

# Former Krishna returns to reality

By Roger Verdon  
Staff writer

LYONS — Herb Tucker, who was whisked away from the Fairgrounds while soliciting with the Hare Krishna group Sept. 7, returned home to Lyons Thursday after undergoing what his parents said was "a successful deprogramming."

During his rehabilitative period Tucker sought out and received advice from Ted Patrick, a nationally-known anti-cult activist who is appealing a recent felony conviction stemming from a separate deprogramming in which Patrick has denied participation.

Patrick, who claims to have deprogrammed 2,600 cult members, has been enjoined by court order from deprogramming efforts. Tucker said Patrick's involvement in his rehabilitation was restricted to advice.

The 22-year-old Tucker, who received a military discharge after converting to the Krishna sect last April, returned from California early

Thursday morning with his parents, Jan and Robert Tucker.

His hair beginning to grow back from the shaved-head Krishna look, and a few days growth of beard darkening his face, Tucker said he felt fine and feasted Thursday evening on a dinner of spaghetti with meat sauce. That meal was one forbidden him during his six-month odyssey with the Denver-based Krishna group, which prohibits certain practices, including the eating of meat.

Tucker said he was taken from the Fairgrounds by a rescue team, one member of which "looked like a line backer with the L.A. Rams," tossed into a van and handcuffed. He was taken to a location in Kansas "within 100 miles of here," said Robert Tucker.

Although his actual deprogramming was complete within hours, he has spent the past six weeks in rehabilitation in Kansas and on the West Coast.

He said his time within the Krishna

group was mostly spent selling candles in the Denver area to raise money for the group.

During the Kansas State Fair, he said, the seven members of his group raised \$800 in a few hours of solicitation. The day before he was taken from the Fairgrounds, said Tucker, another member of the Krishna group voluntarily ran away, apparently dissatisfied with his membership.

Tucker said the effort to solicit funds from such places as fairs in exchange for flowers or reading material was designed merely to get as much cash from fair patrons as possible.

He said the methods of solicitation could be refined so keenly that "if you're good you'll hit the guy (fair patron), get everything he's got and he'll walk away in the other direction."

He said he is now convinced that the Krishna group's intentions are incorrect and that the method by which he was recruited was akin to brain-

washing. He said he was surrounded by mind-control influences 24-hours a day, including ongoing classes in Krishna philosophy and tapes running even while he slept, which, he said, was usually limited to about six hours nightly.

"We all seemed to share a general conviction that the world could be made a better place if people cared and tried. I wanted to walk my talk," or live a life based on ideal concepts.

He said the experience had made him "more wary, more street-wise," and added it was a "valuable experience for me. I regret my parents had to come up with this cash to pay for my inexperience."

The Tuckers, who own a Lyons television store, would not divulge the cost of the deprogramming and rescue although they said it cost them "thousands of dollars."

Asked if he could conceive of himself re-joining such a group, Tucker said, "I can't go back. I love my parents."



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# The Hutchinson News

109th Year

No. 99

Friday, October 10, 1980

Hutchinson, Kansas (67501)

662-3311

20 Pages

