Shrink Rap Radio #252, November 25, 2010. A Buddhist Perspective on Psychotherapy

Dr. David Van Nuys, aka "Dr. Dave" interviews Dr. Mark Epstein
(transcribed from www.ShrinkRapRadio.com by Jo Kelly)

Excerpt: *"What the Buddhists say is that we take ourselves too seriously. They suggest that we unconsciously exaggerate the sense of self, and that we take ourselves to be more real than we actually are. They don't suggest that we're not real at all, or that we're actually empty in the sense of there being nobody there, or in the sense of being void or something. What they're talking about is that there is a way that our own self importance unconsciously makes us exaggerate the feeling of self, and that that gets us into trouble."*

Introduction: That was the voice of my guest Dr. Mark Epstein discussing the Buddhist concept of emptiness in relation to psychoanalytic concepts of self. Mark Epstein, M.D., is a psychiatrist and author of *Psychotherapy Without The Self: A Buddhist Perspective* (Yale University Press, 2007), *Going to Pieces: Without Falling Apart* (Broadway Books, 1999), and *Thoughts Without a Thinker: Psychotherapy from a Buddhist Perspective* (Basic Books, 1995). Dr. Epstein is a graduate of Harvard College and the Harvard Medical School. He is a psychotherapist with a private practice in New York City and Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology at New York University. Dr. Epstein has been a contributing editor to *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review* since it was founded in 1991. He writes for *Yoga Journal*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, *Buddhadharma*, *Body and Soul* and other periodicals. Mark Epstein is the author of well-respected books that deal with the difficult and counter-intuitive Eastern teachings of non-self, a concept which has sometimes proven so alien to the western mind as to be out of reach for many western Buddhists. As a student of Vipassana meditation, he teaches periodically with Sharon Salzberg and Robert Thurman at Tibet House in New York and lectures to therapists around the country on the relationship of Buddhist and western approaches to psychotherapy.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Epstein

Dr. Dave: Dr. Mark Epstein, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

Epstein: Thank you.

Dr. Dave: I'm under the impression that you were a meditator before you became a doctor, is that right?

Epstein: That's right. I was interested in Buddhism, deeply interested in Buddhism and involved in meditation before I went to medical school.

Dr. Dave: So how did you initially become drawn to both Buddhism and meditation?

Epstein: I took an introductory religion class when I was in college, and read *The Dhammapada* which seemed very alive and vibrant to me. Then majored in psychology and took other courses that had bits and pieces of Buddhist psychology mixed in, and found a graduate student who was a teaching fellow in one of my psychology courses who was already interested in Buddhism, and he steered me towards people who became very influential in the Buddhist part of my life.

Dr. Dave: Was all this at Harvard?

Epstein: Those courses were at Harvard, and the graduate student was at Harvard; then he sent me out to meet other friends of his who were in Colorado.

Dr. Dave: Right. I noted that you were at – is it the Naropa Institute in Boulder?

Epstein: Yes, the Naropa Institute in Boulder was just beginning. It was the first summer that they were running programs, and it was like a kind of Buddhist summer camp in which there were teachers from all the different traditions of Buddhism, including the ones I gravitated most towards whose names were Joseph Goldstein and Jack Kornfield. They were just beginning to teach in America at that point.

Dr. Dave: Wow. And these days you can't look into this subject at all without running into their names.

I've been reading your 2007 book of essays, *Psychotherapy Without The Self*, and it largely examines psychoanalytic concepts from a Buddhist perspective. I got my own Ph.D. from the University of Michigan which at the time was very psychoanalytic as well, so I've really been interested in the translations between, shuttling back and forth between the two systems

of thought that you do. Did you go on to get formal psychoanalytic training?

Epstein: I'm not a psychoanalyst but a number of my best teachers and supervisors were all psychoanalysts during my psychiatric residency and so on, and then I read widely in order to do my own writings, but I'm not a psychoanalyst. My own psychotherapists were all gestalt therapists.

Dr. Dave: Oh that's fascinating. Clearly you did read widely and deeply because you do some very impressive and careful thinking as you examine the two systems of thought, Buddhism and psychoanalytic thought. I've also looked at a previous book of yours, *Thoughts Without A Thinker*, and then there's this one I've been reading, *Psychotherapy Without The Self* so it seems that there is this theme of "without" – without a thinker, without a self. What is it that we're getting rid of with this "without", and why is that important?

Epstein: Well you failed to mention another work which is entitled *Going To Pieces without Falling Apart*.

Dr. Dave: OK (laughing).

Epstein: So the thing that we are trying to get rid of is the sense of falling apart; the sense of there being something the matter with us, a sense of being adrift in a vast sea and alone , lonely, unworthy, a kind of self hatred. All of those phrases speak to a quality of unsatisfactoriness that often just under the surface is operating in many people.

Dr. Dave: Yes, doesn't this also relate to the Buddhist idea of emptiness? I think that's something you also explore.

Epstein: Well what do you mean by the Buddhist idea of emptiness?

Dr. Dave: Well I'm not sure what I mean (laughing), but I thought I'd encountered it in your writing talking about the void and so on, and I just wanted to get your reflections on the Buddhist idea of emptiness and whether or not there's any corresponding notion in psychoanalytic thought.

Epstein: What the Buddhists say is that we take ourselves too seriously. They suggest that we unconsciously exaggerate the sense of self, and that we take ourselves to be more real than we actually are. They don't suggest that we're not real at all, or that we're actually empty in the sense of there being nobody there, or in the sense of being void or something. What they're

talking about is that there is a way that our own self importance unconsciously makes us exaggerate the feeling of self, and that that gets us into trouble. The word that they use to describe was translated as "emptiness", actually has its roots – the Sanskrit word is *sunyata* – but then the root is *su* which means a pregnant womb. So the emptiness of Buddhism is really a kind of full emptiness, the same way a pregnant womb is actually full; it's full of the potential that's already there.

Dr. Dave: Yes, I like the way that you explored that concept too in relation to creativity in the final chapter of *Psychotherapy Without A Self*, where you look at the work of John Cage and others who were influenced by Zen and by D.T. Suzuki in particular.

Epstein: John Cage, Philip Guston, a painter named Agnes Martin, psychoanalysts like Erich Fromm and Karen Horney, Thomas Merton; they all attended these lectures in the early 1950s that D.T. Suzuki (who was a Japanese Zen philosopher) gave at Columbia University. They took his ideas and it really affected how they made their work.

Dr. Dave: Yes. I actually was watching a Charlie Rose interview with a sculptor and a painter – and I don't know their names.

Epstein: Oh yes, the Charlie Rose interview was with Richard Sierra and Chuck Close. My daughter was working on that show in fact.

Dr. Dave: Oh really? Amazing. It seemed like they were trying to articulate something very similar, I don't know if they were also in that seminar series or not.

Epstein: They weren't in that seminar series, but they read some of the writings by people like Franz Kline who were affected by those teachings. It really infiltrated the whole contemporary art world, those lectures of D.T. Suzuki. So you hear language from contemporary artists that often one thread comes out of Zen, although they may not know it.

Dr. Dave: Yes that's fascinating. I was happy to see in *Thoughts Without A Thinker* that you noted a similarity between psychoanalytic free association and meditation, because I had had a similar impression on my own. In fact you note that Freud described a kind of "hovering attention" himself. Can you take us though that a bit?

Epstein: Well Freud on several occasions was asked by his followers to write down instructions for them. He didn't do it very often, and he didn't

really want to do it because he wanted people to discover it for themselves. Several times he wrote papers, *Recommendations for Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis* in which he actually describes his method or his technique. He said for instance, "the psychoanalyst should suspend judgement and give impartial attention to everything there is to observe." He said also that, "the psychoanalyst should simply listen, and not bother about whether he or she is keeping anything in mind."

He went on, he described it a little more, but those were the core recommendations, which if you didn't know it was Freud and you just came upon them you might think they were coming from a Zen master. Freud really, through his own explorations with cocaine, and with writing, and with paying attention to his neurotic patients, he came to a method of listening which was remarkably similar to what the Buddhists came to 2,000 years before, and he called that method of listening "evenly suspended attention".

The psychoanalysts who came after him were a little bit afraid of evenly suspended attention – they weren't sure that they could really do it right – and they gradually changed the name from evenly suspended attention to "freely floating attention", and in changing the name they slightly changed the concept of what they should be doing, and began to put more emphasis on the making of interpretations, rather than on the healing quality of the listening.

Dr. Dave: That's great. You know I haven't encountered that anywhere else and I really love that you brought that out. People like to dump on Freud so much in recent years and the anecdotal report that I've always heard about his free association technique, and particularly the use of the couch, was that he was too embarrassed to look at people face on, and so that's why he put them on the couch. But I have difficulty buying that, because just the act of laying down, and not looking somebody else in the eyes actually puts one in a kind of altered state of consciousness. Don't you think that the same sort of (laughing) maybe Zen like wisdom was guiding that choice? Is that a possibility?

Epstein: Well I don't know, I've never done my therapy on the couch either as a patient or as a therapist, I always sit so that we have to look at each other.

The story that I heard was that Freud was worried that he would get tired, and so that's why he positioned the couch that way, because he wasn't sure that he had the stamina to sit all day long looking people in the eye – which

after doing it for 25 years I can understand why he might have been thinking that.

Dr. Dave: Yes (laughing). What about cognitive therapy and mindfulness? It seems to me that maybe east and west are coming together, in as much as both are asking the patient to monitor their thoughts. What's your take on that?

Epstein: I think there are important parallels to be made between cognitive therapy and Buddhist mindfulness. One important thing to remember though is in Buddhist mindfulness practice, you are not only monitoring your thoughts. Thoughts are really only one of what are called the four foundations of mindfulness, and you don't particularly train yourself in mindfulness by training yourself to watch thoughts, you usually train yourself by feeling qualities in the body, by feeling a feeling tone; it's more difficult to apply mindfulness to thoughts.

Cognitive therapists tend to be focussed on patterns of thought, and particularly *destructive* patterns of thought, and they try to bring the same kind of non judgemental attention to the thinking process that the Buddhists are cultivating in these other foundations of mindfulness; but there are parallels to be made.

Dr. Dave: Speaking of mindfulness, it seems like just that word and concept have become so popular – I remarked to someone just the other day that I thought we might be in a mindfulness bubble (laughing), like the housing bubble and so on. What do you think about that; what's your take on all the groundswell of interest in mindfulness, and the maybe co-opting of that word?

Epstein: I don't think it's a co-opting. You can trace much of the influence in mindfulness to the work of an old friend of mine named Jon Kabat-Zinn, who began what he called a "Pain and Stress Clinic" at the University of Massachusetts about 30 years ago. Jon Kabat-Zinn and I did our first Buddhist meditation retreats together – he's an old friend and colleague of mine.

He made a very conscious decision at the very beginning of his work to not call what he was doing Buddhist, but to call it mindfulness; and to abstract what he felt to be the most important therapeutic method or technique from everything he had learned, and to begin to teach it to people who he thought could use it in the hospital environment in western Massachusetts that he was part of.

He asked all the local physicians to send him their worst patients, the ones that they felt they couldn't help, and he said, "I'll help them." He started these groups where he taught not only mindfulness, but he also taught them yoga and careful attention to the body, and he has done tremendous work. It has really taken hold in the mental health field and it has been adapted by all kinds of people for all kinds of things. It's one of the ways that the mental health profession has become interested in Buddhism, because everyone who deals with mindfulness knows somewhere in them that it's been taken from Buddhist psychology.

Dr. Dave: That puts it in a wonderful perspective, thank you.

You have a chapter on the psychodynamics of meditation focussing on the pitfalls of the spiritual path. What are those pitfalls?

Epstein: The major pitfall is that people can get attached to anything. So people do a little bit of meditation practice and they become proud of their accomplishments, and their egos take over; and then not only are they a psychologist but they are also a Buddhist psychologist who meditates, or a psychologist who understands mindfulness, and so the kind of narcissistic recruitment of their accomplishments is under way. That is a well recognized pitfall of meditation – a little knowledge can be used by the ego to bolster itself.

Dr. Dave: Are there some diagnostic categories for which meditation would be contra indicated?

Epstein: There are some diagnostic categories of people who have trouble meditating, at least in the way that it's traditionally taught. There are certain people for whom it is better to let their techniques be adapted, so that they can actually learn them and practice them without becoming more anxious for instance, instead of less anxious. The best example of that comes from the work of a woman named Marsha Linehan, who began a therapy that is called Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT).

Marsha Linehan was a student of Zen Buddhism, and she was also a behaviorist and she had the remarkable insight that borderline suicidal hospitalised patients – who the psychiatric profession was mostly afraid of, and who were seen as too emotional, unable to handle their emotions – Marsha Linehan had the insight that these patients were actually phobic towards their own emotions; so that when they started to get angry or upset

or whatever, they went into a kind of panic because they couldn't handle the emotional expression that was happening in their bodies.

Rather than teaching these patients how to meditate, she took the active ingredient as she saw it of meditation, which was the ability to acknowledge ones feelings without being reactive to them. She began to teach these patients in a kind of workbook like way – this is what a feeling is – and she made flash cards with the words: mad, sad, glad. These are emotions, this is what's happening in your body when these emotions are discharged. So she taught these patients to name the feelings, and also to systematically desensitize themselves to the feelings just as one has to do in meditation, but she did it in a kind of group therapy. Those patients wouldn't have been able to walk into a mediation hall or a Zendo and do the practice, it would have been too overwhelming for them; but they were very skilled, they became very good meditators in her DBT group.

Dr. Dave: Wow. I had the privilege actually of interviewing her but I just got a great picture of her work from your description.

Epstein: It was so effective that it burned through all the psychiatric hospitals, because no-one knew what to do for these patients, and she did.

Dr. Dave: That's great. I was intrigued by your chapter on medication and meditation which speaks to some of these issues – and you take a very balanced view I thought – that Buddhism is not necessarily a cure for all mental ills.

Epstein: It shouldn't have to be, it shouldn't have to be a cure-all for everything. That's putting too much pressure on Buddhism or on meditation.

Dr. Dave: Yes, but somehow that impression seems to be abroad you know.

Epstein: That's part of the pitfalls of meditation, that people feel that it should be able to do everything, and that they're a failure in some way if they're still depressed after they have begun their meditation practice. I've had very senior Zen masters and meditation teachers come to me – upon making me promise I wouldn't tell – because they were anxious or depressed, or needed psychiatric help, needed medication, and feeling very ashamed that they hadn't been able to cure themselves through the power of their meditation.

Dr. Dave: You know that Tibetan Buddhism seems to be more aware of this than other schools, and that they had kind of catalogued a variety of mental ills.

Epstein: Yes, I don't think that I was saying that they were more aware of this, meaning of a failure of meditation to cure everything. I think Tibetan Buddhists are as vulnerable as anyone else in feeling that their method is the highest, and that it ought to be able to be enough to cure anyone of anything. I think there are many Tibetan Buddhists who are vulnerable to that way of thinking. But in their own medical tradition they have catalogued various meditation induced psychiatric disorders, the main one being a kind of anxiety that results when people try too hard in meditation, and they say the mind doesn't react well in being forced into submission, and that it rears up like an angry horse and gets more agitated.

Dr. Dave: Do we have any data on mental health and meditation?

Epstein: Any data on mental health and meditation?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Epstein: I don't have any data, no; I'm sure somewhere there's a lot of data.

Dr. Dave: (laughing) Right. I just know there are so many claims made for meditation and mindfulness.

Epstein: Yes, coming out of Jon Kabat-Zinn's work, he has been very careful to document and to publish studies showing what it's good for and what it's not good for, and what kinds of populations.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Now you have a private practice in New York City. Are you in Manhattan?

Epstein: Yes, I'm in Manhattan.

Dr. Dave: So, how has Buddhism informed your practice?

Epstein: Well it's hard for me to know what my practice would be like without Buddhism, because Buddhism was with me from the very beginning, before I even began my training as a doctor let alone as a therapist. But I think there is some quality to my listening that is informed by Buddhism. I hope so.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Was that a struggle for you in school? I mean I would imagine that maybe some of your Buddhist ideas might have been wrestling, challenged by, struggling with, some of the approaches, theoretical material that you were encountering.

Epstein: No, it actually wasn't much of a struggle. I would say the only real issue – I'm not sure this was Buddhist inspired, this might have been part of my character anyway – I really believed that the right kind of caring attention from the therapist should be enough to help almost anyone. It was I think from experience of working with real patients who weren't just going to get better because I wanted them to, that I came to see how important it was to understand all the different kinds of severe mental illness; to understand there were times and cases where medication – as opposed to meditation – was really important. Also to realize that the depth of people's anger and hatred was a real force to be reckoned with; and that it wasn't going to go away just because I wanted it to.

Dr. Dave: If I were a fly on the wall, would I see anything that would be different from other sorts of therapeutic orientations?

Epstein: It depends what other walls you have been on in your life as a fly (laughing). Hopefully you might see a little more laughter.

Dr. Dave: (laughing) OK, good. Do your therapy patients seek you out because they know of your Buddhist orientation?

Epstein: Some of them. Some of them seek me out knowing of my Buddhist orientation, either because they also have a Buddhist orientation and want a therapist who won't think that they're crazy because of it; or because they don't have a Buddhist orientation but they somehow think that having a therapist with a Buddhist orientation will be better. Then many people come not knowing that I have a Buddhist orientation, and they might if they're lucky make it all the way through their therapy with me without knowing it.

Dr. Dave: OK, here's a big question. What's your take on the notion of enlightenment?

Epstein: What's my take on the notion of enlightenment?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Epstein: It's a very important concept to aspire to; because what enlightenment suggests is that it's possible for the mind to exist free from greed, hatred and delusion. Free from clinging.

Dr. Dave: I guess for myself I'm wondering if it's more of an in state or more of a process.

Epstein: If enlightenment is more of an in state or more of a process?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Epstein: What do you think?

Dr. Dave: I think process.

Epstein: So what kind of process?

Dr. Dave: I think it's a process of unfolding and continuing growth, and I question whether or not there is an in state that one kind of reaches some sort of final state of supreme connectedness to the universe, wisdom, etc that they live in continuously.

Epstein: There is a wonderful teaching story in the Tibetan tradition about Tsongkhapa who is the great reformer of the 1400s, the founder of the Gelugpa sect that the Dalai Lama is the head of. At the moment of his enlightenment he realized that every way he had thought about it before was wrong. He said, "ugh it's just the opposite of what I was thinking."

So I like to think about that, because usually any way that you could imagine what enlightenment is, since you are not enlightened is not going to be what it is. So certainly one of the most common ways of thinking about enlightenment is that it is, as you were saying, a kind of perfect end state where you are one with the universe; or maybe you have disappeared completely and floated into everything. So you just have to try to imagine what the opposite of that might be.

Dr. Dave: (laughing) The final section of your book focuses on the neo-Freudian object relations of Winnicott. What's the tie in between Buddhist meditation and the work of Winnicott?

Epstein: Well actually I'm trying to write a book about that right now, because the ideas of Winnicott from within the psychoanalytic tradition have

been the most helpful to me in my own thinking and in my own clinical work with patients.

Winnicott wrote very beautifully, very poetically about the kind of attention that young children need from their parents, and I think there is a relationship between the kind of attention that Winnicott talks about – he was the one who coined the phrase " a good enough mother", a mother who wouldn't retaliate or abandon in the face of her child's aggression – I think there is a real parallel between what Winnicott was thinking about and the kind of attention that's cultivated in Buddhist meditation.

So it's possible to take the discussion in a lot of different directions once you set up that basic equation.

Dr. Dave: Doesn't he also make a distinction between the true self and the *false self*, and I'm wondering how this relates to Buddhist ideas about self.

Epstein: What Winnicott mostly does is talk about the feeling of falseness that plagues many people; and he does at some point call that the *false self*. He is really trying to elucidate why do some people walk around feeling not quite real, or not real enough. Why do they have a sense of falseness in the back of their minds. He talks about the childhood origins of that for some people as coming out of the need to manage a parental environment that's not quite good enough, that's either too intrusive or too abandoning; where the parents are depressed, or alcoholic, or angry, or worried, so that the child has to prematurely come into their thinking mind, and develop what he calls a caretaker self in order to manage the demands of the parents.

The alternative that he sets up in a different kind of environment, what he calls a facilitating environment is that the parents are there, they are kind of in the next room, they have one eye our for what's going on, but they are able to give the child space when the child can use space – for the child to play by themselves, to go into their imagination, to read, to make things. He says when a child has that kind of attention from afar, that the parents are creating a kind of umbrella, or a kind of supportive environment, giving a kind of auxiliary ego support, and that the child is then able to relax into their own self. It's that relaxing into their own self that he tends to call the true self, the ability to do that.

That's where the title of my book, *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart*, that comes from that idea of Winnicott, that it's possible to let yourself go to pieces, meaning you don't have to maintain that caretaker self, that coherent self, that false self, that personal that you mobilize to show to the world.

That it's really an important thing to be able to let that guard down, and relax into a kind of not knowing who you are going to be at any given moment.

Dr. Dave: OK. Have you got a title for this new book on Winnicott yet?

Epstein: I do but it's provisional, so I'm going to keep it private.

Dr. Dave: OK, just wondering if "without" was going to be in there – like *Parenting Without The Parent*, or something along those lines (laughing).

Epstein: I hope not (laughing) but I might get forced into something like that.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Is there anything else that's on the cutting edge for you right now? You mentioned this book that you're working on, are there any other new ideas that you're working on or exploring?

Epstein: No, I'm afraid I'm at the stage where I'm only re-working my old ideas, trying to make them sound new again.

Dr. Dave: (laughing) OK. I discovered that you've worked on some films. Just last night I started watching *The Buddha* which I guess was a PBS special that I missed, and you appear on camera quite a bit – I'm enjoying that.

Epstein: Yes, that's a film made by David Grubin that did appear on PBS this past year; now I think you can get it on Netflix. He tried to do a biography of the Buddha, it's about the life of the Buddha, and he interviewed all kinds of people: poets, and philosophers, and Buddhist teachers, and psychiatrists like me to try to understand the implications of the life of the Buddha. He's not a Buddhist himself, he really didn't know anything about the subject when he came to it, but he made a beautiful film.

Dr. Dave: So he brought a genuine sort of naive curiosity to the project which is in the real spirit of Buddhism (laughing).

Epstein: Yes, that's right. If you're watching TV I also did a guest appearance once on an episode of a show called "The L Word".

Dr. Dave: Oh you did?

Epstein: Yes, where they asked me to play myself, because they wanted to move the main character in a more spiritual direction. So they had her come to a reading that I was giving from one of my books, and from there she went on a meditation retreat.

Dr. Dave: Which season? I was a fan actually.

Epstein: Season two, it was early in season two. It was a while ago.

Dr. Dave: Oh boy, I wonder if I saw that episode (laughing).

Epstein: You would have had to have looked very quickly to have seen me (laughing).

Dr. Dave: OK. Then I found a website that you were on, and it seemed to be about a film – I think the title might have been *Spiritual Revolution*, but I couldn't find it on Netflix.

Epstein: I'm not sure; I have a vague memory of something like that (laughing).but I'm not sure what it was.

Dr. Dave: At what point did you know that writing was going to be so central for you – did you start off with that notion?

Epstein: No, that really came as a surprise to me. I started writing in medical school I guess, because I had done all these meditation retreats before training as a psychiatrist as I mentioned. I started writing basically little articles, academic articles in the style that I had been reading in psychiatric journals, psychoanalytic journals.

I started writing just to try to explain to myself what these terms meant that I was finding both in Buddhism and in psychoanalysis: they were both talking about the ego, they were both talking about the self, they were both talking about emptiness, they were both talking about selflessness. I wanted to make sure that I actually understood myself were these words being used in the same way, were they being used in different ways; what were the definitions.

So I put these first articles together really for my own edification, and I published a bunch of them in a California journal called, *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* where only a very few people saw them. But I collected – in that book that you mentioned, *Psychotherapy Without The Self* – a number of those early articles are collected there.

Then I went on and I had the ambition to publish at least one article in the *International Review of Psychoanalysis*, and I did, I published one article, but it was about the psychoanalytic view of Buddhist meditation. After all that was published, a book editor got a hold of those articles – another author of hers sent her these articles and said you should try to get find this guy, he's doing something sort of interesting. She contacted me and that's when I wrote *Thoughts Without A Thinker*; she convinced me that I could write a book.

Dr. Dave: Well that's wonderful; she was right (laughing).

Epstein: (laughing) I'm very grateful to her, she was a wonderful editor.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Well we've come to a good place probably to wrap it up. Is there any final thought you'd like to leave our listeners with?

Epstein: No, I think you've done a good enough job and I'm happy to leave it in your hands.

Dr. Dave: Ok, I'm a *good enough* interviewer (laughing).

Epstein: (laughing).

Dr. Dave: Dr. Mark Epstein, thanks for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

Epstein: You are very welcome. I think it went well, you asked very good questions.

Dr. Dave: Oh thank you.