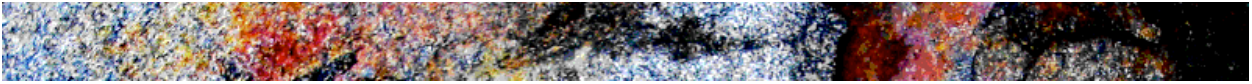
Uh huh. That's what they notice now here to, yeah? Like the other day one of the people who sold me the leaves for thatching my roof came from the village and I needed some more. And he wanted to charge much more than he did 10 years ago. So I said "Well, OK you can charge a little bit more, but not that much!"

"Ahh, you know when I sold you the leaves before I came back with the leaves the same day? But now we've got to go 2 days to find the leaves."

"Uh huh", I said, "and why?"

"Because there aren't any more!"

"Yeah", I said, "and you know *WHY?*"



“Because there aren’t any more!” he said again.

“Yeah”, I said, “but it’s *you* who did it! Because if you would have just left two palm leaves of this palm, because it comes out of one stem and would survive if they left a couple of leaves, then the plants wouldn’t have died and you would still have some! But you had to take ALL of them because of greed!”

“Yeah, that’s true,” he said. “We always cut down everything, but that’s because we want to bring more!” (laughs)

So now they have to go and they come back after 5 days with what they have done before in 1 day.

**LS:**

*It just seems like maybe the only way to teach anybody anything is ...*

**GS:**

... by experience, by the hard way. Yeah.

**LS:**

*If you were to talk to kids what would you tell them was the most important things to have in order to see forward with a certain degree of success and accomplishment?*

**GS:**

That question was not what I’d expected. I’d expected you would ask how to live *happy* (laughs) not to live a *successful* life.

**LS:**

*I don’t mean successful in any particular way. Happy could be a good measure of success. I’m asking what they should know, or should acquire, or should believe in.*

**GS:**

That’s a good word: “believe.” Also everything is against it. They should believe in the good things. They should believe that it’s worth at least to save one thing for future generations. And it’s worth it, that’s something important. And you don’t lose that feeling.

When you’re adult and you haven’t learned that, it becomes very hard to keep believing in things when you see that nobody else does, or everything’s against you. Maybe if you learn it from small on. I think that’s very important.

And not to think that we’re the only ones on the planet. Not to take oneself as too important.



That we have to kill animals because we have to eat, that is no longer true, as an example, or that we have to cut down trees because we have to make a house. That's no longer true in the Western world either.

No, I don't want us all to go backwards, that's not my idea, but yet there is a sense of recognizing that what you really need in order to feel fine is much less than what you get offered in the Western world.

And that it makes you really feel good when you do something good for somebody else, even if it's an animal. It makes you feel good! (laughs)