

6 Great Questions That Will Help You Find Your Focus

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Do you have a ton to do and have no idea where to start?

Would you like to know with each step you take you're heading in the right direction? Would you like to narrow your "to do" list down to a few key items and let go of the rest? Would you like to work smarter, not harder?

The questions below will help you do just that. Answering these questions will help you find your focus so you can do what you want to do and feel great about your life while you're doing it.

1. What do I care about most? Or, where is my heart leading me?

Only when you allow yourself to do what you care about most will you begin feeling better about your life.

Asking this question will give your HEART a space to speak and be heard. When we get wrapped up in all the "stuff" we have to do we often overlook what our heart wants.

2. What do I really, really want to do? Or, ask yourself "is this what I really want?" If the answer is "no", ask yourself why you're doing it and then find a way to stop doing it. So much life is wasted doing things we don't want to do.

Doing what you really want is a process of identifying and letting go of the things that you don't want and replacing them with things that you do want. Overtime you'll rebalance your life to include MORE of what you want to do.

This question will give your DREAMS an opportunity to come to life. This one question could set your life on a new course.

3. How do I want to feel while I'm doing what I'm doing? If what you're doing doesn't give you pleasure while you're doing it, you may be on the wrong track. Why? Because "doing" takes up much more time than the result. The result happens once. We reach each goal only once and then it's over. The journey to our goals is what fills our life with experiences. If you're not feeling good during the "doing" (aka -- the journey) is it really worth it?

This question allows your SPIRIT to come alive -- to be experienced.

Give yourself permission to do things that feel good and you'll live an inspired life.

4. What is the "for sake of what" behind what I'm doing? Another way to word this question would be, "In the big picture of my life what purpose does this action serve?" If the answer isn't clear you may be letting life lead you.

This question helps you CONNECT THE DOTS and make better choices for your life.

Basing your actions on a clear purpose puts you in the driver's seat which means you are LEADING your life instead of letting it lead you.

5. What am I going to do? Make a list of all the things you care about and all the things you really want to do and prioritize them with a "1-2-3" approach. Rank your list in order of importance.

Of course we make choices (decisions) about what we're going to do all day long BUT how often

do we make choices after asking questions 1-4? Answering the above questions FIRST will give you the opportunity to bring more of what you really want into your life.

This question requires a CHOICE be made. Now you've narrowed your focus!

6. How am I going to do it? After narrowing your focus create a mini action plan for each item. Write down the steps you'll need to take to make it happen.

Tip: only focus on 1 or 2 things at a time (ex: over the period of 1 month). Don't try to do everything at once. That will just lead to overwhelm. Give yourself a chance to work smarter and you will get more done.

This question will inspire you to TAKE ACTION. Nothing happens without it. In order to create the life you want you have to give your dreams, heart and spirit a voice and space in your life. However, this alone won't make things happen. You have to channel all these things into a clear course of action.

Instead of jumping into your "to do" list, take some time to reflect upon these questions. By doing so you'll put yourself on a life and/or business path that reflects more of what you really want. Determine your FOCUS first and you'll live a fuller, richer life.

About the Author

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LifeOnTrack.com's inspirational e-zine, LivingOnTrack, offers practical success tools, tips and strategies for getting and keeping your life on track. Sign up at <http://www.LifeOnTrack.com>

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26 Principals of Life

By Jason Johns

1. All Are Related: There is a Native American saying, which translates roughly to "All are Related". Everything in the universe is part of The Great Spirit, from a rock, to a plant, to a fish, to a human. The spirit flows between and within us all, and is the building block of everything. Since we are all part of the same whole, we should treat the rest of the whole as if it is part of us, i.e. with compassion and love. We are all part of the Great Spirit, just like all the different leaves on a tree are still part of the tree.

2. The Energy Flow: The universe is composed of energy. This energy flows between everything, us and within us all. When we have internal blocks, the energy fails to flow correctly, causing illness, lethargy and other symptoms. This energy can be directed consciously, we can see it, and feel it. How we feel affects our energy levels; negativity drains energy, positivity creates energy.

3. We Are Beings of Both Spirit and Flesh: We are spirits, but at the same time, we are creatures of the flesh. We inhabit both worlds simultaneously, even though we are often unaware of it. We should not shun the flesh for spirit or vice versa. Both are equally important. We have to walk with one foot in each of these worlds, and pay them both attention. Neglecting either world causes distress in the other.

4. No One Entity is Superior to Another: No one being or creature is any better or greater than another. We are all the same. We are all on different paths and have different levels of understanding, but that does not make any one of us better than another. Humans are not masters of nature, nor the animals and plants. They are our companions, and co-inhabitants of this planet. We are not superior to them, nor do we own them. We should treat them all with respect.

5. Belief Creates: How we perceive the universe is shaped by our beliefs. If we believe we are in a hurry, then everyone else appears to be going slow. Through belief and positive thought, we can create virtually anything. We should believe in our abilities and ourselves, and we will succeed. We can combine the power of belief with that of visualisation to bring anything into reality.

6. Intuition: Inside of us, a voice speaks and guides us. It is our intuition. We can choose to ignore it or to listen to it. Once we are in tune with our intuition and start to listen to it, we will be guided and will find that we can achieve more than we thought possible. We will begin to realise that the Great Spirit works through us - often in mysterious ways, but always to our benefit - in the long term.

7. The Higher Purpose: Everything that happens is for a reason and for the greater good. We have to learn to look at events in our lives from more than just the normal human perspective. We must see them from the perspective of the Great Spirit and to look at what good will come from these events. This is the old maxim of "is the glass half full or half empty". We can look at events badly, half empty, and our reaction will be worse. However, should we look at events better, i.e. half full, then we are more positive, which means our energy is higher, and our reaction will be better.

8. There are No Ordinary Moments: The past only exists in our memory. The future only exists as our expectation. The only time that really exists is NOW. It is a precious moment and we should treat every single moment as special and live it to the full. By being in the present, we have presence. To live in the now the conscious mind should be quiet and you must focus totally on what you are doing, not what you are going to be doing next week, or what you are going to have for lunch.

9. There are No Limits: The only limits we have are those we place upon ourselves, or others place

upon us. To this end, we should avoid being put in a pigeonhole and labelled by others. If someone views a dog as being vicious, then it is more likely to be vicious. We should hold no expectations of others, and let them be themselves, just as we should be ourselves.

10.Action not Reaction: If we are tickled, our reaction is to laugh. We should be at a state where we do not react in a situation, but act. Reaction is unconscious, whereas Action is conscious. We should not let past influences affect our actions, e.g. if we were once bitten by a dog, when we next meet a dog, we should not let the past bite affect how we act towards it. There are times to act, as well as times to be still. By living in the present and having control of the conscious mind, we can better direct our action.

11.Positivty Rules: Negative thoughts attract negative events and drain our energy. Positive thoughts attract positive events and increase our energy. To this end, we should look at our thoughts and the events which happen to us in a positive light, realising negative thoughts for what they are and releasing them.

12.Posture, Pose & Breathing: Energy flows through the body, as it flows through all things. If the posture and pose are bad, the energy can not flow cleanly and causes blockages, which manifest as pain or illness. We breathe in energy from the world around us. Therefore, our breaths should be deep and full, coming from the bottom of the belly, and not the chest. This enables us to maximise our energy. Deep breathing helps relax us. When we are stressed, angry or afraid our breathing changes and becomes shallow and faster. By consciously controlling our breathing and keeping it deep and even, we can release the stress, anger or fear, enabling us to act consciously in the situation.

13.Everything in Balance: The universe exists in a state of balance, as should we. We can do anything we wish, but should always do it to moderation, never to excess. Should we do things to excess, then they can become addictive, which drains energy and may become negative. Being balanced allows us to act better in situations. If we are sat on the fence, so to speak, we can jump off either way should we desire to.

14.Intent is Action: You can intend to do anything, and your intent is important. However, unless the intent is followed with action, then the intent is nothing. As an example. I may intend to get fit, but spend all my time sat in front of the TV eating pizza and drinking cola. I have my intention, but my actions do not confirm or create the intention. Therefore, if you intend something, do it, don't just talk about it. Action turns knowledge into wisdom.

15.Freedom of Choice: We all have free will, and can choose to do anything we wish. There is no situation where we do not have choice. It may appear that we do not, but there are always options, if we have the courage and strength to take them. We just have to have the courage of conviction to make the decisions.

16.Change Happens: Change is continuous and is always happening around us. We can not actually perceive change, but can see the end result of it. Change is not a bad thing nor is it to be feared. Through change we can grow and go forwards.

17.Taking Responsibility: Our actions cause a reaction - it is a law of nature. We have to be aware of our actions and take responsibility for them and for the consequences of them. It is no good doing something and then saying you did not mean to do it. Had you not meant to do it, you would not have done it. By taking responsibility for our actions, so we can take back our power and freedom to choose. We have to accept that no one will live for us, and that sometimes our actions will cause others, or ourselves, a measure of discomfort. Remember though, that discomfort is one

way of helping us grow and to show us where changes need to be made.

18. One Step at a Time: To get to any goal, break it down into a number of small steps. If you have many small successes, then this will lead to a big success. If you aim for a big success straight off, you may fail. Remember that a journey towards any destination starts with a single step, and then a second and a third, and as many as required until you reach that destination. Remember to reward and praise yourself for your successes, however small they are. By acknowledging them, you increase your power and will to succeed, strengthening your belief in yourself.

19. Judgement: We have no right to judge another for their words, thoughts or deeds. They have the freedom of choice to do as they please and act as they wish, just as we do. We are in no position to judge anyone, as we are imperfect ourselves. It is easily done, for example, you see a big man with tattoos, a skinhead and wearing leather, and the automatic assumption is that he is trouble. He may be a florist for all we know. This colours our judgement of people and changes how we act towards them. By having no preconceptions of other people, we can interact better with them, and perhaps make a new friend.

20. Integrity: Integrity is all about how we act when no one is looking. We must live to our own standards and should not judge others by them. This is about living in line with our highest vision despite urges to the contrary.

21. Air Your Doubts: By airing your doubts, fears, and worries, by looking at them and seeing them for what they are, so you can conquer them and rid yourself of them forever. By refusing to confront them, so they gain power over you, and become even more deeply rooted. After you realise what they are - release them.

22. Failure: It is very rare for us to fail. We only ever choose to stop trying. That is us exercising our free will. We can stop trying any time we wish, but those that succeed never stop until they get to their goal. Success often does not come easy, and does require work and effort from us. You will find that most 'overnight successes' have been working hard for that success for many years. Failure is not something to be feared or worried about, because we can never fail! Everything we do, no matter whether we view it as a success or failure is a valuable lesson for us to learn. By looking at a perceived failure as a valuable lesson, it no longer feels as bad. The only true failure is not learning the lessons our mistakes teach us.

23. The Ongoing Journey: Our journey of exploration through life never, ever stops. The destination is not the reward or the goal. The journey to the destination is the goal itself.

24. Don't Mind: If we take an objective view of our mind, then we can see that lots of thoughts drift through it, many of which we are unaware of. A sad, angry or fearful thought may drift up from the sub-conscious and change how we feel for no apparent reason. We must take control of the mind through tools such as meditation, and become aware of these thoughts and realise them for what they are. Then, we can let them go and stay relaxed and centred. By consciously focussing on our breathing, and keeping it deep and even, we can help to release these negative thoughts.

25. Emotions: Emotions come and go. They flow through us all the time, often without us even realising. Many of us do not express our emotions because we feel we have to "Be manly" or "Be responsible" or "Be cool". When we feel the negative emotions, we can feel our bodies tense. If we do not express these emotions when we feel them, the tension is stored within our bodies. Having emotions is not to be feared and should be celebrated. When you feel an emotion - express it! If you are happy - smile and laugh, if you are sad cry. Expressing your emotions releases the tension they give, and helps you live more fully in the here and now. Once you have expressed an emotion, it is

gone and will not return with the same force for that situation. If we refuse to express them and store the emotions up, then, like damming a fast river, eventually the water level will rise too high if we do not provide it with an outlet.

26.Play: As children, we play exuberantly. We have fun, enjoy ourselves and have lots of energy. Then something happens, we grow up, and we no longer play believing that adults have to be adult and they don't play. Playing is one of our greatest sources of pleasure. It takes many forms, from sport to games to laughing and joking with friends. Playing increases our energy and makes us more positive. It makes those around us more positive and generally lifts the spirits of all involved. There are times to be serious, yes, but there are times to play too, and that is what we must not forget.

About the Author

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ACCEPT: THE 12 STEPS TO PURGE A PROBLEM

By Fraser Rose

- 1 - ACCEPT (your truth)
- 2 - ACCEPT (responsibility)
- 3 - Control (harmful thoughts)
- 4 - Commit (to a vision)
- 5 - Choose (potent paradigms)
- 6 - Create (a plan)
- 7 - Empower (with passion)
- 8 - Expect (to sacrifice)
- 9 - Persist (being proactive)
- 10 - Pick (pure principles)
- 11 - Trust (in Divine help)
- 12 - Thank (with gratitude)

Whether to fight fat or stress, deal with depression or addiction, correct a family conflict, or just to become a better you, these steps are the way.

STEP 1 – Accepting your truth, the truth about you, may take real courage. What if, for example, when you do a searching moral inventory, the truth hurts, what then? The answer is it must be done anyway because you can't change what you don't acknowledge. But don't forget to acknowledge your strengths, your good points – everybody has those. (If you can't be sufficiently objective about yourself, you may want to check out your conclusions with a trusted friend, because you want to paint as accurate a picture of you, for you, as possible.)

STEP 2 – Accepting appropriate responsibility for what's good and bad about you is important for the truth is your life is the sum of the choices you have made in your past. But notice the word "appropriate." That's included because it's possible to accept too much responsibility (for example, children blaming themselves for their parents' divorce). Much more frequently, however, we accept too little responsibility. (It's not my fault that I did it, I was drunk at the time.)

When you have acknowledged past failures and accepted responsibility for them, any guilt you feel will no longer serve you. So forgive yourself for your past mistakes, and seek forgiveness from those you have harmed. Free yourself to focus on your present to form your future.

STEP 3 – Controlling harmful thoughts means that when you realize you are having a thought that is toxic, you don't give it safe harbour. Instead, you release and replace it with a healthy thought. That's important because your feelings flow from your thoughts. You may disagree and claim it's the things that happen to you – the events in your life – that cause your feelings. If events cause feelings, only when you have a positive event (when you are praised, for example), will you have a positive feeling. And when you suffer a negative event (someone cuts you off in traffic), you'll suffer a negative feeling like road rage, at least frustration. Or, if you are insulted, you must experience something negative like humiliation, or embarrassment. All this is erroneous because it's not the events that cause your feelings, it's your thoughts about the events that matter. It's wonderful – I hope you'll agree – that your thoughts (not your events) cause your feelings. That's because you can't often control the events in your life, but you can control your thoughts about the events and, therefore, choose your feelings. Yes, you can always control your reactions. So, for example, if someone insults you by calling you an idiot when you happen to do something dumb (a negative event), instead of raging or feeling upset and embarrassed, you can use some self-talk to counter the insult: "What I did may have been dumb, but I'm anything but an idiot. I'm great in so many ways, and I refuse to allow him to control how I feel. He can't spoil my day. I'm

in charge of how I think and feel and I choose to feel fine.” Thinking that way will turn a negative event into a neutral feeling. No-one, or anything else, has the power to make you feel upset – only you. (People who learn to turn negative events into neutral feelings, can also learn to see positives in most anything – more about that another time.)

STEP 4 – Committing to a vision is the step where you decide what it is you are going to work on. Remember, a vision is what you see as possible in a person or project. Perhaps your vision is to lose fat and get fit, make more money, or improve a relationship. Whatever it is, the question is this: On a scale of 1 to 10 what is the level of your commitment? Obviously a 3 is not likely to end in success; an 8, maybe. (Don’t choose too many visions to commit to at one time – one or two are O.K. but never more than three – because the more you choose the more your focus will be scattered, and the less likelihood success will ensue.) Envision your vision. See it as already accomplished. When you vividly imagine that, your subconscious mind is impressed and inclined to lead you in the desired direction.

STEP 5 – Chose potent paradigms. A paradigm is just a way of looking at your world – the lens through which you choose to view things. Optimism is one paradigm; so is pessimism. The former is potent. For example, a large insurance company tested all its applicants for sales jobs with its standard tests. A number of applicants failed and, therefore, did not qualify to be hired. An experimenter persuaded the insurance company to allow him to test the failures for one quality – optimism – and then hire those who tested high for optimism on a trial basis for one year. At the end of the year, those optimists had sold more insurance than a matched group that had passed the standard tests the insurance company had used for years to select its sales force.

STEP 6 – Create a plan. Remember no-one plans to fail, but many fail to plan. (The difference between a dream and a goal is a good plan.) The more specific your plan is the better, but don’t write it in stone as you must be flexible – prepared to adjust your plan as you proceed. Your plan needs to have an evaluative component so you can gage your progress or lack thereof. For example, if your goal is to lose weight, stepping on a scale every week will give you the feedback you require. If it’s to make more money, your bank account will tell the tale.

STEP 7 – Empowering with passion means that you are not just using your head as you have in previous steps, you are employing the power of your emotions as well. Emotions are heart-felt, like the enthusiasm you muster for the task you have chosen. Emotion provides the drive you need to enact your plan. Yes, feeling enthusiastic can make all the difference, the difference between success and failure.

STEP 8 – Expect to sacrifice. “Oh, oh,” you say, “Do I really have to sacrifice something? This step sounds like a bummer.” The answer is yes – there is a price to pay, and if you are not prepared to pay the price – whether that be time, effort, discipline, whatever – you may as well surrender now. But here’s some encouragement. Think of this meaning for sacrifice: Sacrifice is when you give up something you want for something better. Under that definition any sacrifice is worthwhile. So if you are trying to lose weight, for example, you sacrifice something you may like – the satisfaction of satiety after you pig out – for something better: the pleasure of achieving your desired goal.

STEP 9 – Persist being proactive. To be proactive means not sitting on your seat wasting time wishing for it, but taking the necessary initiative to go out and make it happen. Remember, if it’s going to be, it’s up to me. To persist means hanging in there, not giving up at the first obstacle. Or the second, or the third. The human spirit is not defeated by failure, only surrender.

STEP 10 – Pick pure principles. Through the first nine steps you could be a Hitler. Hitler was very

committed to a vision – that the Third Reich would last 1000 years. He had potent paradigms and created detailed plans. He was empowered by passion and expected to sacrifice. Indeed, he sacrificed millions of German lives for his vision. And he persisted in being proactive until his death. What would stop any Hitler is this step – step 10 – because being the egomaniac Hitler was, his principles were anything but pure. One example of a pure principle is win/win which means in any relationship or negotiation you want to win – but you want the other to win also. Our society operates primarily with the principle of win/lose. (For me to win, you must lose.) Our legal system is built on win/lose. (Who ever heard of two people going to court and both of them winning.) Now, win/lose is fine on the sports field, but when it carries over to our personal lives it can be ruinous. (Who's winning in your marriage is a crazy question.) Whether in business or in parenting, many try to win at the other's expense, instead of looking for ways to engender trust and loyalty by finding a win/win solution so both parties can feel good.

STEP 11 – Trust in Divine Help. Whatever your vision, you don't need to struggle alone. Probably you can't accomplish it alone anyway, or you would have done so before now – without these 12 steps. Divine help is certain when your plan is worthy, and your intention is sincere and honourable. And provided the connection between you and God isn't polluted by garbage thinking. (If it is, the best vision you could possibly commit to in Step 4 is to clean up the crap and clear that connection.)

STEP 12 – Thank with gratitude. Electricity is something we usually take for granted – until we lose it. Our health too. A perpetual attitude of gratitude is not only becoming, it's beneficial in so many ways. You may know of people who seem to have a lot, but constantly complain about their lives. And others who, on the surface, have very little – plus serious challenges possibly – yet not only don't complain, but exude happiness. These are the noble spirits who deserve our admiration (not that they need it for they are already fulfilled). In this final step, you fuel your faith in both God and yourself by becoming thankful for your vision fulfilled – even before it has been fully realized.

Each of a human's four parts (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) is covered by the 12 steps: Steps 1 to 6 cover the mental part (our brain), because each involves thinking.

Step 7 is for the emotional part (our heart) since it's all about feeling.

Steps 8 and 9 emphasize the physical part (our body). Step 8, since the highest expression of the physical is discipline. Step 9, because it's all about doing.

Steps 10, 11 and 12 stress our moral, spiritual part. They are about being.

These 12 steps are guaranteed. They work! If, after attempting the 12 steps, you are not a better you, it's because you have failed to do one or more of the steps properly.

The 12 steps might be summarized in these words: I AM – I WANT – I DO – I BECOME.

The 12 steps encompass each of these, and they produce a cycle to be repeated over and over, because every time you become, you are a new I AM.

NOTE: If you are interested in either being coached through the 12 steps yourself (it's group coaching by regular teleconferencing), or referring others for coaching (you will receive \$70 per referral), please see www.ProblemsAnonymous.com for details. Copyright 2006, Fraser Rose – All Rights Reserved

About the Author

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Aligning with True Power

By Ada Porat

Personal power is the currency of the world. Successful individuals emanate a sense of confidence and power, and others desire to emanate such success by seeking more power in their own lives. We all seek more power to overcome pain and suffering, more power to change the circumstances of our lives, or more power to fulfill our potential.

True power is available to everyone by virtue of their Divine origin. It is the result of aligning with integrity, truth and compassion. Those individuals who are willing to do the work of inner clearing and alignment to Truth, find power flowing in their lives. Others look for quick fixes or magic solutions and settle for a counterfeit instead.

Society offers a cheap counterfeit for true power in the form of force: manipulation, fear, desire and anger are some of the tools that force uses to masquerade as power. Force always pushes for immediate results, and it does so with overt ego, pomp and drama... often lots of it! However, force always has a down-side: it offers a win-lose proposition at best, and usually leads to loss: loss of freedom, loss of joy, and loss of identity. Force never offers lasting results and can never substitute for the real thing. At the merciless hand of force, manipulation leads to betrayal, fear leads to anxiety, desire drives addiction and anger leads to violence.

Power, on the other hand, leads to long-term results and win-win solutions. It brings about change without overt noise or drama, and it operates from the inside out. Here are some key principles to keep in mind about aligning with true power.

1. Acknowledge Your Intrinsic Perfection

You are and have always been an intrinsic part of Divinity. Your intrinsic value has nothing to do with your deservingness, performance or limitations - it has everything to do with the purity and perfection of your Source. Even when a diamond is dropped in mud, it retains its intrinsic properties as a precious stone. You are no different! Even at those moments when you do not live up to your highest standards, your intrinsic value is not diminished by your struggle.

2. Accept The Journey Of Your Soul

Every soul chooses to incarnate for the marvelous opportunity to evolve into the highest expression of its innate potential. Along this journey of your soul, every event holds the potential to further your growth. Why resist the very lessons that you have come to learn? Resistance only brings pain and suffering. It is not what happens to you, but how you respond to the events that come your way, that determines what you become on this journey. When you feel resistant, consider that the most valuable lessons may well come from the very obstacles that you have been resisting, and surrender to the process.

3. Maintain Personal Integrity At All Times

Your integrity is always found by aligning with the still voice within, and not in aligning with the clamour of the ego or external goals. Personal integrity is the result of bringing about alignment in your core values: aligning your actions, your speech, your thoughts, and your feelings with your core values. Do you know what your core values are? One of the most valuable gifts you can give yourself is to identify those core values. Once you've done this, use your core values as a compass to align your responses to life with your inner truth. It will greatly support you in maintaining your personal integrity at all times.

4. Be True To Yourself

You are created of light, of grace and of love. One of the biggest disservices you can do to yourself is to try and be what you think others want you to be. It is the ultimate betrayal of your inner truth! Trying to be what others want you to be is like going through life wearing a mask that hides your true identity. This masquerade cannot last for it is not based on truth; instead, it causes countless breakups, hurts and disappointments. When you stop trying to be who you are not and focus on embracing that which you are, you will discover the Divine nature at the core of your being ready to light up your life. Aligning with this Divine core of Truth brings healing and blessing to you as well as to others.

5. Acknowledge The Value Of Your Existence

As an integral part of the holographic universe, you bring to the world around you unique gifts, talents and abilities. Nobody else on the planet has exactly the same combination of gifts and graces, for your gift to the world is the sum total of everything you have ever experienced. You are truly a unique expression of Divinity on this planet! This insight makes you neither greater than nor less than another and is not a cause for pride. Instead, it fosters a deep sense of awe to realize that you were created to be a unique vehicle through which Divinity can reach out to the world. You are the hands and feet of God on this earth to do His work, and your voice is the instrument through which others may receive words of compassion and comfort. Let the awesome beauty of this concept fill you with gratitude to be of service in your own unique way.

6. Accept Your Power

True power comes not from ego, but from alignment with the Divine. As Marianne Williamson has so beautifully put it, our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate but that we are powerful beyond measure. To fear or to minimize your power is to deny the Source of that power. Acceptance of your true power precedes any meaningful action in the world.

7. Take All Of Your Being Into Your World

Gandhi said that we should be the change we desire to see in the world. All true change happens from the inside out: in other words, to bring about change in the world around you, you first need to embody the very change that you desire to bring about. It is in the application of higher principles that you are transformed into a vessel of purity and power.

8. Let Compassion Rule

When taking action on what you have learned, you are bound to flounder at times. This is an integral part of learning. When it happens, practice having the same compassion for yourself as you would for another! It is in using the same yard stick for both self and for others that the Golden Rule becomes a way of life. True compassion for self and others opens up the doorway for forgiveness, grace and transformation.

9. Let The Love That You Are Touch All You Encounter

Compassion for self and others conditions the heart to become more and more loving. The radiance of Divine love will gently fill every cell and touch lives without your even being aware of it. Simply let that Divine love embrace you and flow through you to others. Recognizing the Divinity in others generates compassion for their areas of weakness.

10. Learn To Discern Between Loving kindness and Enabling

It is critically important to distinguish between loving kindness and enabling. Loving kindness is not wishy-washy; it does not condone, enable or tolerate lack of integrity in any form, whether in yourself or in another. Loving kindness always seeks to align with Truth in all things; it does not compromise to accommodate lower egoic illusions camouflaged as truth. The ability to discern between Truth and its counterfeit forms will empower you to disregard irrelevant distractions and to more fully align with your soul's highest potential. ©Copyright 2007 Ada Porat.

About the Author

Ada Porat uses body/mind/spirit techniques to facilitate personal growth and balance for clients. Her innovative approach has brought about profound results for individuals internationally. For more information on vibrational healing, ascension and life balance coaching or to sign up for her inspirational newsletter, go to: www.AdaPorat.com

The Anatomy of a Spiritual Person

By Vijai P. Sharma, Ph.D. Clinical Psychologist

Wayne Dyer, a renowned contemporary psychologist says, "We all are spiritual beings having human experience." We are physical, emotional and spiritual beings, a living proof of "trinity," in this case the trinity of the body, the heart and the soul

To what extent we develop the spiritual or the other two dimensions depends on our environment, upbringing and self-cultivation. Exceptional indeed are the people who are fully developed as spiritual persons and live their lives on the spiritual plane on a 24-hour basis. All prophets of any religion, or at least the ones I have studied, were spiritual beings in the total sense of the world. In common parlance, we use the terms "spirituality" and "religion" interchangeably. Although many aspects overlap, not all spiritual people are religious, and not all religious people are spiritual.

Relationship between mind and matter: Spiritual people know they are more than their physical bodies, and their awareness and knowledge are far greater than the sum total of information provided by their five senses. Intuition is at its highest in them. The "intuit" when a solution is beyond reasoning and thinking. They believe they are more than their thoughts, memories, emotions and other mental faculties put together, and that lets them transcend physical limitation.

Relationship with one's own self: Spiritual people are at peace with themselves. They feel the same compassion for themselves as they feel for all other beings. They are secure in themselves in that they feel totally accepted by the loving force or being of the universe.

Relationship with others: Spiritual people see others too as more than their physical forms. They believe the same invisible life force flows through others as it does within themselves, so they feel at one with others because of that connection. Their eyes can pierce through hateful behavior and men words and see the beauty of the soul, so they often succeed in bringing that beautiful being out by their compassion and unconditional acceptance. Their motive for all their actions is based on love and compassion for others rather than the motive for return or recognition.

Spiritual people seldom feel alone. They never feel lack of love because they feel they are being loved by the universe and that Universal Spirit all the time. As a result of this unconditional, ever-present love, they are peaceful, compassionate, open and loving to all human beings. They believe in universal brotherhood and sisterhood, recognizing that all other definitions of people in terms of creed, color, sex, nationality and the like too often divide people. They feel the same compassion and love for all without focusing on their faults and weaknesses. They have no desire to control or dominate others. They constantly endeavor to empower others.

Relationship with God: Knowing that there is an infinitely superior intelligence, they constantly seek the divine guidance. While others look outward for solutions, spiritual people go within and meditate for guidance. They experience a constant presence of God loving them and guiding them. They seek answers to their questions only from the source of all intelligence and wisdom. This relationship is experienced with an overwhelming feeling of joy and gratitude, which can take the form of the lover and beloved as with the Sufis, the teacher and disciple, the parent and child, or the guardian and ward.

Relationship with the universe: They have a spiritual connection with the whole world. Spiritual people see the universe as part of a divine plan. They see a purpose and inherent logic in all aspects and events of the universe. Nothing is possible outside that plan and its purpose,. Though it may not be immediately discernible to the naked eye. They are simply in awe of the mystery of the universe as they feel the divine presence in every atom of the universe. They feel grateful for every

event in the universe and often experience ecstasy in admiration and awe of how the whole universe runs with such perfection.

About the Author

Vijai P. Sharma is a Clinical Psychologist of 30 years was born in India, who trained in India, U.K. Sweden and now practicing in U.S.A. He is a yoga teacher, certified at 500 hour level and trained by Gary Kraftsow. Dr. Vijai Sharma also shares free psychology articles on Type A Personality, Anger Management Techniques, Information On Eating Disorders such as Anorexia, Trichotillomania, Attention Deficit Disorder, Autism, Dyslexia, Phobias, Work Stress, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Self Growth. Dr. Sharma has also written helpful books including People Fear and Insane Jealousy available in the Mind Publications area.

Visit Dr. Vijai Sharma's Self-Help Pages on: www.mindpub.com/selfhelp.htm

How to Handle Other Peoples Anger

By Michael Atma

How many times have you been confronted by an angry person, be it a workmate, a customer or a loved one only to feel at a loss for how to handle them without losing your cool?

What if you knew how to stay calm while everyone else around you was losing their cool, how would that be?

Fortunately there are some simple anger management techniques that you could be applying right now that can make your life easier and give you the confidence to deal with irrational and hot-headed people.

Here are 5 simple anger management techniques to get you started

1. Use Positive Self Talk

There are things that you can say to yourself quietly in your mind when faced with another person's anger. This kind of talk is called self talk. The most important person you will talk to every day is yourself. It is from this talk that you can begin to take charge of your physical and emotional responses. Anger management activities for your mind...

'When someone gets angry, I get calm'

'Anger is just a temporary state of insanity - it will pass'

'I wonder what this person is angry about'

'I choose to respond calmly no matter how angry you get'

'I can choose to walk away if I feel uncomfortable or afraid'

'I am responsible for my own feelings and I can choose to respond instead of reacting'

Keep this list with you, and if you like add some of your own positive statements. Choose the one that you most relate to and then affirm it to your self every day for five minutes.

Don't be discouraged if you forget your positive statement the first few times. Just continue to memorize it and repeat it constantly especially if you know you are going to face an angry person.

2. Acknowledge Their Feelings

When someone is angry, they have powerful emotions fuelling their thoughts and actions. As most of us are not taught how to manage powerful emotions like anger, frustration, rage or jealousy we revert to our conditioned behaviour. During moments of anger people become irrational and illogical because these feelings overwhelm their rational mind. The fastest way to diffuse these feelings is to not judge them in another. To do this, you must also be comfortable to face your own anger. Use statements such as:

'You seem to be very annoyed.'

'I understand that you are angry.'

When you use statements like these try to speak in a calm, sincere and assertive tone, despite how much you might want to criticize them.

3. Listen First, Ask Questions Later

Most angry people just want to be heard. The secret to diffusing their anger is to simply acknowledge what they are saying without trying to judge or change it.

The moment that you negate or oppose what they are saying you're adding fuel to the fire. To overcome this try repeating back some of the main points or comments that have been made such as:

'So what you are saying is that you don't like it when...'

'Ok, I understand that you don't like to be woken up by the neighbour's dog'

One of the secrets to making a connection with someone who is angry is to know that anger comes from not feeling loved or understood.

Just by talking the time to find out why they are angry can sometimes be enough to let the other person know you are listening and care about them.

4. Check Your Body Language

When you find yourself in a situation where you are being confronted by an angry person do your best to match the position of your body with them. If they are standing up and talking down to you, then change your body position by standing up also. If they are sitting, then sit down so that you are at the same level so that they do not take your body posture as a threat.

Always keep in mind that safety comes first. Never allow anyone to encroach upon your personal space. Always keep a safe distance between you and the person confronting you so there are no accidents.

If this means keeping yourself close to exit, then do so. The other option is to keep a piece of furniture between you and the other person. By matching the body language of the other person it allows for a more non-threatening experience for both. Try not to ask any questions until after the person has finished their outburst. That way no-one needs to get frustrated by unsatisfactory answers.

5. Share Your Own Feelings

This can be a great diffuser of tension and help you to take back control of the situation. This is especially true if the other person is normally even tempered. The strategy here is to use 'I' statements instead of 'you' statements. The reasoning behind this is that you are then taking responsibility for your own emotions and not trying to blame them for how you feel. Blaming or accusing others for how you feel in any situation will only fuel the fire.

Some examples include:

'I feel angry when you shout at me like that'. (Instead of, 'You make me so angry when you yell'.)

'I feel scared when you lose control of your temper'. (Instead of, 'You are scaring me'.)

'I'm so upset right now that I don't know what to think or say'. (Instead of, 'You are making me so upset that I I don't know what I might do'.)

Mastering the skill of anger management both within yourself and others is a powerful gift to give yourself and those you love. It is also a gift that lasts a lifetime. I highly recommend you find an anger management program or even an anger management class to join.

This is by far the fastest way to accelerate your skill level and start enjoying the benefits of a calmer, happier and more stress free life!

About the Author

Why are thousands of people feeling great all the time and enjoying easy anger management techniques for improved health, happiness and calmness? Check out Michael's best selling anger management program! See website: <http://www.theultimaterelaxation.com/>

Top Ten Ways of Moving Through Anger

By Johanna Vanderpol

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Our culture makes anger a dirty word. Yet, it is an emotion that deserves attention. Because it has not received the proper attention, it is responsible for coming out "all wrong" and come out it will. The way to manage anger is by recognizing it as a valid emotion with a purpose. Next time you are angry, look at it as a form of information that has a message for you. Determine the message and act in a way that satisfies the message with self-respect and respect for others. Here are ten points to keep in mind as you move through anger:

1. Recognize that anger is a valid message that something is wrong.
2. Experience the sensations in the body: Where do you feel it? What does it feel like?
3. Determine the message in the emotion. What is the message? What is anger trying to tell you? Have one of your boundaries been violated? Is it a response to protect you from feeling hurt? Are your goals being frustrated? Are you responding to feeling threatened? Has your sense of justice been betrayed? Figure out the message. Your body and mind are trying to tell you something.
4. Understand the other person's point of view. Are you angry at someone? Have you thought about or talked about what may have provoked their behaviour? If you can truly understand, it will change your anger.
5. Understand your need for nourishing people in your life. Is your anger a pattern, a theme with the same kinds of problems with the same kinds of people? Is it time to respect yourself and choose friends and others who treat you better?
6. Recognize your beliefs. What beliefs about yourself and others are driving your anger. Use the ABC exercise on my site to excavate your beliefs. Are your beliefs adaptive or maladaptive? If they are adaptive, go ahead to action. If they are maladaptive, what new belief do you need to try that would work better or be more accurate?
7. Take action. Inherent in the message of anger is the need for non-violent action that is respectful of self and others. This is the tricky one. What action is required here that will satisfy the anger without causing damage to anyone including yourself.
8. Manage your anger. If you need to manage your anger, in what ways can you do that which would allow you to continue to function?
9. Acknowledge the anger. Suspend self-judgment. Are you truly acknowledging your anger, even if you know it is connected to a maladaptive belief that you haven't yet changed completely? Acknowledging and having compassion for yourself in a nurturing style will go a long way to having your anger feel heard.
10. Look for moderation. Remember, suppressed anger is linked to cancer and cathartic anger is linked to cardiovascular heart disease. Find the moderate point on the continuum for hearing and taking appropriate action and your anger will be attended to in a way that is befitting for all concerned.

Now that you have some new insight, what will you do today to bring it into consciousness and

apply it. Every day we get angry but don't pay much attention to it. Today, notice a small thing you are angry at and apply any one of these principles or insights and see how it changes things for you. I would love to hear if it had any effect for you.

About the Author

Johanna Vanderpol is a professional coach, author and speaker on emotional intelligence, emotional well-being and de-stressing. For more free resources and articles as well as her latest products in this field, go to <http://www.johannavanderpol.com> and download exercises and articles complimenting this article on the support page.

Are You Part of the Wake Up Crew?

By Keith Varnum

Many people living on the planet right now have volunteered to accept the opportunity to play teaching, healing, inspirational and leadership roles during this current planetary transformation. These assignments have been accepted by the individual's soul prior to birth. Most folks have a kind of amnesia concerning these agreements. The energy fields of natural Power Spots have the capacity to awaken an individual to their destiny agreement--to stimulate recognition of their deeper purpose in living.

Connect with Your Destiny

Power Spots in Nature have unique energetic characteristics and qualities to assist people in their mental, emotional, physical and spiritual development--and thereby enable them to fulfill their life purpose. Such places express an irresistible spiritual magnetism on the hearts and souls of the people who resonate with them. These sites have a magical ability to lift the human soul above the problems of daily existence into an awareness of the Great Spirit and our specific connection to The Grand Plan.

Stalk Power Spots

Power Spots play a very potent role in the quest for one's Self. A Power Place is anywhere you feel centered, grounded and connected with Primal Life Force. Power Spots can be geographical locations, a positioning in a room full of people, or a precise moment in time when it is most advantageous to act. Designating a certain place and time as a focus of strength is ultimately a subjective, individual act of empowerment.

Boost Your Aliveness

Being grounded and connected makes us feel more safe and centered. The safer we feel, the more courageous, able and willing we are to perceive the truth of what is so. The more accurately we perceive the world around us, the better we deal with things in our life. The better we handle our world, the more fun it is to be present. The more consciously we show up, the more alive we feel. The more vibrant we feel, the more awake we want to be. The more awake we are, the more accurately we see what's really going on, the better we deal with life, the more exciting and exhilarating it is to be conscious. This spontaneous process quickly snowballs in a wonderful direction of waking up fully to our natural wisdom.

Uncover Your Essential Self

You can use the natural physical world to reveal the true workings going on underneath the surface appearance of all form. In Nature the deceit of Illusion is exposed, and you glimpse the core reality within the outer physical shell. The inter-dimensional veils between the visible and invisible worlds are gossamer-thin in the silent, timeless spaces of Wilderness, permitting easy access to other dimensions of life.

Nature offers a safe, nurturing environment for deep introspection, self-discovery and soul retrieval. Clear intention to awaken--combined with the isolation and solitude of a place of timeless harmony, balance and tranquility--stimulates a dynamic, alchemical odyssey. When you delve deeply into your relationship with the Earth and your God, you let the Land teach you greater intimacy, clarity and personal integrity.

Free from the confining shackles of the modern world, you uncover a new vision of your life. You learn to trust the physical universe to fully support you as you follow your own unique path. You find your way back to your heart and soul, and reclaim the strength and clarity to stand in your personal truth.

Seeing the Secrets of Life

"Seeing" life reveals its secrets. When you "see" beneath the surface appearance of events--instead of simply "looking" at the outer presentation, you tap into the realm of true wisdom. The same essential dynamic of unfolding moves through every aspect of life--natural and human. You see the same patterns of ebb and flow, catalyst and change, destruction and transformation, in the sphere of sexuality and spirituality, science and emotion, thunderstorms and arguments.

As you begin to perceive the similar recurring patterns of energy flowing through all life behind-the-scenes, you begin to experience "the river running through it all." When you get still enough inside--mentally and emotionally, you can feel the common thread of spiral movement that flows through all life and gives animation to all things. You get a very tangible sense of how all creation operates. One who has mastered life is one who has mastered the way life flows. Nature is our best teacher of the way life plays.

Break on through to the Other Side

Breakthrough and transformation can come through an intuitive, respectful reunion with Wilderness. You experience a palpable time warp between the everyday world and the timeless soul oasis of the lost Wildness. The Ancients Ones, alive in the vibrations of the Land, call to you to meet and play with your extended family of kindred spirits. You absorb the wisdom of knurled trees and majestic, ancient temples of dark moss forests. You cleanse and purify your body and soul in clear, spring-fed pools. You hike through a rainbow. You soar with hawks upwards into the clouds to a new appreciation of the infinite scope of your spirit. You hear your inner voice speaking to you in the whisper of the wind and the howl of a timber wolf. "You" disappear into the expansive night sky.

You can lose your "self" in the mystery and magic of ageless vortexes guarded by ancient forests. You can find your "Self" in the raucous rambling of untamed creeks and canyons. Hidden behind the grandeur of serrated, jewel-toned cliffs; the awesome, wild beauty of graceful trees; and the serene sound of rushing mountain streams lies the living consciousness of Gaia, the Greek Goddess of the Earth. These transformational treasures are ready to rejuvenate your body and spirit.

Walk the Way of the Warrior

The Nature Warrior walks the path that matters most, the path of spiritual purpose--the journey that leads us Home. Spirit Warriors live their passion, speak the divine truth, create love with heart, and build karmic freedom portals with each footstep. The Wilderness pilgrimage is a cosmic journey into your own soul, into the depths of your own knowing through its natural reflection in the world around you. You explore the fluid, flexible nature of the physical universe. Guided by the precise, practical mirror of the outer natural world, you open to loving without fear and enjoying without judgment. In Nature you tap unexpected new sources of strength, joy, ecstasy and inner peace.

Play a Bigger Game

Expand your playfield. This Earth-Human connection can be a two-way street. Natural Power Spots are particular geographic locations where a unique energetic dynamic allows for a mutually

beneficial relationship between the planet and humans. People are served by the dynamic energies radiating from the sites. And, in the same manner, the presence of Earth healers at Power Spots transmit an essence of love, strength and gratitude to the planet. This deep appreciation sparks waves of vital energy that stimulates the planet's entire energy field, and becomes a deliberate practice of planetary acupuncture. With pure conscious intention, a human being with a loving heart functions as an acupuncture needle to move stuck energy of the Earth.

Renew Yourself and the Planet

This sharing of human chi builds a bridge to a new paradigm and re-kindles conscious awareness in the lost relationship between the planet and its human inhabitants. Combined with other folks with the same unifying intention, you can seed a future of cooperation, community and co-creation between all forms of life--planetary, animal, elemental, human and divine. Merging with Nature you learn how to become an active player in healing your own spirit while at the same time healing the body and soul of the planet.

About the Author

Drawing from the wisdom of native and ancient spiritual traditions, Keith Varnum shares his 30 years of practical success as an author, personal coach, acupuncturist, filmmaker, radio host, restaurateur, vision quest guide and international seminar leader with "The Dream Workshops". Keith helps people get the love, money, and health they want with his F-r-e-e Prosperity Ezine, F-r-e-e Abundance Tape and F-r-e-e Coaching at <http://www.TheDream.com>

Are You Highly Sensitive?

By Jenna Avery

Do you often feel overwhelmed by your environment or the people around you? Has anyone ever called you shy - or worse: "too sensitive"? Do you care deeply about EVERYTHING? You may be a Highly Sensitive Soul - a person of deep empathy and high intensity, with powerful intuition, awareness, and intelligence.

Being Highly Sensitive, you have a uniquely perceptive sensory system. You are therefore more sensitive to emotions, energy, environmental conditions such as lighting or sound, other people, excitement, and stress. As a result of constant stimuli, you may feel easily overwhelmed or unable to cope. Things can be particularly confusing when others seem unperturbed by the same experiences. For example, your friends might be able to shop all day, go out to dinner, and then head to a loud party. For you, that would be unbearable.

Research psychologist Dr. Elaine Aron, author of *The Highly Sensitive Person*, has studied high sensitivity extensively. Her research shows that being sensitive is a personality temperament or trait, one usually inherited. According to Dr. Aron, up to 20% of the population is Highly Sensitive.

How To Tell If You Are Highly Sensitive

Being Highly Sensitive comes with a number of gifts, as well as challenges. See if any of these Highly Sensitive qualities resonate strongly with you.

- 1. You are deeply affected by all aspects of your life.** As a Sensitive Soul, you have great emotional passion, intensity, and depth. You may have been told that your emotions are "too much." You are sensitive, caring, and easily affected by the energy and emotions of others. These qualities make it easy to lose touch with your needs and desires.
- 2. You have heightened perceptive skills.** A Sensitive Soul is intuitive, highly aware, and keenly observant of the subtleties of your environment, including energy, light, noise, smell, texture, and temperature. You may also be empathic or even psychic. Your perceptive skills operate in the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual realms. You tie together things you see into complex and original concepts. This makes you a visionary.
- 3. You have a lower tolerance for stimulation than others.** Because you receive so much information from your surroundings, your threshold for what's "too much" is significantly lower than for those around you. This means: a) You may be seen as shy or timid; and b) You may feel uncomfortably dissimilar to others because you respond so differently to stimulation.
- 4. You are highly conscientious and thorough in all your undertakings.** A Sensitive Soul makes a great employee. You concentrate intensely and process multi-source information. However, you require privacy, uninterrupted time, and little or no pressure in order to do your best work.
- 5. You have a strong relationship with aesthetics and art.** As a Highly Sensitive Soul, you have a passion for beauty, art, and aesthetics. You may be highly artistic and creative yourself. You easily create beauty and comfort. Seeing things "out of alignment" can actually be physically or psychically distressing.
- 6. Your inner life is just as intriguing and inspiring as your outer life.** You likely have a rich, complex inner life and are highly imaginative. You may find it challenging to connect to "real world" priorities and realities.

7. **You absolutely require private time alone in order to feel replenished.** Up to 70% of Highly Sensitive Souls are introverted. But even extroverted sensitives need downtime to rejuvenate, often in a darkened, quiet room.

8. **You have a strong spiritual connection and depth.** If you are Highly Sensitive, you experience a profound spiritual connection with the divine and/or spiritual realm. You "see" a lot in what appears common. Because of this you may feel impatient with the truly mundane.

Learning To Thrive: What You Need

Learning to thrive as a Highly Sensitive Soul presents challenges. If you're sensitive, you have likely accumulated years of training in trying overcome the trait because you don't "fit in" with society. And yet being Highly Sensitive is a vital part of you.

A first step toward thriving as a Sensitive Soul is to understand and accept your trait. Hear this now: There is absolutely nothing wrong with you. You are just different. As one of my clients says, being Highly Sensitive is both a gift and a responsibility.

Sensitive Souls require regular self-care, meaningful work, and supportive relationships. Working with a sensitive coach or therapist who helps you tune into your own magnificent inner guidance system - your sensitivity - is a powerful means of support.

Additionally, there are books, websites, web-based communities, and teleconference gatherings on the subject. Connecting with like-minded souls is often deeply healing for sensitive persons.

As you begin to manage your life in a way that truly works for you, you will trust the power and gift of your sensitivity, and be inspired to share your much-needed wisdom with the world.

About the Author

Jenna Avery, Certified Life Coach, is the Life Coach for Sensitive Souls. It is her purpose and vision to support Highly Sensitive Souls in claiming their power and changing the world with their wisdom, beauty, and depth. She offers individual and group telephone-based coaching for Highly Sensitive Souls, TeleClasses, free monthly TeleGatherings, and other events specifically designed to support sensitive beings to find their voice and share their gifts with the world. For more information visit www.highlysensitivesouls.com or phone 510.528.1696.

Or you can email Jenna at: jenna@highlysensitivesouls.com

Aspects of the Soul: Astral body

***Astral Body - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astral_body

The astral body refers to the concept of a subtle body which exists alongside the physical body, as a vehicle of the soul or consciousness. It is usually understood as being of an emotional nature and, as such, it is equated to the desire body or emotional body. However, some philosophies conceive that the astral body is a body made of ether (the soul body), built by each individual during the current evolutionary stage (the Philosophers' Stone), which is said to give support to the desire (emotional) body during the astral projection.

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***The astral body in Theosophy

Blavatsky used the term "astral" to refer to the double (linga sharira) which was the lowest but one of the seven principles (immediately above the physical). Later however, C.W. Leadbeater and Annie Besant (Adyar School of Theosophy), and following them, Alice Bailey, equated the astral with Blavatsky's Kama (desire) principle (the fourth of the seven principles of man, and called it the Emotional body (a concept not found in earlier Theosophy).

In this way, astral body, desire body, and emotional body became synonymous, and this identification is found in much of New Age and theosophically-inspired thought since. The astral or emotional body here is understood as a sort of psychic body or aura that is made up of emotions, just as the physical body consists of matter. In occult thought, emotions are not just subjective qualia, but have an existence apart from the individual consciousness, and exist on a cosmic plane of existence, in this case, the astral plane.

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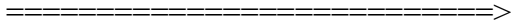
***The desire body in the Western Wisdom Teachings

According to Max Heindel's Rosicrucian writings, the Desire body [1] is made of desire stuff from which human beings form feelings and emotions and also it impels to seek sense gratification. But while it is referred that the Dense (physical) body and the Vital (etheric) body are well organized, the desire body is said to appear to spiritual sight as an ovoid cloud extending from sixteen to twenty inches beyond the physical body; it is seen above the head and below the feet so that the dense (physical) body sits in the center of this egg-shaped cloud as the yolk is in the center of an egg. This desire body has a number of whirling vortices - since a characteristic of desire-stuff is to be in constant motion - and from the main vortex in the region of the liver, there is a constant outwelling flow which radiates toward the periphery of this egg-shaped body and returns to the center through a number of other vortices. It is said the desire body also exhibits all the colors and shades, which we know and a vast number of others unknown to physical sight, and those colors vary in every person according to his or her characteristics and temperament, and they also vary from moment to moment as passing moods, fancies, or emotions are experienced by the person.

The "Astral body" (Soul body)

His writings, called Western Wisdom Teachings, refer that the term "Astral body" - a vehicle made of ether (from the Vital body), which is lighter than air and therefore capable of levitation - was employed by the mediaeval Alchemists, because of the ability it conferred upon the one who has it to traverse the "starry" regions. The Astral body should not to be confounded with the Desire body: during the soul flights the desire body molds itself readily into this prepared matrix; when the individual returns to the physical body, the effort of will whereby he enters it automatically

dissolves the intimate connection between the desire body and the soul body. The Astral body is also known as the 'Soul body', the 'Golden Wedding Garment', the 'Philosopher's Stone', or the 'Living Stone', spoken of in some of the ancient philosophies as the 'Diamond Soul' ("for it is luminous, lustrous, and sparkling--a priceless gem"), and will eventually be evolved by humanity as a whole.



***Barbara Brennan on the Astral Body: The Astral Level (Fourth Layer)

"The astral body is amorphous and is composed of clouds of color more beautiful than those of the emotional body. The astral body tends to have the same set of colors, but they are usually infused with the rose light of love. It extends out about one half to one foot (15 to 30 cm) from the body. The chakra are the same octave of colors as the rainbow of the emotional body, but each is infused with the rose light of love. The heart chakra of a loving person is full of rose light on the astral level.

When people fall in love, beautiful arcs of rose light can be seen between their hearts, and a beautiful rose color is added to the normal golden pulsations I observe in the pituitary gland. When people form relationships with each other, they grow cords out of the chakras that connect them. These cords exist on many levels of the auric field in addition to the astral. The longer and deeper the relationship, the more cords and the stronger they are. When relationships end, those cords are torn, sometimes causing a great deal of pain. The period of "getting over" a relationship is usually a period of disconnecting those cords on the lower levels of the field and rerooting them within the self.

A great deal of interaction takes place between people on the astral level. Great blobs of color of various forms whisk across the room between people. Some of it is pleasant and some not so pleasant. You can feel the difference. You may feel uneasy about someone across the room who is apparently not even aware of your presence; however on another level a lot is happening. I have seen people standing next to each other in a group pretending not to notice each other, when on the energy level there is a whole communication taking place with lots of energy forms moving between them. You have no doubt experienced this yourself, especially between men and women. It is not just body language; there is an actual energetic phenomenon that can be perceived.. For example, when a man or woman fantasize about making love with someone, say in a bar or at a party, there is an actual testing in the energy fields to see if the fields are synchronous and if the people are compatible." from Barbara Brennan, Hands of Light pp.50-51

For more information Barbara Brennan and her work see: Barbara Brennan School of Healing. Holistic, spiritual healing through working with the human energy field or aura. www.barbarabrennan.com

Dreams - From Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream>

A 'dream' is the experience of a sequence of images, sounds, ideas, emotions, or other sensations during sleep, especially REM sleep. The events of dreams are often impossible or unlikely to occur in physical reality, and are outside the control of the dreamer. The exception to this is known as lucid dreaming, in which dreamers realize that they are dreaming, and are sometimes capable of changing their dream environment and controlling various aspects of the dream. The dream environment is often much more realistic in a lucid dream, and the senses heightened.

+ Neurology of dreams

There is no universally agreed-upon biological definition of dreaming. General observation shows that dreams are strongly associated with REM sleep. REM sleep is the state of sleep in which brain activity is most like wakefulness, which is why many researchers believe this is when dreams are strongest, although it could also mean that this is a state from which dreams are most easily remembered. During a typical lifespan, a human spends a total of about six years dreaming. (which is about 2 hours each night. It is unknown where in the brain dreams originate — if there is such a single location — or why dreams occur at all.

+ Cultural history

Dreams have a long history both as a subject of conjecture and as a source of inspiration. Throughout their history, people have sought meaning in dreams. They have been described physiologically as a response to neural processes during sleep, psychologically as reflections of the subconscious, and spiritually as messages from God or predictions of the future.

Oneiromancy deals with the use of dreams for divination. In ancient Judeo-Christianity: in the Tanakh, Jacob, Joseph and Daniel are given the ability to interpret dreams by Yahweh; in the New Testament, divine inspiration comes as a dream to Saint Joseph, the husband of Mary, when the Angel Gabriel spoke to him in a dream and told him that the baby Mary was carrying was the Son of God. After the visit of the Three Wise Men to them in Bethlehem, an angel appeared to him and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt for their safety. The angel appeared again in a dream to tell him when it was safe to return to Israel. The story of Saint Patrick and his conversion of the people of Ireland also features dreaming. When Patrick was enslaved in Antrim he was told by God in a dream that there was a boat waiting in Wicklow to bring him back to his homeland.

Dreams were thought to be part of a spiritual world, and were seen as messages from the gods. Likewise, the Torah (known in Christianity as the first five books of the Old Testament) and the Qur'ān tell the same story of Joseph, who was given the power to interpret dreams and act accordingly. Biblical stories and actions that came from dreams (and visions) form about one-third of the entire Bible (383 References to "Dream" "Vision" and "Seer" / 74 times alone for "Dream" in the King James Bible: Gen 20:3; Gen 31:10; Gen 31:11; Gen 31:21; Gen 37:5 etc). Many cultures practiced dream incubation, with the intention of cultivating dreams that were prophetic or contained messages from the divine. In Islam, good dreams are considered to be from Allah and bad dreams from Satan [2]. In India, scholars such as Charaka (300 BC) gave alternative explanations for the reasons behind dream. In Charaka Samhita the explanation of dreams is as follows : " The cause of dream are seven. They are what you have seen, heard, experienced, wish to experience, forced to experience, imagined and by the inherent nature of the body".

The belief that dreams were part of a spiritual world continued into the Early Middle Ages. A story from Nevers, which is reproduced in the Golden Legend, states that one night the Emperor

Charlemagne dreamed that he was saved from being killed by a wild boar during a hunt by the appearance of a child, who had promised to save the emperor from death if he would give him clothes to cover his nakedness. The bishop of Nevers interpreted this dream to mean that he wanted the emperor to repair the roof of the cathedral dedicated to the boy-saint Saint Cyricus.

+ Dream content

From the 1940s to 1985, Calvin S. Hall collected more than 50,000 dream reports at Western Reserve University. In 1966 Hall and Van De Castle published The content analysis of dreams in which they outlined a coding system to study 1,000 dream reports from college students.[12] It was found that people all over the world dream of mostly the same things. Hall's complete dream reports became publicly available in the mid-1990s by Hall's protégé William Domhoff allowing further content analysis.

+ Emotions

The most common emotion experienced in dreams was anxiety. Negative emotions are more common than positive feelings[12]. Some ethnic groups like the Yir Yiront showed an abnormally high percentage of dreams of an aggressive nature. The U.S. ranks the highest amongst industrialized nations for aggression in dreams with 50 percent of U.S. males reporting aggression in dreams, compared to 32 percent for Dutch men.

+ Gender differences

In men's dreams 70 percent of the characters are other men, while a female's dreams contain an equal number of men and women. [12] Men generally had more aggressive feelings in their dreams than women, and children's dreams did not have very much aggression until they reached teen age. These findings parallel much of the current research on gender and gender role comparisons in aggressive behavior. Rather than showing a complementary or compensatory aggressive style, this study supports the view that there is a continuity between our conscious and unconscious styles and personalities.

+ Sexual content

Sexual content is not as prevalent in dreams as one might expect. The Hall data analysis shows that sexual dreams show up no more than 10 percent of the time and are more prevalent in young to mid teens.

+ Recurring dreams

While the content of most dreams is dreamt only once, most people experience recurring dreams—that is, the same dream narrative is experienced over different occasions of sleep. Up to 70% of females and 65% of males report recurrent dreams.

+ Common themes

Content-analysis studies scientists have identified recurring themes in dreams. Common reported themes have been shown to be: themes relating to school, being chased, sexual experiences, falling, arriving too late, a person now alive being dead, flying, and failing an examination. 12% of people dream only in black and white. [14]

+ Understanding dreams

*** Psychodynamic interpretation of dreams**

Both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung identify dreams as an interaction between the unconscious and the conscious. They also assert together that the unconscious is the dominant force of the dream, and in dreams it conveys its own mental activity to the perceptive faculty. While Freud felt that there was an active censorship against the unconscious even during sleep, Jung argued that the dream's bizarre quality is an efficient language, comparable to poetry and uniquely capable of revealing the underlying meaning. Fritz Perls presented his theory of dreams following the holistic nature of gestalt therapy. Dreams are seen as being projections of parts of oneself. Often these are parts that have been ignored, rejected or even suppressed. One aim of gestalt dream analysis is to accept and reintegrate these. According to Perls, the dream needs to be accepted in its own right - not broken down and analysed out of existence.

+ Other associated phenomena

*** Lucid dreaming**

Lucid dreaming is the conscious perception of one's state while dreaming. The occurrence of lucid dreaming has been scientifically verified.

*** Dreams of absent-minded transgression**

Dreams of absent-minded transgression (DAMT) are dreams wherein the dreamer absentmindedly performs an action that he or she has been trying to stop (one classic example is of a quitting smoker having dreams of lighting a cigarette). Subjects who have had DAMT have reported awaking with intense feelings of guilt. Some studies have shown that DAMT are positively related with successfully stopping the behaviour, when compared to control subjects who did not experience these dreams.[17]

*** Dreaming as a skeptical argument**

While one dreams a non-lucid dream, one will not realize one is dreaming (one classic example is a child dreaming that they are using the toilet and end up wetting the bed because they don't realize that they are in a dream). This has led philosophers to the idea that one could be dreaming right now (or at least one cannot be certain that one is not dreaming). First formally introduced by Zhuangzi and popularized by Hindu beliefs, the dream argument has become one of the most popular skeptical hypotheses. Out of the major religions and philosophies in the world, Buddhism makes most use of this argument.

*** Recalling dreams**

According to Craig Hamilton-Parker, [3] author of *Fantasy Dreaming*, many humans find certain dreams extremely difficult to recall. According to David Koulack in "To Catch A Dream," researchers refer to these types of dreams as "no content dream reports." It is thought that such dreams are characterized by relatively little affect. According to Koulack, factors such as salience, arousal and interference play a role in dream recall and dream recall failure. According to Henry Reed, author of *Dream Medicine*, a useful technique to improve dream recall is to keep a dream journal. Stephen LaBerge, author of *Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming*, also suggests that one must lie perfectly still upon awaking from a dream, not letting concerns of the day occupy the mind. It is quite common to not remember much of what has just been dreamed, but LaBerge maintains that with sufficient concentration, the entire dream may be recalled.

Another sufficient method to recall a dream is to wake at least 5 minutes after dreaming.

*** Déjà vu**

The theory of déjà vu dealing with dreams indicates that the feeling of having previously seen or experienced something could be attributed to having dreamt about a similar situation or place, and forgetting about it until one seems to be mysteriously reminded of the situation or place while awake.

Aspects of the Soul - The Etheric body - Explained.

Etheric body - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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

The etheric body, ether-body, æther body, or vital body is one of the subtle bodies in esoteric philosophies, in some religious teachings and in New Age thought. It is understood as a sort of life force body or aura that constitutes the "blueprint" of the physical body, and which sustains the physical body.

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Etheric Body – Dictionary of Mind, Body and Spirit – Eileen Campbell and JH Brennan

A second Body, mirror image of the physical and usually coincident with it, which can, in certain circumstances, be projected and become the primary vehicle of consciousness. In Traditional occultism, the etheric body is believed to be composed of 'finer matter' but recent research suggests it may actually be a field phenomenon, electrical in nature.

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The Etheric/Vital Body

****Function:**

The Etheric Body gives vitality, health, life and organization to the Physical Body. It attunes our consciousness to the principle of Energy. It steps energies from the higher bodies down into our physical consciousness.

****Range of Consciousness:**

An awareness of various types of subtle energy moving through the Physical Body and in the environment. Subtle/etheric energy can be seen as well as felt.

****Form/Structure:**

The Etheric Body is the subtle level of the Physical Body. It is composed of various energies such as electromagnetic, chi, prana, ki, vitality, etc. It is also composed of subatomic particles, the finest of which are quarks. It glows overall with colour variations in the range of blue to violet to silver. The Etheric Body has a figure form in the same shape as the Physical Body. This figure form is made of numerous energy channels called nadis or meridians. There are seven major energy centres, called chakras, that are connected to the endocrine glands and process seven main types of consciousness. There are 21 minor energy centres and many smaller energy centres.

The Etheric Body has two auric layers. The first extends about one foot from the Physical Body. The second extends about three or more feet from the Physical Body. Each auric layer has luminous string-like hairs that radiate out and always move in wave like motions. From the inner body, sparkles of vitality move outwards.

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Barbara Brennan on the Etheric Body

The Etheric Body (First Layer)

"The etheric body (from "ether" the state between energy and matter) is composed of tiny energy lines "like a sparkling web of light beams" similar to the lines on a television screen. It has the same structure as the physical body including all the anatomical parts and all the organs.

The etheric body consists of a definite structure of lines of force, or energy matrix, upon which the physical matter of the body tissues is shaped and anchored. The physical tissues exist as such only because of the vital field behind them; that is, the field is prior to, not a result of, the physical body. This relationship has been supported in the observations of plant growth by Dr. John Pierrakos and myself. Through the use of High Sense Perception, we observed that an energy field matrix in the shape of a leaf is projected by the plant prior to the growth of a leaf, and then the leaf grows into that already existing form.

The web-like structure of the etheric body is in constant motion. To clairvoyant vision, sparks of bluish-white light move along its energy lines throughout the entire dense physical body. The etheric body extends from one quarter to two inches beyond the physical body and pulsates about 15-20 cycles per minute.

The colour of the etheric body varies from light blue to grey. The light blue colour has been connected to a finer form than the grey. That is, a more sensitive person with a sensitive body will tend to have a bluish first layer whereas a more athletic, robust type of person will tend to have a more grayish etheric body. All the chakras of this layer are the same colour as the body. That is, they will also range between blue to gray in colour. The chakras look like vortices made of a net of light, just like the rest of the etheric body. One can perceive all the organs of the physical body, but they are formed of this scintillating bluish light. As in the leaf's energy system, this etheric structure sets up the matrix for the cells to grow; i.e., the cells of the body grow along the lines of energy of the etheric matrix, and that matrix is there before the cells grow. If one were to isolate the etheric body and look only at it, it would look like a man or woman made of bluish lines of light in constant scintillation, rather like Spiderman.

By observing the shoulder of someone in dim light against a plain white or plain black or dark blue background, you may be able to see the pulsations of this etheric body. The pulsation rises, say at the shoulder, and then makes its way down the arm, like a wave. If you look more closely, there appears to be a blank space between the shoulder and the blue hazy light; then there is a layer of brighter blue haze that slowly fades as it extends from the body. But be aware that as soon as you see it, it will be gone, because it moves so fast. It will have pulsed down the arm by the time you take a second look to check yourself out. Try again. You will catch the next pulsation." from Barbara Brennan, *Hands of Light* pp.49-50

For more information Barbara Brennan and her work see: Barbara Brennan School of Healing. Holistic, spiritual healing through working with the human energy field or aura.
www.barbarabrennan.com

Aspects of the Soul: Meditation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation>

Meditation describes a state of concentrated attention on some object of thought or awareness. It usually involves turning the attention inward to the mind itself. Meditation is often recognized as a component of Eastern religions, where it has been practiced for over 5,000 years. It has also become mainstream in Western culture. It encompasses any of a wide variety of spiritual practices which emphasize mental activity or quiescence. Meditation can be used for personal development, or to focus the mind on God (or an aspect of God).

+++++ Overview

The word meditation comes from the Latin *meditatio*, which originally indicated every type of physical or intellectual exercise, then later evolved into the more specific meaning "contemplation." The use of the word meditation in the western Christian tradition has referred generally to a more active practice of reflection on some particular theme such as "meditation on the sufferings of Christ". Similarly in Western philosophy, one finds, for example, Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, a set of six mental exercises which systematically analyze the nature of reality.

"Meditation" in its modern sense refers to Yogic meditation that originated in India. In the late nineteenth century, Theosophists adopted the word "meditation" to refer to various spiritual practices drawn from Hinduism, Buddhism, and other Eastern religions. Thus the English word "meditation" does not exclusively translate any single term or concept, and can be used to translate words such as the Sanskrit *dhyana*, *samadhi* and *bhavana*.

Meditation is usually defined as one or more of the following:

- * a state of relaxed concentration on the reality of the present moment
 - * a state that is experienced when the mind dissolves and is free of all thoughts
 - * "concentration in which the attention has been liberated from restlessness and is focused on God."
 - * focusing the mind on a single object (such as a religious statue, or one's breath, or a mantra)
 - * a mental "opening up" to the divine, invoking the guidance of a higher power
- reasoned analysis of religious teachings (such as impermanence, for Buddhists).

Meditation may be for a religious purpose, but even before being brought to the West it was used in secular contexts, such as the martial arts. Beginning with the Theosophists, though, meditation has been employed by a number of religious and spiritual movements, such as Yoga and the New Age movement, as well as limited use in Christianity.

From the point of view of psychology, meditation can induce an altered state of consciousness. The goals of meditation are varied, and range from spiritual enlightenment, to the transformation of attitudes, to better cardiovascular health.

+++++ Types of meditation

According to Perez-De-Albeniz & Holmes (2000), the different techniques of meditation can be classified according to their focus. Some focus on the field or background perception and experience, also called mindfulness; others focus on a preselected specific object, and are called "concentrative" meditation. There are also techniques that shift between the field and the object.

Categorizing the varieties of meditation is difficult. One common way is according to religion or lineage. Some meditative traditions, such as yoga or tantra, are common to several religions or occur outside religious contexts. Therefore, to avoid controversy, this article will not attempt to classify all meditations into a religious class or lineage.

+++++ Hinduism

Hinduism can safely be considered the oldest religion that professed meditation as a spiritual and religious practice. Yoga (Devanagari) is one of the six schools of Hindu philosophy, focusing on meditation. In India, Yoga is seen as a means to both physiological and spiritual mastery.

There are several types of meditation in Hinduism. These include (but are not limited to):

- * Vedanta, a form of Jnana Yoga.
- * Raja Yoga as outlined by Patanjali, which describes eight "limbs" of spiritual practices, half of which might be classified as meditation. Underlying them is the assumption that a yogi should still the fluctuations of his or her mind: Yoga cittavruti nirodha.
- * Surat shabd yoga, or "sound and light meditation"
- * Japa Yoga, the repetition of a mantrai is very important
- * Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of love and devotion, in which the seeker is focused on an object of devotion, eg Krishna
- * Hatha Yoga, in which postures and meditations are aimed at raising the spiritual energy, known as
- * * Kundalini, which rises through energy centres known as chakras
- * Sahaja Yoga, the yoga of instant self-realization through the awakening of dormant Kundalini energy.

Meditation techniques involve realizing one's spiritual self. The basic premise is the acceptance of equality among all and consequent divinity of all and is intrinsically positive and affirming. It takes away many of the false constructs that are the reason for most misery and frames life as a gloriously positive thing. Since every Being is equal and equally divine, there is no reason to hate, fear, indulge in vanity, greed, pettiness etc. When these preoccupations of the mind are removed, each Being's time and energy are now available to discover what fulfills the Self in truth and to align his or her actions and experiences in accord to that. This is not the same as saying one must repress normal life experiences and consequent emotions - it is to view them in the right context and with the right perspective and to let them pass if they are contrary to the true Being. This allows for normal life experiences in all their colourfulness without the associated attachment and long term baggage.

Although rooted in Hindu philosophy, meditation techniques may be regarded as secular in the same sense that the Mindfulness techniques based on the Buddhist tradition are. Even a very scientific person would not feel that the approach takes away from his or her curiosity about things, scientific scepticism and experience-based mode of learning.

+++++ Buddhism

Meditation has always been central to Buddhism. The Lord Buddha himself was said to have achieved enlightenment while meditating under a Bodhi tree. Most forms of Buddhism distinguish between two classes of meditation practices, shamatha and vipassana, both of which are necessary for attaining enlightenment. The former consists of practices aimed at developing the ability to focus the attention single-pointedly; the latter includes practices aimed at developing insight and wisdom through seeing the true nature of reality. The differentiation between the two types of meditation practices is not always clear cut, which is made obvious when studying practices such as

Anapanasati which could be said to start off as a shamatha practice but that goes through a number of stages and ends up as a vipassana practice.

Tibetan Buddhism (Vajrayana) emphasizes tantra for its senior practitioners; hence its alternate name of Tantrayana Buddhism. However, visitors to Tibetan monasteries are often surprised to discover that many monks go through their day without "meditating" in a recognizable form, but are more likely to chant or participate in group liturgy. In this tradition, the purpose of meditation is to awaken in us the sky-like nature of mind, and to introduce us to that which we really are, our unchanging pure awareness, which underlies the whole of life and death.[citations needed]

Meditation is the way to bring us back to ourselves, where we can really experience and taste our full being, beyond all habitual patterns. In the stillness and silence of meditation, we glimpse and return to that deep inner nature that we have so long ago lost sight of amid the busyness and distraction of our minds.

The gift of learning to meditate is the greatest gift you can give yourself in this life. For it is only through meditation that you can undertake the journey to discover your true nature, and so find the stability and confidence you will need to live, and die, well. Meditation is the road to enlightenment.- Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying

Some of the Buddha's meditative techniques were shared with other traditions of his day, but the idea that ethics are causally related to the attainment of religious insight was original.

+++++ Christianity

Christian traditions have various practices which might be identified as forms of "meditation." Many of these are monastic practices. Some types of prayer, such as the rosary and Adoration (focusing on the eucharist) in Catholicism or the hesychasm in Eastern Orthodoxy, may be compared to the form of Eastern meditation that focuses on an individual object.

Christian meditation is considered a form of prayer. Some Christian prayer is made primarily by using the intellect, through the contemplation of the divine mysteries. However, Christian prayer or meditation through the heart, as described in the Philokalia is a practice towards Theosis, which involves acquiring an inner stillness and ignoring the physical senses.

According to the Old Testament book of Joshua, a form of meditation is to meditate on scriptures. This is one of the reasons why bible verse memory is a practice among many evangelical Christians. "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it, then you will be prosperous and successful." (Joshua 1:8)

+++++ Islam

There are two concepts or schools of meditation in Islam. One is that which is described in the Qur'an and Sunnah, i.e. developed during the life and times of the prophet or shortly thereafter. Another is that which has been developed by the Sufis, Muslim ascetics, in later times.

The original concept of meditation is based on contemplation, called Tafakkur and Tadabbur (Arabic in the Qur'an). Literally, this refers to reflection upon the universe. Muslims feel this is a form of intellectual development which emanates from a higher level, i.e. from God. This intellectual process through the receiving of divine inspiration awakens and liberates the human mind, permitting man's inner personality to develop and grow so that he may lead his life on a

spiritual plane far above the mundane level. This is consistent with the global teachings of Islam, which views life as a test of our practice of submission to Allah, the one God.

The second form of meditation is the Sufi meditation, it is largely based on mystical exercises. However, this method is controversial among Muslim scholars. One group of Ulama, Al-Ghazzali, for instance, have accepted it, another group of Ulama, Ibn Taymiya, for instance, have rejected it as an bid'ah.

Sufism relies on a practice similar to Buddhist meditation, known as Muraqaba or Tamarkoz which is taught in the Oveyssi-Shahmaghsoudi Sufi order. Tamarkoz is a Persian term that means 'concentration,' referring to the "concentration of abilities". Consequently, the term concentration is synonymous to close attention, convergent, collection, compaction, and consolidation.

+++++ Judaism

There is evidence that Judaism has had meditative practices from the earliest times. For instance, in the Torah, the patriarch Isaac is described as going (lasuach) in the field - a term understood by all commentators as some type of meditative practice (Genesis 24:63).

Similarly, there are indications throughout the Tanach (the Hebrew Bible) that Judaism always contained a central meditative tradition.[citation needed]

In modern Jewish practice, one of the best known meditative practices is called hitbodedut or hisbodedus is explained in Kabbalah and Hassidic philosophy. The word hisbodedut, which derives from the Hebrew word "boded", (a state of being alone) and said to be related to the s'firah of Binah (lit. understanding), means the process of making oneself understand a concept well through analytical study.

Kabbalah is inherently a meditative field of study. Kabbalistic meditative practices construct a supernal realm which the soul navigates through in order to achieve certain ends. One of the most well known types of meditation is Merkabah, from the root /R-K-B/ meaning "chariot"(of God).

+++++ New Age

New Age meditations are often influenced by Eastern philosophy and mysticism such as Yoga, Hinduism and Buddhism, yet may contain some degree of Western influence. Examples of such meditations include:

- * Passage Meditation, a modern method developed by spiritual teacher Eknath Easwaran, involves silent, focused repetition of memorized passages from world scripture and the writings of great mystics.
- * Sahaja Yoga, the Global Meditation meditation, a practice started by H.H.Shri Mataji Nirmala Srivastava. Sahaja Yoga is said[attribution needed] to be a unique method of meditation based on an awakening that can occur within each human being.
- * Transcendental Meditation, a form of meditation taught and promoted by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.
- * Natural Stress Relief, a meditation technique invented by the Scientia Institute.
- * 5Rhythms, a movement meditation technique invented by Gabrielle Roth.
- * FISU (Foundation for International Spiritual Unfoldment) was established by Gururaj Ananda Yogi's prime disciples Rajesh Ananda and Jasmini Ananda whom are the leaders ever since.
- * Ananda Marga meditation was propounded by a Mahakaula Guru Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiiji in India and revived sacred practices taught by SadaShiva and Sri Krs'na. His system of meditation is

based on original Tantra as given by Shiva and has sometimes been referred as "Rajadhiraja Yoga". He revised many yogic and meditative practices and introduced some new techniques.

+++++ Effortless Meditation

J Krishnamurti used the word meditation to mean something entirely different from the practice of any system or method to control the mind. He said, "Man, in order to escape his conflicts, has invented many forms of meditation. These have been based on desire, will, and the urge for achievement, and imply conflict and a struggle to arrive. This conscious, deliberate striving is always within the limits of a conditioned mind, and in this there is no freedom. All effort to meditate is the denial of meditation. Meditation is the ending of thought. It is only then that there is a different dimension which is beyond time." For Krishnamurti, meditation was choice-less awareness in the present. He said "..When you learn about yourself, watch yourself, watch the way you walk, how you eat, what you say, the gossip, the hate, the jealousy - if you are aware of all that in yourself, without any choice, that is part of meditation."

+++++ Purposes and effects of meditation

The purposes for which people meditate vary almost as widely as practices. Meditation may serve simply as a means of relaxation from a busy daily routine; as a technique for cultivating mental discipline; or as a means of gaining insight into the nature of reality, or of communing with one's God. Many report improved concentration, awareness, self-discipline and equanimity through meditation.

Many authorities avoid emphasizing the effects of meditation - sometimes out of modesty, sometimes for fear that the expectation of results might interfere with one's meditation. For theists, the effects of meditation are considered a gift of God or from the Holy Spirit/Ghost, and not something that is "achieved" by the meditator alone, just as some say that a person will not convert to Christianity without the influence of the Holy Spirit/Ghost's presence.

Commonly reported results from meditation include:

- * Greater faith in, or understanding of, one's religion or beliefs
- * An increase in patience, compassion, and other virtues and morals or the understanding of them
- * Feelings of calm or peace, and/or moments of great joy
- * Consciousness of sin, temptation, and remorse, and a spirit of contrition.
- * Sensitivity to certain forms of lighting, such as fluorescent lights or computer screens, and sometimes heightened sense-perception.
- * Surfacing of buried memories.
- * Experience of spiritual phenomena such as kundalini, extra-sensory perception, or visions of deities, saints, demons, etc.

Some traditions acknowledge that many types of experiences and effects are possible, but instruct the meditator to keep in mind the spiritual purpose of the meditation, and not be distracted by lesser concerns. For example, Mahayana Buddhists are urged to meditate for the sake of "full and perfect enlightenment for all sentient beings" (the bodhisattva vow). Some, as in certain sects of Christianity, say that these things are possible, but are only to be supported if they are to the glory of God.

Aspects of the Soul: Third Eye

Third eye - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_eye

The third eye is a metaphysical and esoteric concept referring in part to the ajna (brow) chakra in certain eastern and western spiritual traditions. In New Age spirituality, the third eye may alternately symbolize a state of enlightenment or the evocation of mental images having deeply-personal spiritual or psychological significance. The third eye is often associated with visions, clairvoyance, precognition, and out-of-body experiences, and people who have allegedly developed the capacity to use their third eyes are sometimes known as seers.

+++ Symbolism

* In Hinduism and Buddhism

In Hinduism and Buddhism, the third eye is a symbol of enlightenment (see moksha and nirvana). The third eye is the ajna chakra (sixth chakra) also known as brow chakra or brow centre. This is commonly denoted in Indian and East Asian iconography with a dot, eye or mark on the forehead of deities or enlightened beings, such as Shiva (God of Destruction), the Buddha, or any number of yogis, sages and bodhisattvas. This symbol is called the "Third Eye" or "Eye of Wisdom", or, in Buddhism, the urna. In Hinduism, it is believed that the opening of Shiva's third eye causes the eventual destruction of the universe. Many Hindus wear a tilak between the eyebrows to represent the third eye.

* In the Western Wisdom Teachings

According to Max Heindel's Rosicrucian writings, called Western Wisdom Teachings, there are in the brain two small organs called the pituitary body and the pineal gland. This last gland is also called by medical science as "the atrophied third eye"; however, these teachings describe that none of them are atrophying: the pituitary body and the pineal gland at the present time are neither evolving nor degenerating, but are dormant. It is said that in the far past, when man was in touch with the inner worlds, these organs were his means of ingress thereto, and they will again serve that purpose at a later stage. According to this view, they were connected with the involuntary or sympathetic nervous system and to regain contact with the inner worlds (to reawaken the pituitary body and the pineal gland) it is necessary to establish the connection of the pineal gland and the pituitary body with the cerebrospinal nervous system. It is said that when that is accomplished, man will again possess the faculty of perception in the higher worlds (i.e. clairvoyance), but on a grander scale than it was in the distant past, because it will be in connection with the voluntary nervous system and therefore under the control of his will.

* Elsewhere

The third eye is used in many meditation schools and arts, such as in yoga, qigong, many Chinese martial arts, Ch'an Buddhism, and in some Japanese martial arts like Karate and Aikido (both use Zen Buddhism as a philosophy).

+++ Physical basis: the pineal gland?

Some, including Rick Strassman, have suggested that the third eye is in fact the partially dormant pineal gland, which resides between the two hemispheres of the brain. This concept is supported by the pinealocytes, one type of cells within the pineal gland, having a strong resemblance to the photoreceptors of the eye. Additionally, the pineal gland is said to excrete dimethyltryptamine (DMT), which some think induces dreams, near-death experiences, meditation, or hallucinations. Various types of lower vertebrates, such as reptiles and amphibians, can actually sense light via a

third parietal eye—a structure associated with the pineal gland—which serves to regulate their circadian rhythms.

There is evidence that the pineal gland produces the hormone melatonin, which has a role in regulating the body's circadian rhythm to the daily light/dark cycle and also assists with the immune system. Because of all the above, the pineal gland has become for some the subject of speculation about its origin as a physical third eye.

For more information see: Third Eye - Pineal Gland
<http://www.crystalinks.com/thirdeyepineal.html>

Aspects of the Soul: Self-actualisation

Self-actualisation – From Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia

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

Self-actualisation is term that has been used by various organismic psychology theories, often in slightly different ways (e.g., Goldstein, Maslow, Rogers). The term was originally introduced by the organismic theorist, Kurt Goldstein, for the motive to realize all of one's potentialities. In his view, it was the master motive - indeed, the only real motive a person has, all others being merely manifestations of it. However, the concept was brought to prominence in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, as the final level of psychological development that can be achieved when all basic and meta needs are fulfilled and the 'actualisation' of the full personal potential takes place.

+++++ Self-actualisation in Goldstein's Theory

According to Kurt Goldstein in his book *The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man* self actualisation is "the tendency to actualise, as much as possible, its [the organism's] individual capacities," in the world. The tendency for self-actualisation is "the only drive by which the life of an organism is determined." Goldstein defined self-actualisation as a driving life force that will ultimately lead to maximizing one's abilities and determines the path of one's life.

+++++ Self-actualisation and Maslow's Hierarchy

The term was later used by Abraham Maslow in his article, *A Theory of Human Motivation*. Maslow explicitly defines self-actualisation to be "the desire for self-fulfillment, namely the tendency for him [the individual] to become actualised in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming." Maslow used the term self-actualisation to describe a desire, not a driving force, that could lead to realizing one's capabilities. Maslow did not feel that self actualisation determined one's life; rather, he felt that it gave the individual a desire, or motivation to achieve budding ambitions. Maslow's usage of the term is now popular in modern psychology when discussing personality from the humanistic approach.

A basic definition from a typical college text book defines self actualisation according to Maslow simply as "the full realization of one's potential" without any mention of antiquated Goldstein. A more explicit definition of self actualisation according to Maslow is "intrinsic growth of what is already in the organism, or more accurately of what is the organism itself...self actualisation is growth-motivated rather than deficiency-motivated." This explanation emphasizes the fact that self-actualisation cannot normally be reached until other lower order necessities of Maslow's hierarchy of needs are satisfied. While Goldstein defined self-actualisation as a driving force, Maslow uses the term to describe personal growth that takes place once lower order needs have been met. People that have reached self-actualisation are characterized by certain behaviours. Common traits amongst people that have reached self-actualisation are as follows:

- * They embrace reality and facts rather than denying truth.
- * They are spontaneous.
- * They are interested in solving problems which may include personal problems or the emotional conflicts of others.
- * They are accepting of themselves and others and lack prejudice.

For Goldstein it was a motive and for Maslow it was a level of development; for both, however,

roughly the same kinds of qualities were expressed: independence, autonomy, a tendency to form few but deep friendships, a 'philosophical' sense of humour, a tendency to resist outside pressures and a general transcendence of the environment rather than a simple 'coping' with it.⁶

+++++ Self Actualisation's Place in Psychology

Self actualisation resides at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and is considered a part of the humanistic approach to personality. The humanistic approach is one of several methods used in psychology for studying, understanding, and evaluating personality. The humanistic approach was developed because other approaches, such as the psychodynamic approach made famous by Freud, focused on unhealthy individuals that exhibited disturbed behavior.¹ The humanistic approach focuses on healthy, motivated people and tries to determine how they define the 'self' while maximizing their potential.

People who are self-actualised have had peak experiences. Peak experiences are situations that are so intense that the person loses all sense of self and they find themselves in the flow of the event. These are often religious or mystical experiences.

Stemming from this branch of psychology is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, people have lower order needs that in general must be fulfilled before high order needs can be satisfied. As a person moves up Maslow's hierarchy of needs, eventually they will reach the summit—self-actualisation. Maslow's hierarchy of needs begins with the most basic necessities deemed "the physiological needs" in which the individual will seek out items like food and water, and must be able to perform basic functions such as breathing and sleeping.

Once these needs have been met, a person can move on to fulfilling the "the safety needs" where they will attempt to obtain a sense of security, physical comforts and shelter, employment, and property. The next level is "the belongingness and love needs" where people will strive for social acceptance, affiliations, a sense of belongingness and being welcome, sexual intimacy, and perhaps a family. Next are "the esteem needs" where the individual will desire a sense of competence, recognition of achievement by peers, and respect from others.

Some argue that once these needs are met, an individual is primed for self-actualisation. Others argue that there are two more phases an individual must progress through before self-actualisation can take place. These include "the cognitive needs" where a person will desire knowledge and an understanding of the world around them, and "the aesthetic needs" which include a need for "symmetry, order and beauty". Once all these needs have been satisfied, the final step of Maslow's hierarchy of needs can take place—self actualisation.

+++++ Recommended Listening:

Zaadz Notes: Abraham Maslow by Brian Johnson

<http://www.learnoutloud.com/Catalog/Social-Sciences/Psychology/Zaadz-Notes-Abraham-Maslow/15250>

Free download from learn out load (11.5MB)

Also listed is the characteristics of a Self-Actualising Individual. Listen to the Audio and see if you are a Self-Actualising Individual.

Abraham Maslow & His Self-Actualising Individual (Highly recommended!!)

Abraham Maslow is a cool guy...definitely one of my favourite teachers. An expert in the field of human motivation, and one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th Century, Maslow

believed that human beings were innately incredible. Throughout his life, he pondered questions such as: "Of what are human beings capable?"; and, "What makes for happy, creative, fulfilled human beings?"

The Zaadz Notes are a series of essays written and read by Brian Johnson, Philosopher and CEO of Zaadz, Inc. Each Note features wisdom about a concept or teacher that will educate and inspire you. For more inspiration and to join a growing community of seekers and enlightened entrepreneurs, check out Zaadz at www.zaadz.com. For more of the Zaadz Notes or to subscribe to the Zaadz Daily Wisdom Podcast, visit www.learnoutloud.com/brianjohnson

Aspects of the Soul: Soul

Soul - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia

This is a summary of the various religions view point of the nature of the Soul

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul>

The soul, according to many religious and philosophical traditions, is the self-aware essence unique to a particular living being. In these traditions the soul is thought to incorporate the inner essence of each living being, and to be the true basis for sapience. It is believed in many cultures and religions that the soul is the unification of one's sense of identity. Souls are usually (but not always as explained below) considered to be immortal and to exist before their incarnation in flesh.

The concept of the soul has strong links with notions of an afterlife, but opinions may vary wildly, even within a given religion, as to what may happen to the soul after the death of the body. Many within these religions and philosophies see the soul as immaterial, while others consider it to possibly have a material component, and some have even tried to establish the mass (or weight) of the soul.

+++++ Philosophical views

The Ancient Greeks used the same word for 'alive' as for 'ensouled'. So the earliest surviving Western philosophical view might suggest that the terms soul and aliveness, were synonymous - perhaps not that having life, universally presupposed the possession of a soul as in Buddhism, but that full "aliveness" and the soul were conceptually linked.

Francis M. Cornford quotes Pindar in saying that the soul sleeps whilst the limbs are active, but when man is sleeping, the soul is active and reveals in many a dream "an award of joy or sorrow drawing near".

Erwin Rohde writes that the early pre-Pythagorean belief was that the soul had no life when it departed from the body, and retired into Hades with no hope of returning to a body

+++++ Socrates and Plato

Plato, drawing on the words of his teacher Socrates, considered the soul as the essence of a person, being, that which decides how we behave. He considered this essence as an incorporeal, eternal occupant of our being. As bodies die the soul is continually reborn in subsequent bodies. The Platonic soul comprises three parts:

- * the logos (mind, nous, or reason)
- * the thymos (emotion, or spiritedness)
- * the eros (appetitive, or desire)
- * Each of these has a function in a balanced and peaceful soul.

The logos equates to the mind. It corresponds to the charioteer, directing the balanced horses of appetite and spirit. It allows for logic to prevail, and for the optimisation of balance.

The thymos comprises our emotional motive, that which drives us to acts of bravery and glory. If left unchecked, it leads to hubris -- the most fatal of all flaws in the Greek view.

The eros equates to the appetite that drives humankind to seek out its basic bodily needs. When the passion controls us, it drives us to hedonism in all forms. In the Ancient Greek view, this is the

basal and most feral state.

+++++ Aristotle

Aristotle, following Plato, defined the soul as the core essence of a being, but argued against its having a separate existence. For instance, if a knife had a soul, the act of cutting would be that soul, because 'cutting' is the essence of what it is to be a knife. Unlike Plato and the religious traditions, Aristotle did not consider the soul as some kind of separate, ghostly occupant of the body (just as we cannot separate the activity of cutting from the knife). As the soul, in Aristotle's view, is an actuality of a living body, it cannot be immortal (when a knife is destroyed, the cutting stops). More precisely, the soul is the "first actuality" of a naturally organized body. This is a state, or a potential for actual, or 'second', activity. "The axe has an edge for cutting" was, for Aristotle, analogous to "humans have bodies for rational activity," and the potential for rational activity thus constituted the essence of a human soul. Aristotle used his concept of the soul in many of his works; the *De Anima* (On the Soul) provides a good place to start to gain more understanding of his views.

There is on-going debate about Aristotle's views regarding the immortality of the human soul; however, Aristotle makes it clear towards the end of his *De Anima* that he does believe that the intellect, which he considers to be a part of the soul, is eternal and separable from the body.

Aristotle also believed that there were four parts, parts understood as powers, of the soul. The four sections are calculative part, the scientific part on the rational side used for making decisions and the desiderative part and the vegetative part on the irrational side responsible for identifying our needs.

+++++ Thomas Aquinas

Following Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas understands the soul as the first principle, or act, of the body. However, his epistemological theory required that, since the intellectual soul is capable of knowing all material things, and since in order to know a material thing there must be no material thing within it, the soul was definitely not corporeal. Therefore, the soul had an operation separate from the body and therefore could subsist without the body. Furthermore, since the rational soul of human beings was subsistent and was not made up of matter and form, it could not be destroyed in any natural process. The full argument for the immortality of the soul and Thomas's elaboration of Aristotelian theory is found in Question 75 of the *Summa Theologica*.

RELIGIOUS VIEWS

+++++ Buddhist beliefs

In Buddhism, it is acknowledged that there is a Self (true identity), however this Self is clouded over by mind-dellusions/experiences. These mind-dellusions (anatta). are mistaken for one's true nature the Atman, or unmoved mover.

Buddhism teaches that all things are impermanent, in a constant state of flux; all is transient, and no abiding state exists by itself. This applies to humanity, as much as to anything else in the cosmos; thus, there is no unchanging and abiding self. Our sense of "I" or "me" is simply a sense, belonging to the ever-changing entity, that (conventionally speaking) is us, our body, and mind. This expresses in essence the Buddhist principle of anatta (Pâli; Sanskrit: anâtman).

+++++ Christian beliefs

Christians believe that when people die their souls will be judged by God, who sees all the wrong and right that they have done during their lives. If they have repented of their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, they will inherit eternal life in Heaven and enjoy eternal fellowship with God. Most Christians believe that if one has not repented of his sins and not accepted Jesus Christ, he will go to Hell, and suffer eternal torment and separation from God. This is the teaching of most evangelical, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, which constitute the majority of Christianity, though there are some Christians that believe the soul will be destroyed in hell, instead of suffering eternally. There are many Christians who also recognise the righteous as those who will equally inherit eternal life in Heaven and enjoy eternal fellowship with God. These include babies and righteous deaf and blind (who had no opportunity to hear the gospel) as well as all the righteous saints who lived before Jesus came and since but have yet to hear.

+++++ **Hindu beliefs**

In Hinduism, the Sanskrit words most closely corresponding to soul are "[[Jiva]/[Atma]]", meaning the individual soul or personality, and "Atman", which can also mean soul. The Atman is seen as the portion of Brahman. GOD is described as Super soul. Hinduism contains many variant beliefs on the origin, purpose, and fate of the soul. For example, advaita or non-dualistic conception of the soul accords it union with Brahman, the absolute uncreated (roughly, the Godhead), in eventuality or in pre-existing fact. Dvaita or dualistic concepts reject this, instead identifying the soul as part and parcel of super soul (GOD), but it never lose it's identity. That is where we as an individual get an identity. This identity exists eternally. Soul never dies. According to scriptures, it is eternal. It only transmigrates from one body to other body.

The Bhagavad Gita, one of the most significant puranic scriptures, refers to the spiritual body or soul as Purusha (see also Sankhya philosophy). The Purusha is part and parcel of God, is unchanging (is never born and never dies), is indestructible, and, though essentially indivisible. It is made up of three components:

- (i) Sat (truth or existence)
- (ii) Chit (consciousness or knowledge)
- (iii) Ananda (bliss) It has form "Vigraha".

Presence of soul is perceived by its consciousness. According to Bhagavad Gita, all living entities are soul proper. When soul leaves the body, then it is called death. That means, DEATH is transmigration of soul from one body to another body [Bhagavad Gita]. Soul transmigrates from one body to another body based on their Karmic[performed deeds] reactions.

+++++ **Islamic beliefs**

The Qur'an doesn't explain much about the concept of the soul and instead says:" The Spirit (cometh) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)"[5]. So little information is available in that regard from Islam.

According to few verses from Qur'an though the following information can be deduced: In part 15 verse 29, the creation of man involves Allah or an Angel of Allah "breathing" a soul into him. This intangible part of an individual's existence is "pure" at birth and has the potential of growing and achieving nearness to God if the person leads a righteous life. At death the person's soul transitions to an eternal afterlife of bliss, peace and unending spiritual growth (Qur'an 66:8, 39:20). This transition can be pleasant (Heaven) or unpleasant (Hell) depending on the degree to which a person has developed or destroyed his or her soul during life (Qur'an 91:7-10).

From the Hadith we understand the Allah assigns an Angel to "breathe" soul into an embryo after 40 days of pregnancy. The soul is responsible for the good deeds of a person and can be interrupted by devils which results in committing sins.

Generally, it is believed that all living beings are compromised of two aspects during their existence: The physical (being the body) and the non-physical (being the soul). The non-physical aspect, namely the soul, is one's soul-related activities like his/her feelings and emotions, thoughts, conscious and sub-conscious desires and objectives. While the body and its physical actions serve as a "reflection" of one's soul, whether it was good or evil, and thus "confirms" the extent of such intentions [6]. For further clarification, another example can be found in the Qur'an where Allah says that Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) followers have their noble personalities and characteristics "written" and shown on their faces

+++++ **Jewish beliefs**

Jewish views of the soul begin with the book of Genesis, in which verse 2:7 states, "the LORD God formed man from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being." (New JPS)

The Torah offers no systematic definition of a soul; various descriptions of the soul exist in classical rabbinic literature.

+++++ **Atheist/humanist beliefs**

Atheists and humanists do not necessarily accept the existence of a soul. In fact, the majority of self-proclaimed atheists do not believe in a soul, more of simply human consciousness.

+++++ **Agnostic beliefs**

Agnostics believe humans cannot come to know whether God(s) or soul(s) exist

+++++ **Research on the concept of the soul**

In his book *Consilience*, E. O. Wilson took note that sociology has identified belief in a soul as one of the universal human cultural elements. Wilson suggested that biologists need to investigate how human genes predispose people to believe in a soul.

Daniel Dennett has championed the idea that the human survival strategy depends heavily on adoption of the intentional stance, a behavioural strategy that predicts the actions of others based on the expectation that they have a mind like one's own (see theory of mind). Mirror neurons in brain regions such as Broca's area may facilitate this behavioural strategy. The intentional stance, Dennett suggests, has proven so successful that people tend to apply it to all aspects of human experience, thus leading to animism and to other conceptualizations of soul.

Please note that this is a shorten version of the complete listing of on Soul on Wikipedia. See:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul>

For a more detailed description see the full text, as there is often in the various religions different interpretations of the nature of the Soul

Understanding Anger

By Jim Stempel

Both Jesus and the Buddha taught that the truth could set us free, but for many of us truth is an impossibility forever hidden by the elaborate, subversive arrangements of our own anger. Like the violent waves of a hurricane exploding upon a sandy beach, anger seems to pound upon us almost daily, buffeting us hither and yon in storms of anxiety and rage.

No matter how maturely you vow to approach each day, how carefully you select your home and occupation, or how decent your pursuits, anger still finds you. You are cut off on the highway, bumped out of line at the supermarket, cursed by children, and virtually mugged by salespeople. While you would love to remember the kindly individual who held the door open for you, more often than not, it is only the jerk who stole your parking spot that you remember at the end of the day. The world is certainly filled with its share of rudeness, pomposity, and downright meanness, and sooner or later we all react the same. Our blood pressure soars, jaws tighten, and our hearts begin to pound. We get angry!

Anger is a natural response. In many situations, that response is justified. Anger in the face of abuse or severe injustice can serve as a catalyst for profound change. At times — as when faced with an enraged or dangerous individual — anger can mitigate a potential attack, or even save a life.

Anger is an intense confluence of one or more negative emotions: confusion, self-righteousness, desire, fear, jealousy, etc. In the least psychologically mature individuals, that confluence can be chaotic, constant, and overwhelming; anger becomes almost a way of life. As we grow, however, we slowly learn to deal with our anger so that it gradually ceases to overwhelm us.

Even the most capable individuals have episodes of anger, but when they occur they are almost always handled with purpose, control, and some degree of skill. Thus, as we develop, anger becomes something we learn to manage. It was Jesus, after all, who ran the moneylenders out of the temple in a table-tossing rage.

So anger, like a knife, is handled mindlessly by immature individuals, slashing and damaging everything around them with no thought as to the consequences, while that same anger in the hands of the more seasoned individual is utilized just as a surgeon handles a scalpel: for healing. Same instrument, very different results.

I recall very well, for instance, a confrontation I witnessed one summer years ago while working my way through college as a labourer. A truckload of steel pulled into the factory where we were putting up a new relay building. The driver of this truck — I'll call him Ed — was always loud and angry, and on this day he was particularly so. He had nothing good to say, and when he could not immediately pull his truck into the spot he desired, he virtually charged the guard on duty — I'll call him Frank — spitting, shouting, and cursing at the top of his lungs. Ed was a big man I would have certainly thought twice about confronting in such a situation. Frank, on the other hand, was a small and gentle individual who rarely spoke above a whisper, and "on paper" seemed no match for the enraged driver.

Yet it was Frank who rose from his seat and strode fearlessly across the pavement in front of the guardhouse, marching directly into Ed's path, where he stopped and planted both feet firmly. Ed stopped in his tracks. Then Frank pointed his finger at the driver's nose, cursed a blue streak you could hear a quarter of a mile away, and informed Ed in no uncertain terms that if he didn't move his truck to the proper space, he would have him and his tractor thrown off the lot for good.

It was a sight to behold, yet the truly interesting thing was not the confrontation so much as its aftermath. The truck driver, Ed, returned to his truck, moved it to the proper spot, and then began fretting, cursing, and tossing pieces of steel off the rear with no mind to their direction.

Frank, on the other hand, returned to the guardhouse as if nothing had happened. He picked up his book and began reading where he had left off without the slightest outward sign of his anger or recent tirade. Later, when I went in for a cup of water, I asked him how he managed to stay so cool, and all he did was smile and brush the whole thing off. "That's the only thing he understands," is all he said.

It was an interesting study. Frank, a reasonably mature individual, knew instinctively how to handle his anger, and he used it almost like a tool he might employ on the job, say, a spade or pick. He brought it out, did the job, and then let it go once the task was complete.

Ed, on the other hand, did not use anger like Frank at all, but rather was almost consumed by it. It drove him, raged through all aspects of his life, and, like a wildfire, seemed to char every thought he had.

So anger itself really isn't the problem. Anger that is justified, that is a temporary reaction and is therefore managed (anger like Frank's), is something we can use and then let go of. But most anger is not managed. Most people do not use anger, but rather are used by it, and the worst form of anger, the most deeply entrenched and therefore the most toxic, is the variety we direct against ourselves, in its entire spectrum of psychopathological forms.

Thus it is important to understand that anger is a natural occurrence, and that managing it is far more important than simply having — or not having — a dose from time to time. Unfortunately, it is very often the spiritual aspirant who denies this reality, and prefers instead to cling to the fantasy that, by good intentions alone, he or she has somehow moved beyond anger. Not only is this delusional, it is downright dangerous, for rather than managing anger, this delusion demands that the spiritual aspirant must now deny, cut off, repress, or project anger or, in short, subconsciously pretend that he or she has none whatsoever. Like hiding a bomb in the closet rather than defusing it, this tactic almost always leads to an explosion of sorts, for anger returns again and again in a host of various symptoms — depression, psychosomatic illness, unexplainable anxiety, accident proneness, guilt, paranoia, etc. — for many of which the spiritual and religious communities are historically famous.

Indeed, stigmata — of which there are many well-documented cases — may well be one of the most extreme forms of self-hatred imaginable, a pathological behavior in which the spiritual aspirant subconsciously apes the death wounds of Jesus in a state of near-hysteria. Michael Murphy points out in *The Future of the Body* that virtually all the individuals with documented cases of stigmata were known not necessarily for their saintliness but for their hysterical tendencies. Through psychologically crucifying themselves, they were able to manifest their extreme self-hatred through a form of socially acceptable (even esteemed, from the perspective of the traditional church) behavior, no matter how hateful its origin.

While we can never entirely elude anger, we can, of course, become far less susceptible by simply incorporating more wisdom, compassion, and awareness into our lives. These do not function as an antidote so much as they allow us to understand the world from increasingly more sophisticated points of view, which in turn render anger meaningless. As I mature, for instance, I no longer react with anger in many situations — someone's snide comment, for instance — that might have set me off in my younger days. Then one day we throw our heads back and laugh out loud in a situation that may have infuriated us years before because we have finally managed to see the foolish irony

in a situation where before we sensed only wounded pride. This is why I suspect a good sense of humour may well be one of the clearest indicators of psychological and spiritual maturity.

Let us love ourselves enough to accept ourselves as imperfect, anger and all. Once we do that, anger becomes just one more of those things that makes life both interesting and challenging. One day, perhaps we will all awake to a strange, striking, and universal harmony, no longer to endless bickering, bombs, and dissension, but to a world bursting with the joy of laughter. Now, wouldn't that be a wonderful sound?

About the Author

Jim Stempel is the author of the novel American Rain; numerous works of short fiction; and articles on science, psychology, and spirituality. His book When Beliefs Fail: A Psychology of Hope can be ordered through Swedenborg Foundation Publishers, (800) 355-3222. E-mail customerservice@swedenborg.com

The Science of the Antahkarana

From Education in the New Age

By Alice A. Bailey

"Antahkarana The path, or bridge, between higher and lower mind, serving as a medium of communication between the two. It is built by the aspirant himself in mental matter."

As a preparation for what students need to master, I would like to emphasize certain points by tabulating the information already given. The Science of the Antahkarana is not an easy one to learn because of the following points. These emphasized points must be accepted by students as a working hypothesis prior to all attempted work:

1. The Science of the Antahkarana is connected with the entire problem of energy, but peculiarly with the energy handled by the individual and with the forces by which the individual relates himself to other individuals or to groups. For the sake of clarity, we will give the name of

a.ENERGY: to all forces pouring into the individual form from whatever direction and source. To these major energies, the names of "sutratma" or "life thread" or "silver cord" have frequently been given.

b.FORCE: to all the energies which - after due manipulation and concentration - are projected by the individual or group in any direction and with many possible motives, some good and many selfish.

2. The Science of the Antahkarana, technically speaking and for group purpose, is especially the science of light manifestation with its results of revelation and consequent changes. It should be remembered that: a.Light is substantial, and from the angle of the spirit is a sublimation or higher form of material matter.

b.Light is also the quality or major characteristic of the soul in its own realm, and of the etheric body (a reflection of the soul eventually) in the three worlds of human evolution.

c.The object of the science with which we are dealing is to fuse the lower and the upper lights, so that one light shines forth in physical manifestation and a synthesis of light is consequently brought about.

d.Technically speaking, two light bodies exist - the vital or etheric body and the soul vehicle. One is the result of aeons of incarnating life and becomes in time a powerful repository of energies gathered out of a wide range of contacts, though conditioned by the ray type in its three aspects. The etheric body exists and is today functioning powerfully. The soul body is in process of being slowly constructed, and is that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" to which the New Testament refers (II Cor. V, 1). It is interesting to note that the Old Testament refers to the etheric body (Ecc. XII, 6-7.) and its construction, and the New Testament deals with the building of the spiritual body.

3. The Science of the Antahkarana must be studied in three ways:

a.Concretely and in relation to the etheric body, which is a substantial, tangible form, and is being so considered (though not as yet universally admitted) by modern science.

b.Egoically and in relation to the soul and to the "light body" through which the spiritual man must function in the world of souls, and which - when blended and fused with the etheric body - produces the manifestation of divinity upon earth to a greater or lesser degree, according to the extent of fusion and the conscious recognition by the individual of the attained fusion.

c.Abstractly and in relation to knowledge-wisdom, which are two words used in relation to force

and energy, and their use by the individual in his environment and contacts. Ponder on these words. You will realize how necessary it is that there should be some capacity for abstract thinking before the true implications of this new science can be understood.

4. The Science of the Antahkarana is concerned with the problem of the continuity of consciousness and with the problem of life and death. Keep these two themes clearly in your mind for they are basic and important.

5. The Science of the Antahkarana deals with the three fold thread which connects:

a. The monad, the soul and the personality, linking all three periodical vehicles and unifying all seven principles.

b. The triple personality and its environment in the three worlds of human enterprise, and later in the other two worlds (making five) of superhuman expression.

c. The consciously creative man and the world of ideas. These he must contact and express through creative work, thus bridging with the light:

i. Between the world of souls and the world of phenomena.

ii. Between the realm of subjective beauty and reality and the outer tangible world of nature.

iii. Between himself and others.

iv. Between group and group.

v. Later, when the divine Plan has become a reality to him, between the fourth kingdom (the human) and the fifth

kingdom (the Kingdom of God).

vi. Finally, between humanity and the Hierarchy.

6. The Science of the Antahkarana is the science of the triple thread which exists from the very beginning of time and links individual man with his monadic source. The recognition of this thread and its use, consciously, as the Path and the means of ever expanding contacts, comes relatively late in the evolutionary process. The goal of all aspirants and disciples is to become aware of this stream of energy in its various diversifications and consciously to employ these energies in two ways: interiorly in self-unfoldment, and in the service of the plan for humanity.

7. The Science of the Antahkarana teaches certain fundamental truths about the thread, some of which might be enumerated as follows:

a. The life thread comes directly from the monad or the ONE. This thread is anchored in the heart during incarnation. There is the seat of life.

b. The consciousness thread comes directly from the soul. It is anchored in the head. There is the seat of consciousness.

c. The thread of creative activity is initiated and constructed by the human being. It is anchored, when sufficiently constructed, in the throat. This thread is an extension or synthesis of the two basic threads.

The creative thread itself is triple in nature. It is slowly constructed down the ages by the man. As he becomes truly alive, from the standpoint of intelligent awareness and the desire fully to express himself, the process is materially hastened. These three self-created lesser threads which constitute the third thread of the antahkarana extend eventually:

a. From the physical body to the etheric body, passing from the heart to the spleen, and thence to the body of prana, the vital or etheric body, unites with force from the egoic will petals.

b. From the etheric body to the astral body. This thread passes from the solar plexus to the heart and

from thence to the astral body, picking up the energy of the thread mentioned above, unites with force from the love petals.

c. From the astral body to the mental vehicle. This thread passes from the ajna center to the head center and from thence to the mind body, picking up the energy of the other two threads mentioned above, unites with the force from the knowledge petals.

Though these three energies are woven into one thread finally, yet they remain distinct. It should be borne in mind that the soul body is constructed of pure white light, whilst the light out of which the etheric body is made is golden.

8. The Science of the Antahkarana deals, therefore, with the entire incoming system of energy, with the processes of usage and transformation and fusion. It deals also with the outgoing energies and their relationship to the environment and is the basis of the science of the force centers. The incoming and the outgoing energies constitute finally two great stations of energy, one characterized by power and the other by love, and all directed to the illumination of the individual and of humanity as a whole, through the medium of the Hierarchy composed of individuals. This is basically the Science of the Path.

The antahkarana, therefore, is the thread of consciousness, of intelligence, and the responsive agent in all sentient reactions. The interesting point to bear in mind, and where we must now lay the emphasis, is that this thread of consciousness is evolved by the soul and not by the monad. The World Soul pours its gossamer thread of sentient consciousness into all forms, into all body cells and into all atoms. The human soul, the solar angel, repeats the process in relation to its shadow and reflection, the personality. This is part of the creative work of the soul. But, in its turn, the human being has also to become creative in the mental sense of the term and must repeat the process, for in all points the microcosm resembles the macrocosm. Therefore, through the life thread, the soul creates and reproduces a personality through which to function. Then through the building of the antahkarana, the soul first of all develops sentiency down upon the physical plane, and later bridges the gap - through meditation and service - between the three mental aspects. It thus completes the creation of the path of return to the Center, which must parallel the path of outgoing.

I have now completed my introductory presentation of the fundamentals which will in the future age dominate the educational systems. It was necessary for all of you - and for those who will later study these instructions anent the new education - to have some grasp of past foundational implications and basic tendencies and also some ideas, however vague, of the line along which major changes can be expected to come. You can begin, therefore, to work intelligently and with as little loss of time as possible.

It remains now to make the teaching which I have given practical in its implications. The New Education now must take the place of that which is old and which has proved so wrong that it could not prevent the universal holocaust which distinguished the years 1914-1945. It must be superseded. The next stage of human evolution will emerge as a result of the purificatory action of the World War. There are steps which humanity must take, and only a new type of education and a different attitude to the educational processes (imposed upon the very young of every nation) will enable mankind to take them.

A new cycle of experience, of psychological development and of new educational processes is imminent. What I have given here and elsewhere on the Science of Meditation, of Service and anent the Antahkarana gives method, mode, promise and point to it all.

Transforming Anxiety

By Tarthang Tulku

From a Gesture of Balance

A guide to Awareness, Self-healing, and Meditation.

By utilizing the penetrative quality of direct awareness we can become sensitive to our emotions before they arise and thus begin to break our habit patterns and our attachment to them.

Awareness is always accessible within ourselves, within our energy. But when we are distracted or emotionally entangled, we may have no idea what is actually happening in ourselves. Everything may seem very dream-like, and we may find ourselves going from one conversation or activity to another, moody and anxious, or possibly with a false sense of spontaneity and freedom. At other times we find ourselves thinking concurrent 'problems' inadequacies, hesitations, self-deceptions, fears, infatuations, and guilts our energies so caught up in a variety of emotional entanglements that we feel confused, worn out, tense, and anxious. By working with these emotions in our meditation, we can learn to free ourselves from their influence.

Emotions may not have eyes, mouths or stomachs, but they can still suck our energies, hypnotize us, and destroy our natural state of balance. Emotions have the power to lure us into an artificial realm of sensation that is able to gain control of our positive energies. People seem to need emotions, like they need salt for food. But emotions are dangerous and unstable, for what begins as pleasure, often ends up as pain. And when we are in the midst of an emotional situation, we can be blinded by the dynamics of the situation so that our perceptions and perspectives are no longer clear.

One of the most difficult emotions to handle is anxiety. On the surface anxiety may not be seem that great a problem, but as far as our human consciousness is concerned, it can disturb our meditative openness to the point where we completely lose our balance. We let positive opportunities slip away through loss of awareness; anxiety pushes and divides us, creating separateness, confusion, and dissatisfaction. And when we are not mindful of our anxiety it becomes increasingly hard to control.

Needing can be very demanding. We continually feel the need for what can satisfy me . . . my ego, my mind, my feelings, my senses. Our lack of confidence causes us to feel the need for support or stimulation by friends, intellectual perceptions, or material objects. When we do not receive this contact, we can sometimes feel so alone and without support, that anxiety drains all the energy from our bodies. Once our energy is gone, we feel empty, depressed, and even despairing.

It seems that the only way we know how to search for satisfaction or self-fulfilment is through endless craving. Although we sometimes manage to temporarily satisfy our desires, the satisfaction usually lasts only a short time, and we are left with disappointment that leads to even more anxiety. Most human beings run on anxiety. Craving and grasping are like a candle, and anxiety is the flame. One word for this continual frustration is samsara, which means that we are dissatisfied and unhappy because we can seldom get what we want. We are continually seeking moving toward what is outside ourselves. When we lack confidence in ourselves, our lives often go on, day after day, having little meaning or value. Eventually we realize that we cannot afford to spend our entire lives on a seesaw of pleasure and pain, and that true fulfilment comes by giving up our grasping and finding contentment within ourselves.

No matter how our lives may seem on the surface, problems always exist at deeper, subtler levels of consciousness. There are various methods we can use to bring them to the surface; but as soon as we think we have solved one problem, more frustrations or dissatisfactions set in. It is like digging in sand on the beach as soon as we remove a handful of water, more water seeps in. So, we just

continue to get trapped in an endless progression of problems, temporary solutions, and more problems. We can relieve some of the surface tension by emotional outbursts and once these are over, we may even feel a little lighter or more relaxed. But this is like shifting weight from one place to another; the problem still remains, even though we may wishfully sense a change for the better. Because the underlying causes have not been resolved, the same problems or patterns continue to occur.

We may decide to fight these negative forces, but fighting often just perpetuates the negative energies and further alienates us from ourselves. It seems that the more we fight our negativity, the stronger it becomes.

So we somehow need to find a positive approach to deal with our problems. But first we need to understand that consciousness is only a collection of habit patterns. No matter how fixed or persistent they may seem, the patterns are not solid or substantial we can change and rearrange them. Negative reactions create forces which form a pattern; but this pattern can be broken. Once we understand the way habit patterns operate within the mind, and once the process of awakening awareness begins, then awareness penetrates and transforms our problems and obstacles. When we are mindful, instead of getting lost in conflict and indulging ourselves in misery, self-condemnation, or self-indulgent melancholy, we can quickly and easily see through our difficulties and transmute negative energy into positive energy. This takes some practice, but when we use intrinsic awareness to learn to see and quickly change destructive situations, our problems clear up, and peace and light begin to grow within us.

When problems arise in meditation or in daily life, when we are overly emotional or trapped in a pattern of behaviour which causes us to suffer, that is the time to practice openness and balance, and to awaken mindfulness. For example, when we are extremely sad or angry, if we concentrate properly on the emotion, looking at it intensely from above and below, and then facing it directly, it can actually disappear because we see that it is really 'nothing'. With practice, we can quickly balance a depressing or frustrating situation by switching the mind back and forth making it happy, making it sad, making it happy again all the time watching what is happening inside ourselves. First, we can do something positive, then something negative. One time, switch the mind to depression and really cry. Then, immediately switch to laughter. What, really, are these emotions? Why should I be controlled by these emotions? Why should I be controlled by these transitory mental states? This exercise may seem almost schizophrenic, but as we work on it we discover that an important change takes place within our consciousness and in the way we look at ourselves and the world. Sadness is not so serious and happiness is not so frivolous.

Life is moving and changing much faster than even a few years ago. Many exciting and fascinating things are happening every day it is all a very beautiful dance, and every situation, every activity, and every thought has its place in our practice. Each experience can teach us how foolish it is to be so dramatic and serious and that even our difficulties can be transcended, for nothing is permanent.

Yet at the same time, this realization is not easy to put into practice. We are so tied up in negative patterns that we may even be strengthening our negative emotions without knowing we are doing so. When we are unaware, when we are sad, depressed, or unhappy, we are like bees trapped in a jar they buzz around in restless patterns, with no way of escape. Yet we are not completely trapped. Our emotional problems and negative attitudes are in one way part of our learning process.

By means of awareness we can become sensitive to our emotions as they arise and thus begin to break our emotional patterns and our attachments to them. The more our awareness increases, the more time we have for positive action; three weeks for the person who is aware are the same as three months for the person who is not. When we remind ourselves to keep our bodies and minds in

harmony with our awareness, we become familiar with every change in our thoughts and moods; and we can remember to bring our awareness immediately into the midst of any situation that could disturb our balance. This practice is like learning to swim; once we learn the first strokes, with practice we will gradually be able to swim not just for five or ten minutes, but for as long as we like. Similarly, we can develop continuous meditation if we sustain an open attitude in whatever activities we are involved.

Because anxiety causes, consciously or unconsciously, many of our problems, it is important to deal with it as soon as it arises. The best antidote to anxiety is meditation. When we learn to control the emotions through meditation, we become less burdened by our problems; our bodies and minds become very still, and anxiety then starts to dissolve in calm relaxation and quiet. We can then begin to work with our problems directly, for we no longer feel the need to escape them. Our tenseness and blockages naturally ease. Thus, we are no longer caught in a cycle of craving and anxiety, and we can enjoy living in our bodies and minds. This is the first stage of meditation.

Not My Assignment ... if you didn't create it, then it's not yours!

By Edward B. Toupin

Life consists of lessons. Living is continual learning. Therefore, if you take on someone else's issues and responsibilities, or lessons, would that not be classified as cheating? Are you not cheating yourself out of your own life? Are you not cheating others out of their own lessons? At one time or another, we all get involved with someone else's issues. These issues can include family issues, life change, minimal conundrums, or anything that can somehow challenge the foundations and beliefs of an individual. However, we must be able to identify when we are providing assistance and when we are accepting responsibility for someone else.

Helping vs. Hindering

Of course, there are times when it is essential, for our well-being and for those we love, that we must set aside our own lives to ensure the comfort of a loved one. In this situation, for example, I am speaking of a loved one who is incapable of caring for themselves. In these cases, it is our desire and obligation as human beings to be there and care for them as we are not only helping our loved ones, but we are also growing within ourselves. However, there is a limit that we, as humans, are expected to give up our lives and directions for another. These cases primarily involve the absorption of responsibility for another person who is unwilling to take care of their own issues. It is in such a situation that we must all learn how to back away and allow the others to handle their own problems and learn their own lessons.

Please ... do this for me!!!

It is a natural human response to lend a hand to someone in need. It is fulfilling to know that you are helping someone, especially if you've been through a similar situation and you know all of the answers. But, do you really know all of the answers? You may have experienced a similar situation; however, your perspective and, therefore, your lessons were different. By taking on the issue for yourself and solving the problems of others, you are actually robbing them of lessons that they need to learn for themselves and grow in their own way. Also, realize that people live their own karma. When they are experiencing various issues in their lives, they are more than happy to include others into the drama or give the issue to someone else to handle. This is because they are walking into an area of the unknown outside of their safety zone. By taking responsibility to resolve their issues for them, you are also accepting responsibility for the success or failure of the issue. Over time you will lose yourself in the expectations of others and eventually become the whipping post for everyone that knows that you will do the 'dirty work' for them. Finally, you're giving up a time of your own life to deal with someone else's issues when, in fact, you could be using that time to move forward in your own life. But, in many cases, people take over other people's issues when they feel the need to become emotionally stimulated and there isn't enough going on in their own life to stimulate themselves. Perhaps you need more involvement in things that make a difference in your own life. Such stimulation can occur through setting a plan and having a vision set for your life. Without one, we seek out other forms of stimulation to fill the voids in our own lives. I'm not saying that you should ignore the needs of others on this planet. Such a view would be arrogant, harsh, and inhumane. You should always be aware of the needs of others. However, 'being aware of' and 'being responsible for' the needs of others are two completely different things. It is important to respect the needs of others and allow them the opportunity to fulfill their needs. However, you cannot take responsibility for anyone else's needs. If they are capable of handling their own lives, then they should take the reins and do so.

It's all your fault!!!

You have to realize that, if someone else makes an error and throws it into your court, they are expecting you to handle it. Many times, people will blame you for their own issues, also known as 'projection', because they don't know how to handle them. But, your best approach is simply to

'throw it back'. It is actually their own responsibility to resolve the issues and your responsibility is merely to watch your own area of influence and ensure that their issue does not affect you. With such situations, don't fall into 'playing games', which can last for weeks, months, and even years. By toying with games, you're literally wasting your time with someone else's issues while you could be focusing on things of importance to your own life. Ignoring their claims will only create more turmoil on their side that they will have to eventually handle. Consider it a form of voodoo. If you don't believe it in, it can't harm you. If you see this person as a friend, and you lose this person as a friend because of the situation, then so be it. There's more to life than being drug into a hole because of someone else's inability to handle their own issues. Allow them a chance to learn on their own. Not only will they be a better person for it, but you will be a better friend in the long run.

How do I know the difference?

If you allow other's issues, whether they affect you or not, to engulf your life, then you are allowing your life to be controlled by other people and situations. Eventually, your life will belong to everyone else and you can no longer move forward to your own vision because your life is cluttered with everyone else's issues. You must learn to evaluate the issues and learn, more importantly, how to be human without providing your soul as a door mat. One of the side effects of taking on the world's issues is that many people can eventually feel as though they are overwhelmed, beaten, or carrying a huge load on their shoulders. Their 'load' comes from taking on too many unnecessary issues that actually belong to someone else just to fill in the voids in their own lives. The best way to determine if you are busily taking on the world's problems and not focusing on your own life is to make a list of the many issues with which you are faced at this moment in time.

For each issue note:

- 1) Where did this issue come from? Was it you or someone else that initiated the issue? You need to figure out whom or what actually started the issue and what made it seem of importance to you in your life. If it was initiated by someone else, why did you seem to find it important?
- 2) What are the details of the issue? When examining their own issues, most people have no idea why they're even engaged in certain issues. It seems as though they know where it came from and they know where it's going, but they have no idea why they're even doing anything about the issue. If you don't know what the issue is about, then perhaps there is no real reason for the issue in the first place so, why are you dealing with it?
- 3) How does the issue affect your life? If you can come up with at least five important aspects of your life affected by the issue in a positive way, then indeed, it is an important issue. But, if there are no real affects, then you need to re-evaluate the situation. If a given issue does not directly affect your life and the quality thereof, then why are you dealing with the issue?
- 4) What is the status of resolution for the issue? Does the issue seem to sag and hang without any real forward momentum? If you don't feel as though the issue is moving forward toward a resolution then you need to stop and see if indeed there is a viable resolution. Perhaps you've simply been caught in a vortex where one issue begets another and another and another. This is a situation where you are searching for problems to solve when, indeed, there are no 'real' problems. This is a common pitfall and one that you should simply step out of as, indeed, there is no resolution.
- 5) Who is involved and how? Who is involved in the situation and why are they involved? Are you in control of the progress or is someone else 'managing' the issue and its progress? If someone else is 'managing' the progress, then shouldn't this other person be completely in control of the situation? Perhaps you should simply give them the issue to deal with on their own.
- 6) What else could I be doing? If you're working with a situation that seems useless, then why are

you doing it? If you're working to resolve a situation from the past so that you can feel better about yourself in the now, why not work on something that can benefit you in the now and make you feel better about yourself in the future? The past is gone, let it go. Shoot for the future!

7)What is my ultimate vision in my life? Everyone must have a vision for their life. What's yours? If you have one, then how does this issue relate to the success of your attainment of this vision? If you don't have one, then you need to find out how this situation relates to your life and devise a vision for your life. --

What's Next?

Stick to what's important and let the rest fall aside. There is no shame in dropping trivial situations that are of no use and are at a dead-end. Don't feel guilty about pushing other people's issues out of your life. You're not shirking responsibility. You're simply claiming your own life. You have just as much right to live your life as everyone else. You will encounter issues that you must overcome just as everyone else will throughout their lives. But, while you're dealing with other people's problems, what are they doing? They're living their life because you were so kind to alleviate them of their pressures. The point is that, if you're not careful, these issues can block your paths moving forward. Ultimately, you remain stuck in the past because you're unable to find a solution. Your best solution is to cut it out of your life and continue moving toward your vision. Make your own path, fix your own mistakes, and take responsibility for your own future. Not only will you find that the load slowly lifts from your back, but you'll see a much brighter future in a life that you own and control for yourself.

Assimilation vs Accumulation

By: Steve Davis

Assimilation vs Accumulation

The practice of getting full nourishment from everything in your life.

Western culture has reached a level of material wealth greater than at any time in history. We include in this material wealth, wealth of information as well. Currently, at the pinnacle of our ability to manipulate our environment and produce all the things we need, and many that we don't, it's entirely possible that many of our ills are arising as a result of our inability to handle this incredible glut of input, in all of its forms.

Prior to the recent age, when resources and information were scarce and hard to come by, we would never think of turning either of these away. The arrival of this incredible abundance is relatively recent, in the past 50 years or so, with the refinement of industry and the emergence of the information age and the Internet. It has come upon us so quickly that many of us haven't learned or prepared ourselves to handle this new level of abundance. If indeed it is possible to adapt and prepare ourselves for the onslaught at all.

We haven't asked ourselves the questions, "How much is enough?" "What do I value over everything else?" We just cannot say "no" to available "things" and information that meet our fancy. And, in some ways, we crave each new thing with the hope that it will somehow set us free. Consequently, we are literally dying from over consumption in one form or another.

More than half the US population is now considered "obese," while people are starving for renewal of "spirit" and "soul" in their lives and work. People are busier, have less time, and often feel overwhelmed, surrounded by "too much stuff" and stressed out under the growing burden of "too much information."

Application

How do we cope with the temptation to consume ourselves into oblivion? Our proposal is simple. We suggest two things. First, that you begin replacing the habit of "accumulating" with the practice of "assimilating." And second, that you make sure what you ingest in any form is of the highest quality possible. Let's first quickly define these words:

Accumulate: To heap up in a mass; to pile up; to increase; to collect or bring together; to amass; as, to accumulate a sum of money.

Assimilate: To appropriate and transform or incorporate into the substance of the assimilating body; to absorb or appropriate, as nourishment; as food is assimilated and converted into organic tissue.

Proper assimilation and digestion of food, experience, and information will allow us to extract its full benefit and put it to good use. Whereas overstuffing ourselves, in any of these arenas will cause a buildup of unsightly fat, waste, stress, toxicity, confusion, unease, often fueling an unconscious compulsion for more. All of us know how much better we feel when we push ourselves away from the table before we're full, and the satisfied feeling we get when we give ourselves a little time for our systems to "assimilate" what we've taken in.

Unconscious compulsions for "more input" seldom satisfy our true needs. Nor will having piles of

unread books and magazines ringing our desks reduce the nagging sense that there is some piece of information that will really change everything for us.

Satisfaction comes from fully digesting and extracting the fine nutrients from what we already have, and making choices for new input based on our true values and passions, not our casual likes and vague interests.

Saying yes to only what most serves our needs and resonates with our deepest sense of self, and our chosen mission will go a long way to lessen the burden. So will focusing on what is important to ours and not someone else's sense of self.

How to Facilitate Assimilation

- **Of Information.** We often spend a great deal of time looking for that special piece of information or that magical answer to our current problem when more often than not, the answer we seek is right in front of us.

But unless we slow down to see, hear, and process what's already in our world, we may miss these gifts. In your groups, model this by inviting your participants to assimilate fully the meaning and consequences of every activity.

- **Of Relationships.** We rush around so often focused on "getting stuff done" that we sometimes neglect our most precious resources--our friends, associates, coworkers, and family. The benefits in good will, emotional support, new connections and ideas, very often offset the time spent cultivating and maintaining these existing relationships.

- **Of Customers.** Balance your expenditure of energy on seeking new customers with efforts to deepen and enrich your relationships with existing customers. It takes a whole lot less effort to cultivate these existing relationships where some trust already exists. Share your gratitude for them being in your life, appreciate their trust in you, and seek to deeply understand and respond to their needs. Become so familiar with their situation that you can act as a trusted advisor and in turn help them assimilate the tidal wave of information bearing down on them as well.

- **Of Ideas.** If you're anything like us, you're a life long student of personal growth and have hundreds of books on your bookshelves. Just imagine what might happen if instead of picking up yet another new title to read, you were to study the principles from just one chapter of a favorite you've already read and actually apply them for the next 30 days? This, my friends, is called assimilation.

Create a learning plan with specific goals for the next six months. Include both informational and learning goals into this plan. And, only include that which you know you can assimilate with minimum effort so that you have time to really make the information a part of your very being instead of just being a walking index pointing people to this book or that website.

- **Of Food.** During at least one meal this week...you may even want to experiment with the (big) one this Thursday, try eating slower than usual. Chew your food just a little bit longer. When you're talking or listening to someone, stop eating. Take time to really assimilate your food and experience with family. Try just doing one thing at a time. Enjoy the rainbow of flavors and textures, each bite a miniature world of experience.

- **Of Experience.** We're all tempted to accelerate our pace of life to match that of our increasingly frenetic culture. But this is a personal choice. Most of the time, we can choose to slow down and

carefully select our inputs, experiences, and the speed at which we subject ourselves to them.

There are ways to help make this choice easier. Commit to a practice of "being fully present" for a few minutes each day. Use whatever method appeals to you. Some choices are meditation, yoga, quiet walks, prayer, tai chi, marshal arts, sitting alone quietly, journaling, etc. Or just look out the window with all of your senses. Focus on what is before you and allow it to really enter your being.

These kinds of practices are more and more important as the world accelerates around you. They give our inner selves time catch up with, reconnect with, and properly assimilate with our outer experience.

Now go forth and assimilate!

About the Author:

Steve Davis, M.A., M.S., is a Business and Life Coach and Infoprenuer, who works with individuals to realize their own personal or business dreams, and with leaders frustrated by typical problems they experience in groups. Subscribe to Steve's free weekly ezine for group leaders at www.MasterFacilitatorJournal.com and check out his virtual university - packed with information for group leaders and participants at www.FacilitatorU.com . Contact Steve at <mailto:contact@facilitatoru.com>

How Can your Attention be Utilized as Your Energy?

By Clara Szalai

Open your horizons. Find quality in small things, not the big ones. A more spiritual orientation brings about observing the details that go by unseen when you look for the big things.

Can you control your attention? The ability to control your attention, to control where you focus your attention, endows you with the ability to create your environment. It furnishes you with energy to do work, study, finish projects, succeed in your endeavors when you can see both the whole picture and also the details, and in general, it enables you to react to situations with enough rationality to direct them toward your objectives. You become aware by focusing your attention on something. Before placing your attention on that something, it didn't exist for you. Now that you focused on it, you became aware of it and it exists for you. By observing you make things alive in your own universe. And obversely, when you put less attention on something, it tends to disappear. Is your life precisely what you wish it to be? If not, no matter the reason, you can still learn to control your attention, and thereby, learn to create.

Is your attention being controlled by external events when everything disturbs you, when the smallest rustling distracts you? If that is the case, then you certainly don't know how to handle energy. When instead of being directed by you, your attention is controlled by external events, then your energy too is controlled by external events. We have bodies to learn how to handle energy. An expression of wasting it could be the lack of cash flow as wished. People who have a high concentration level, who can control the flow of their attention, have more energy than others do. It's not that they have more energy — they simply know how to handle it better. So control it. You see, usually, when not working on it, awareness, or one's attention is guided, controlled by outside events: by emotions, unwanted emotions, the chattering of the mind, etc. However, when you work on it and develop your control, consciousness is the one directing the awareness, and that's as it should be. Then you flow with the universal energy, which therewith can flow through you and imbue you with its plenty. When you allow your attention to float like a boat without a rudder on high seas, you block the universe from being able to give to you.

Individuals with easily dispersed attention often seem to act neurotically. They could be said to be unstable. They feel guilt-ridden, having too many unfinished tasks on their conscience. They get into something, then something else comes up and they give that something else attention while they leave the first thing unattended and so on and so on. Too many loose ends. They seldom finish things before going on to the next thing, and yet they leave their attention on the unfinished projects or wishes. They don't even end them in their minds, so they are kept in a constant state of distraction, their concentration dispersed, and then they judge themselves on all those things they haven't done. Instead of treating these individuals with antidepressants, tranquilizers, barbiturates or other goodies, instead of beating to death their childhood or past life traumas, it would suffice to teach them step by step how to control their attention and how to finish what they began.

An inability to control one's attention may be regarded as "just another symptom," and consequently, treatment may be aimed at something else. Yet learning to control one's attention could cure many psychological disorders. Your energy is your ability to focus your attention where you wish.

Perhaps, you keep playing the same record in your private chatterbox you call your brains, disabled by the automatic repetitions of babble you call your thoughts. Maybe your attention is stuck in past events, thinking that if you had only said this or that, then... whatever, or maybe you hold onto all those terrible things that were done to you. When your attention is trapped in past unfulfilled wills, you have less attention, less energy to carry on. If you become more in control of your attention,

you can learn to let go and thus become involved in the present rather than in the past. For that to occur, however, you need to know how to control your attention.

Of course, you could be one of those who lack self-confidence, which is the result of being too self-conscious, which means your attention is stuck on yourself — the condition I named the “bubble syndrome.” This may be the result of being afraid of critical attention. If that’s the case, then you should turn your attention outward instead of focusing it on the self. That’s listening. I call listening everything that has to do with putting your attention outside yourself. Listening can be achieved by being interested in the other instead of being interested in oneself.

Self-confidence is the ability to not focus upon yourself, the ability to give others your full attention. But since your attention is curved back on you, the external world goes unnoticed and you are either unaware or uninterested in others’ predicaments or joys. Because your attention is trapped in the narrow circle described between you and you, there is not much left over for others. When you direct your attention on yourself, you don’t direct it upon others. Then these others can’t feel you care for them. To really experience — and this has been a great secret — you should experience others by being them, loving them, without expecting something miraculous to happen as a result of this act. The pure joy of being, existing, is the greatest miracle.

How to love would be a relevant question here. The first thing in learning to love is to be Nothing, which means not being beautiful or ugly, happy or unhappy, not this and not that, just being and then seeing — seeing other life forms and listening to them. This means that all your attention is on them, not on yourself. You see them and become them as much as you can. You feel what they feel. You participate in their hopes, loves, whatever, and then it is only natural that you want to make them happy by giving them what they want because you are no longer separate from them. You are they, so you would do unto them what you would have done unto yourself — only it is their wish you fulfill. You are they when you want the same, and since you have gone through being Nothing, you can be anything and you are able to love anyone.

Being self-centered is often the result of a fear of criticism, of what-will-others-think-of-me. Wanting to be accepted and loved, one can become wary of not being accepted and loved. This vigilance is achieved by constantly searching for revealing signs and statements uttered by others to detect what they think of you. Such behavior may be misconceived as attentiveness, and yet what is the self-conscious person really interested in? In the other? No. He is interested in himself through the other. That is still curving one’s attention back on oneself, investing in looking good in the eyes of the other.

Be the actor, not the act. When your whole world is you and only you, it is a small world and you are the act. When you are interested in others, when you can turn your attention outward, then you are the actor, and then you are the world, the big world.

As long as your attention is on yourself instead of the joy of doing and acting, you draw critical attention back at you and you receive evaluations. When you enhance your self as the object, then it is you who is getting graded and judged, not the act. This is why you feel you are losing confidence in yourself. Enjoy the doing and you will see the difference. Stop dreaming of how you will be admired, and instead, revel in acting out the different parts, sense the feelings and emotions of the roles. That makes the whole difference.

This constant preoccupation with one’s self prevents one from having experiences, real, enriching experiences. Affirmations of being good, or getting “gooder” by the day, is such a preoccupation that too often turns into self-criticism, intensifying the labels of what’s wrong with oneself. When that’s the main theme of one’s existence, then what do you think this person experiences? Occupy

yourself with experiencing things. Turn your attention outward rather than toward what you think to be your deficiencies.

You may be unhappy because you don't have: you don't have money, you don't have youth, you don't have health, you don't have beauty, you don't have a sex-partner, you don't have parents, you don't have a job, and the list goes on and on. Look at you! You center your attention on what you miss and miss what you have. Life can pass you by and you won't notice that you forgot to live and experience. As if this wasn't serious enough, the consequences of focusing on what we miss are even more morbid.

About 99% of humans fear uncertainty and lack of stability. However, when you look at the lack, then that is what you increase since you create your own reality by focusing. By putting your attention on things, you make them real. So when you put your attention on a lack, you increase that lack. In order to feel stability — which is a feeling, an attitude, and not something objective — you ought to change your attitude. You are not confronting immediate life threatening problems. You are afraid of the future, afraid of how you will perform in the future. To solve this problem, think of uncertainty in a different way: try to learn to live with uncertainty. How? Through faith in the universe, in knowing you belong to the universe, faith in yourself. The wider your scope of activity becomes, the more uncertainties you will face. Learn to live with uncertainty and then you won't need to shrink the sphere of your activities and interests in order to entomb yourself in certainty. Expand, have faith, and then you can live with uncertainty and live well, feeling stable in spite of uncertainty (how to achieve that, see my article, *Could Holophany Guide us to Live Comfortably in Uncertainty?*). Know that you, the real you, can never be hurt, only the role, the possessions, the temporary part. That is indeed a leap into the spiritual realm. Faith. When you have faith, your attitude changes, and you won't view uncertainty as an unwelcome guest. When you have that attitude, then you will have freed attention to work with and expand into more stability in your everyday life, without pressure, without feeling that doom hangs over your head, which was placed there by your own self in the first place.

Stability is due to control. Life is one big uncertainty, which you cannot control. What you can control is your attention, which when controlled can guarantee your stability even within uncertainty. This ensures that you can live well in uncertainty.

Happiness could be a few blocks down the road, once you can control your attention and when you know where to direct it. If you are bored, uncreative, or you feel life is a drag because of all those things you have to do, put your attention on things that really interest you, and then you will be able to enjoy your life in full. However, this is not always as simply done as said, because you may feel you have to do those things you don't enjoy and you have no choice. To overcome this platitude (which seems to you the coercion of facts), you may need to understand Holophany enough so you can change your attitude in those areas where indicated and thereby turn your environment into a more desirable scene. Even to learn Holophany and to understand the philosophy of how things work, you need a certain span of attention and concentration, and a certain control of your energy. The main lesson to learn is to handle energy, which includes knowing where your attention is aimed at and controlling it. This teaches you to look and observe, to see others including their problems and desperation. This is exercising control over your energy.

When you are familiar with the techniques of controlling your attention, you can become a virtuoso with abilities that may seem supernatural to those who don't know how to observe. Your memory and intelligence will improve as well as your creativity. First, however, you need to learn to focus. Focusing is the ability to concentrate on one thing for a long time (long defined as relative to you). It is putting attention on something, investing your energy as stated above. It is also paying attention to detail. When you can lock out the automatic mind chatter, then you can start splitting

attention and focus on more than one thing at a time, thereby creating a kind of field, which is very creative in all respects. That's when you get insights, connect between things you have not connected before. Splitting your attention allows you to trigger things within an area in which you focus and then things happen. This focus allows you to see the nature of things as a process, the relations within a certain complex structure, and from there you can easily create changes by changing the dynamic aspect, the relations of the complex structure. Then the whole structure changes somewhat as seen from your point of view. Try to visualize this paragraph, even in meditation, until you get it. This is the result of the ability to focus, which of course starts, as I have stated, with a laser-like ability to center, locking out all other noise.

Controlling the wanderings of one's attention is controlling awareness, which is the access code of consciousness. Our attention is the most basic dynamic aspect of our creation.

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How to attract emotionally healthy people:

By E.K.Bernshaw

1. Who you think you are is important. Like attracts like. Think about it. Do you like who you are?
2. What you want in a relationship is important, and when you are willing to ask for it, you will be able to create it. But only ask for what you want when you are clear about what it is. Until then, don't go around demanding things you just think you should have.
3. We get exactly what we focus on. The problem or the solution. We make a choice between them with every decision we make.
4. Tell yourself the truth about what you want, not what other (family, friends, spouse) say you should have.
5. Tell everyone else your truth about what you want. Don't be afraid to share your vision and dreams.
6. You are not defined by your relationships unless you choose to be. Consider what it says about you if you deed over your soul to one.
7. Interdependent (two independent functional people) relationships are the only ones that work, long term.
8. Truth is the first thing necessary to create trust in our relationships. Respect is earned from trust, and love is earned from respect. Intimacy is the gift we get when we risk telling the truth. See the hierarchy of a functional relationship
9. Fear of intimacy is fear of the truth. Your truth is better for you than someone else's. Just get to know what it is so you can own it.
10. If your relationship is not getting better, it is probably getting worse. Life is dynamic and nothing ever stays the same.
11. Every relationship is unique. It takes what it takes to work. If you want it to work, you have to work it. No shortcuts. No 50/50 deals.
12. It's not your job to fix your mate, and it's not his or her job to fix you. Take the relationship and what your mate says at face value and stop reading into it what you'd like to hear. We can work with what's real. It's impossible to deal with what's not real.
13. Unconditional love is an inside job. If you haven't gotten it by now, guess what...start working from within. When you can give it to yourself, you'll be ready to give it to someone else. If you can give it to someone else, you'll recognize it when it's given to you.
14. If you both are committed to creating a functional relationship, agree to start doing it today, without any judgments about the past. Be willing to work in the solution and let go of your need to control the outcome, moment to moment, one day at a time. Joy can only be experienced in the present moment.
15. Most of our fears about what may happen in this relationship are really fears we experienced in past relationships, and have nothing to do with this person. Come to grips with what's real and

what's Memorex!

16. When in an argument, ask yourself Does this really PASS THE SO WHAT TEST? For you to be right, does the other person have to be wrong? Think about it. Life is short. Don't waste it on arguments that have no meaning or purpose. You can always agree to disagree if you need to. Then laugh about it and go on to the next thing. Start observing your arguing as just another one of our dysfunctional, immature habits that need to be broken.

17. When we finally learn to say we are sorry (at 3 or 93) we get to finally hear we are O.K. To error is human, and there is great virtue in all forgiveness, ourselves included. The best ways to teach our children this lesson is by watching us demonstrate it.

18. Any negative, hurtful or sarcastic remark is abusive. Like a sharp knife, each word will carve out a chunk of a loving relationship that can never grow back. Please consider the source and the outcome of your remarks, before you open you mouth to tell your truth.

19. Never let a day go by without saying and showing how much your relationship and partner mean to you. Never take a moment for granted. Express how grateful you are for your good fortune, however meek or humble it may be. Appreciation and gratefulness have magic in them. It seems the more we express them, the more reasons we are given to say thank you.

20. To have a functional relationship you have to be willing to risk loosing it everyday, by telling your truth. If you don't feel free to tell your truth, start asking yourself why you think it's so important to stay, and what else you are willing to lose besides your self-esteem. For starters, you can ask your mate to tell their truth, and be willing to accept it at face value, with no judgment. Now you both get to know if you each want a relationship based on what's real.

For optimum results, start doing this in the first five minutes of meeting anyone.

HIERARCHY OF A FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP

INTIMACY

LOVE

RESPECT

TRUST

TRUTH

What is a functional relationship?

Without the beginning base of truth in a relationship, trust cannot occur. Without the development of trust, respect will never be born. Without a level of respect for another, a functional relationship of love will not seed and nourish the partners. Intimacy occurs when we become willing to share our whole selves with another in this order. It is the gift we get when we learn to engage in a balanced, loving and functional relationship.

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The Aura: Your Energy Skin

Francesca McCartney, PhD

Most people do not realize that they have a second skin — an energy skin that protects and shields their energy system just as physical skin protects their inner organs.

Imagine having no skin. What would happen? All your organs would spill out onto the ground. Your veins and arteries would sag and bulge. You would be defenseless against dirt, germs, and viruses. And, perhaps worst of all, you would look pretty frightening! Your skin is a highly efficient protective layer between you and the external world. It holds all of your organs in place, it shields you, and it filters out foreign matter that could be dangerous or irritating to your inner organs.

Like physical skin, the aura is permeated with natural disease-fighting chemistry, and it hosts the sensory communications of the nervous system. This second skin is the boundary between your personal energy system and the energy of your environment; an illuminated wrap of life-force medicine; and a subtle nervous system receiving and sending energy messages. This energy skin is your aura. Every living being has an aura.

The human aura field is distributed around the body like an ovoid, spherical, or egg-shaped cocoon of energy. Clairvoyantly, it appears as a shape with different qualities in different places. You may see the boundary as diffuse, well defined, smooth, or jagged. You can perceive the aura clairvoyantly as color, brightness, darkness, shape, and density. You can hear the aura clairaudiently as tone, sound, music, frequency, and vibration. You can feel the aura using biotelemetry (The detection and measurement of a human or animal condition, activity, or function such as the heartbeat or body temperature) and psychometry (temperature changes, pulsation, tingling, pressure, or magnetism).

When you are feeling healthy, self-confident, calm, and grounded, your aura is healthy as well. A healthy aura is indicated by a cocoon of energy surrounding and extending out from the body at least 1 foot in all directions. This positive protection field is composed of bright colors, strong vibrations, pure tones, and a full, smooth, egg-shaped boundary. When you are sick, depressed, sad, or unsure of yourself, your aura is close to your body. The colors are most likely to be dull, murky, and dark. The frequency is slow and erratic. There may be breaks or tears in the boundary. And the shape could be bumpy and distorted. All of these indicate that your aura is not serving as a positive protection field between you and the energy of others and your environment.

An unprotective aura can be a cause of illness and distress for sensitive people. Without the natural filtering system of a positive protection field surrounding your body, you are open to environmental influences. The frequency of different energies can coexist and overlap nondestructively in the same space; take, for example, radio and television frequencies. Much of the energy in your environment — mental, physical, and emotional — may be positive, but much of it is negative.

An Early-Warning System

Your aura is a multi-operational energy field. The aura also acts as a reception and relay network for subtle energies. It delivers energy messages to the chakra system, which translates them into hormonal, nerve, and cellular activity in the physical body. In general, the aura tends to hold present (rather than past) thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and interactions between yourself and your environment. As the world first interconnects with your auric field, the freshest impressions, communications, and intuitive hits are woven into it. As an early-warning system, your aura also detects energy disturbance not yet manifested. This aspect of the aura's function is a preview of the future that can be utilized as a preventive tool.

Disease in the physical, emotional, or mental body is often preceded by a disturbance in the aura, or, if it originates within the physical body, it registers in the aura at the same time or oftentimes

before it manifests in a person's conscious mind or physical body. When I practiced as a medical intuitive, I had a patient in the medical clinic who was in good health and having her annual health checkup. The clinic doctor asked me to energetically scan her, and I picked up a reproductive-system problem in her aura. None of the medical tests confirmed my scan. Three weeks later she returned to the clinic because of uterine hemorrhaging. Your aura is an early-warning system for disease. By paying attention to such forewarnings, you can take preventive healing action, whether it is medical, psychological, or energetic.

A grounded aura allows you to sense when energy is being directed at you from near or far, and gives you the choice to accept it or cleanse it out of your space. This puts people and situations at a healthy distance from you, thus allowing them less power to unbalance you. With a grounded aura, you will feel safer and more secure, and the quality of all your grounding anchor points will improve. Your aura, when functioning effectively, acts as a lightning rod for negative energy or thoughts that enter your space. If your aura is not protecting you well, you might be hit by someone's unhealthy energy transference, or you might feel that you are being verbally attacked when someone is simply transmitting information. With a grounded aura, these undesirable intrusions into your system will be intercepted at the outer edge of your aura and automatically grounded out of your personal field and down into the earth. With practice, your aura will become an autonomic system of protection.

A Positive Protection

A highly healthy aura nourishes us with a constant circulation of life-force energy. It also protects us, because high-energy fields disintegrate energy that enters from lower-energy fields.

In order for your aura to act as positive protection it must be in a whole and healthy state of coherence. When your aura is filled with life force, others will show respect for your boundaries. With your intuition you can sense and heal aberrations in the field of your aura. With intention and affirmation, you can quickly revive the potent vitality of your aura's protective qualities. You need not be in quiet meditation to practice aura sensing and healing.

When you leave your home, the best health initiative is to walk into the outside world with a grounded, vibrant aura. Physical, mental, or emotional abuse of any kind — real or imagined; from within yourself or from your environment — can affect all of your subtle-energy systems when you are not being conscious. At times, your positive intentions may be pushed out of focus, and you may find yourself unprotected and affected by chaos from the world or ill intentions from other people. These are the times to be energetically proactive. Immediately scan your aura for aberrant patterns — energies that are not yours or attached themselves to your auric field and are operating below your level of positive intention.

The following story illustrates how to actively work with your aura in daily life. It comes from a twenty-five-year-old corporate secretary who is a highly clairsentient (acutely developed sense of empathy) and has practiced aura healing for one-year. She had difficulty with a boss who constantly intimidated her; she felt his energy pushing out her own feelings and thoughts, leaving her speechless and vulnerable in his presence. She described this situation as a "violation of boundaries," but she has now learned to use her aura as positive protection during these episodes.

The biggest aura revelation for me was discovering that the ways in which I had always tried to protect myself (being defensive, withdrawn, shut down, and angry) were energy drains in and of themselves, and that my boss was still able to "get in" and drain my energy. The discovery of being grounded, being aware of my auric field, keeping my auric field grounded, and having healthy energy circulating through my aura literally changed my experience of life. Now I truly feel safe and protected, and I am almost immediately aware when someone or something is trying to violate

my boundaries — or if I'm ungrounded, energetically unprotected, or vulnerable. I feel like a different person than I was a year ago.

Try This!

- Have you ever been in a roomful of people and seen a person walk in and all heads turn to look at him or her? I see this as a manifestation of the person's aura filling up the room, reaching out and touching people like an energy handshake. Others call this charisma. If you would like to bring attention to yourself during a speech, in a group, or for whatever reason, try this with your aura: Fill your aura with bright colors and expand your auric field into a large cocoon around your body. Experiment first at home to find out how much you can expand your aura and which size is comfortable for you. Some people can fill an entire room with their aura and feel comfortable and grounded, while others become scattered when their auras are expansive. Notice how others react to you when you practice this fun experiment.

I hope that this article has given you insights into your own aura and how you can use your auric field as a protective skin, and a passport to walking through the world with ease and grace.

Excerpt from: *Body of Health: The New Science of Intuition Medicine* â for Energy and Balance

About the Author

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How To Be Your Authentic Self

By Beth Densmore

Most of us play many different roles in the course of any given day. We could be Mom, Boss, Employee, Student or Friend, to name just a few. Very often we identify ourselves by those roles. When asked, "Who are you/" we say, "I'm a wife and mother", "I am a doctor and amateur photographer". We identify ourselves by how the world sees us, not by who we really are.

Our authentic self is who we really are, deep at the core of our being. Our authentic self is not who the world labels us to be. The authentic self is driven by our individual values and our specific needs.

In order to learn to be our authentic self, we must first discover our authentic self. To discover is to learn of the existence of something. Self-discovery is learning of the existence of our core values and needs.

Discovery is not a one step process. Although there are many "a-ha" moments in discovery, there is a lot of hard work that must be done before and after experiencing those "a-ha" moments in order to incorporate that discovery into our daily lives. Once we say "a-ha" I really value adventure and creativity and I really need support and tenderness, it is time to incorporate those values and needs into our daily lives.

While most of us would date the discovery of penicillin to the early 1940's, the first "a-ha" moment came much earlier. Sir Alexander Fleming discovered that the mold growing on his unwashed culture plates was repelling the bacteria surrounding it in 1928. It was not until 1940 that Ernst B.Chain and Sir Howard Florey first tested penicillin on animals. And it was not until 1941 that pharmaceutical companies in the United States started penicillin production, a long road to the discovery of penicillin.

Self-discovery is also a long road. In truth, we can continue to discover ourselves throughout our lives. But, we have to work at it. We have to look deep into our core to find our inherent values and needs.

Think about what values motivate your daily life. In any community there are shared values. These might be honesty, integrity, respect, and helpfulness. You might share these values with colleagues, friends and family. In addition to these shared values you will have values that are specific to you as an individual.

Your individual values might be, to contribute, to discover, to teach and to create. These values are specific to you and are what propel you to become who you are. You are more likely to be drawn to work in the arts if your core values consist of creativity, originality, discovery and beauty. By the same token, you would be more likely to become a teacher if your core values consist of guiding, inspiring, learning and informing.

The other factor to be considered in becoming our authentic self is the needs that drive us emotionally. We cannot be our authentic self without having those needs met.

You might have the need to be empathetic in your relationships, or to experience adventure. Perhaps your need is to be really connected to your family or community. These needs go beyond the shared human needs of food, shelter and safety.

We often confuse wants with needs. To want something is to desire it. We may want a bigger house, newer car or financial independence. We can achieve those desires and still have core needs that are unmet. We have all heard the saying " Money doesn't buy happiness". The truth in that adage is that "money" is an external want not an internal need. When our internal needs are not met, it matters not what external gains we accomplish, we are left un-fulfilled.

If we don't live by our core values we are in essence creating core needs. For instance, if we have discovered that our core values consist of things like, creativity, originality and imagination and yet we work and live in an environment with no room for original thinking and conceptualization, we are not being our authentic selves. In turn we are creating the unmet needs of creativity, originality and imagination.

So, in order to be our authentic self we must embrace the path of self-discovery. We must look deep within our being and discover our core values and needs. We then must choose our goals and our path in life based on those core values and needs.

About the Author

Beth Densmore is a Personal Life Coach who offers support, inspiration and motivation to those who are in transition and want to achieve a goal. For more information and more free articles like this, visit her site at <http://www.newfocuscoaching.com>

Authenticity: Key to Transformation

By John Amodeo

Should I change myself or accept myself as I am? Although self-change and self-acceptance appear to be in opposition, they're two essential sides of the same coin of self-transformation.

When people come to my office for therapy, they usually want to change themselves -- or reshape their partner. Being unhappy with how things are, they're eager -- if not desperate -- to implement changes. But little do they realize that the key to creative change doesn't lie in our usual efforts to fix ourselves, poke at ourselves, or push ourselves. Just the opposite. The key to real and lasting change lies in the paradoxical art of accepting ourselves as we currently are.

The terms "self-acceptance" and "being ourselves" are thrown around loosely. Sometimes we use that expression to justify abusive behaviour: "I'm just being myself!" Or, "Don't try to change me!" Sadly, what we're often really saying is, "I want to stay stuck in my rigid defences, fixed opinions, and self-righteous behaviours. I don't want to show you what's really going on inside me." Even sadder, we may not allow ourselves to see what's really happening in our depths, perhaps fearful of what we might find.

Being ourselves really means being authentic. And authenticity requires that we connect with the ever-deeper layers of our felt-experience. As we become willing to courageously uncover what's happening in our depths, we become less split inside. We heal the conflict between who we actually are and who we're trying to be. As we relinquish our self-image of who we think we should be, we discover -- finally -- the vibrant world of who we actually are.

Tragically, society trains us to avoid certain feelings. Boys are taught that being a man means being tough (not wimpy), which translates as "don't cry or show hurt." Women are taught that showing anger means you're a bitch, so "be nice." As a result, we feel fear or shame when feelings arise that we believe will be objectionable. We try to shape and peddle an image that we hope will gain acceptance and love, rather than rejection or disdain. This core human longing for love and belonging leads us to achieve what Fritz Perls calls "self-image actualisation" as opposed to self-actualisation.

The inner split between our authentic self and manufactured self creates a quiet war in ourselves. As we distance from genuine feelings and wants, we betray essential aspects of ourselves. As a result, we remain distant from others. The refusal to show the tender and vulnerable parts of ourselves keeps us isolated, hidden, and alone. Yet, we remain unaware of our own pivotal role in pushing people away by betraying our authentic self. By not embracing and exposing who we really are -- our tenderness, our fears, our strengths, our limits -- we live armoured in defences.

The flip side of judging ourselves is that we subtly condemn others with our judgments, hostility, and accusations. We use anger to hide our fear and shame. Or, we withdraw into a world of silent judgments toward people, perhaps believing we're superior.

Those of us who are spiritually inclined are also susceptible to this trap of self-betrayal. The effort to maintain an image of serenity and feeling good may lead to an avoidance of "messy" emotions and conflicts. As a sad result, we may never learn how to engage in a deep and sober sharing of core feelings, wants, and longings. Relationships remain unaccountably shallow as a result of not finding the courage and wisdom to expose our vulnerable depths.

The key to transforming both ourselves and our relationships is to learn what it means to accept and embrace ourselves just as we are. Spiritual teacher J. Krishnamurti made the profound observation

that, "If you begin to understand what you are without trying to change it, then what you are undergoes a transformation." Psychologist Carl Rogers drew the same conclusion through psychological observation: "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."

Welcoming the whole of who we are leads to a spirituality of embodiment, rather than a futile, perfectionistic struggle to transcend where we are right now. Within a context of warm self-acceptance, we're no longer battling ourselves. By creating a friendly space for what we ordinarily push away, we reclaim disowned parts of ourselves. Transformation ensues from allowing and embracing what we normally avoid and deny. As a result, we become more whole, more complete, and more contactable. We find an inner peace and calm aliveness that becomes self-communicating. Intimacy with others deepens as we become more intimately acquainted with ourselves.

We need to find paths that bring awareness to the full range of our humanness. I've found Eugene Gendlin's Focusing approach to be particularly useful. Certain forms of meditation, such as Vipassana, also bring awareness to present experience as it actually is, rather than how we'd like it to be. Psychotherapy can also provide a safe and supportive place to discover and welcome our authentic self.

Many of us are attracted to dramatic, exotic paths that promise transformation. We may have out-of-body experiences and taste the ecstasy of Tantric merging, but can we be emotionally honest and forthcoming with our partner? Can we communicate with clarity, kindness, and respect -- even when we don't get what we want?

Oftentimes, the most profound paths are the simplest. Does our personal growth practice enable us to extend warmth toward people and be empathically present for their joys and sorrows? Can we look with kind eyes upon the grocery clerk, and speak gently, although assertively, to the phone solicitor struggling to make a living? The fruits of personal and spiritual transformation show up in these ordinary, everyday extensions of our heart.

About the author

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Awakening to Values, Intentions, and Destiny

From the forthcoming book - Power and Grace – An Adventure in Awakened Living

By Irish Author Mick Quinn.

Often we declare a desire to change with great gusto and conviction, but may find that within a few days or weeks that enthusiasm (root: God within) to change has almost completely dissipated. Why is this so? How can we make change permanent?

The core of the issue is that, although our intentions are good, the way in which we direct them is subject to both individual and collective conditioning; hence, even the purest ideas become corrupted and lead us pretty much back to where we started.

An intention is the anticipated outcome envisioned in the mind. Our values help us select and then guide our intentions. The dilemma is that our values and the way we use them are the domain of ego, and because of this, lasting transformation is difficult, if not impossible.

The most humble of wishes would be to end all unnecessary suffering, also known as, freedom. We will look at how this potential exists within your free will and how, when you are clear about your values, you can create a direct link between your intentions and your destiny. In this way your intentions become manifest in your future and you the master of your own destiny.

To stabilize the conditions for your wonderful resolutions to “stick” you must reclaim consciousness that will otherwise be consumed in a continuous struggle with ego-based outcomes. Liberation from the effects of hand-me-down values, upon which you base your decision-making, is the outcome when those values are rearranged into one conscious group, where the primary value supports and guides your intention to be free from suffering.

The primary value that you select for this single hierarchy always represents that your interest in awakening is marginally greater than all others. Making decisions based on such a conscious primary principle will produce an enlightened effect. This new arrangement also supports all other necessary aspects of living, since subsequent values can include money, security, family, love, creativity, and learning.

An awakened person’s life is centered on a clear, single hierarchy of values, and when asked she could instantly identify her primary value. She may, however, have some difficulty determining what her second and third values are, as these will vary from choice to choice. Her primary value however, will be consistent with freedom from conditioning, and significant choices made in her day-to-day life will give consistent and tangible proof of this arrangement.

For example: To sustain the conditions for transformation consider placing a primary value such as completion, freedom, or fulfillment over and above all other values on a single hierarchy that is to represent your life from that moment forward. Making a major life decision according to a primary value of completion delivers an outcome of completion regardless of the circumstances surrounding that choice. Freedom is not dependent on the circumstances, options or outcomes, but on how consistently your pure intentions are directed by a related value that supports such an objective.

Conditioning segregates values into distinct and concurrent groups related to career, home, family, friends, and so on, in its futile attempt to manipulate reality. You may realize that you also have a “wish list” of values that includes valiant attributes such as integrity, perfection and creativity. The struggle with most major life decisions and their outcomes is the consequence of numerous “ego-guiding principles”. Not only does each group of values have it’s own agenda but each hierarchy has its own presiding primary value. This arrangement ensures that the ego remains in firm control

of your life force and fortune.

Because most of us are not aware of the multiple groups of values, we experience great anguish and confusion in times of making important choices. “Not knowing what to do”, is a clear manifestation that the ego is entrenched in values. An awakened person can make major life decisions in a matter of seconds with no worries, regrets or fears that options may need to be “revised”.

Stressing over choices is a reflection of conditioning as it drains consciousness with compelling and conflicting narcissistic alternatives. The ego controls your decision-making process by selecting the most important values from these multiple and conflicting groups and then it lets you “duke” it out! In this way the ego can easily orchestrate your actions—and your fate—as you “weigh up the options,” “consider all the scenarios,” or look to the past for patterns. Whatever the original intention was, it is now lost, the outcome is conditioned, and lasting changes never seem to “stick.”

The ego also uses the battle for attention between all these values to drain your consciousness—in the present moment with deliberation—and in the future because of the conditioned outcomes you have to “overcome”. The continued existence of these multiple groups of values precludes you from being able to discover and express your full potential by setting and following through on noble resolutions.

As you awaken, it will become apparent how the first big decision you ever made—independently of your parents—was based on the existence of multiple groups of values, the result of conditioned intention and a product of the ego. You may also realize that you have been doing this pretty much ever since.

Margaret was the quintessential grandmother. She was sweet, kind, and caring. Margaret was also quite independent and lively. Now in her early seventies, she loved to go to spiritual retreats as she awakened in her wisdom years. She always paid attention, asked great questions, and expressed a genuine interest in awakening to her full potential. In the morning session of the last day of such a retreat. Margaret stated categorically that her number one value was family, and from her grandmotherly stories her classmates had no reason to doubt her. The teacher then asked her, “Is family your number one value, or are you the number one value of your family?” As Margaret fell silent, she looked perplexed and anxious, and for the very first time in the retreat she did not respond. At the beginning of the afternoon session, Margaret was not in her usual place. When the teacher enquired as to her whereabouts he was told, “She had to leave on a personal matter.”

“Awakening to Values, Intentions, and Destiny” was adapted from the soon-to-be-published book *Power and Grace - An Adventure in Awakened Living* by Irish author Mick Quinn. A native of Ireland, Mick has lectured to thousands nationwide and has received press attention from *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. He studied Buddhism, Christianity and the evolution of consciousness since 1991. Please visit www.mickquinn.com for his teaching schedule.

Balancing Male-Female Energies

Aspects of Ourselves

By Ken Page

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BALANCING THE MALE-FEMALE ASPECTS OF OURSELVES

Which of us hasn't dreamt of finally finding and keeping our perfect relationship? What if we are in a partnership that is confusing and always changing? How do we cope with the loss and heartache relationships can sometimes bring? What if we don't seem to be attracting any kind of intimate interactions at all? The working dynamics of good relationships are for many of us one of the greatest mysteries of life. It is a secret each of us seeks to unravel from the day we are aware there is more than one of us around. Why do interpersonal interactions -- something we are all engaged in every day, every minute, every second of our lives -- sometimes seem so challenging, complicated, confusing, difficult, and mysterious? The quality of our partnerships with others actually reflects the quality of the relationships we have with ourselves. Do we know who we are, and do we like who that is? Do we believe we are worthy and deserve unconditional love? While we may know how we would like someone to love us, do we love ourselves that way already? Do we trust and accept all parts of ourselves? The bottom line for most all of us is we simply would like to be loved and accepted for who we are, for our real selves.

MALE AND FEMALE TEMPLATES

As we change our inner definition or template of our male and female selves to a place of balance and self-acceptance, we are able to attract someone who is more reflective of our true counterpart. Even if we are balanced with our inner masculine reflection, if we do not like our own femininity, we would be unable to create a truly balanced relationship for ourselves. One aspect many people do not give much thought to is that we look to our partners to reflect aspects of ourselves back to us. For example, if we are a woman, our partner is holding a place for us so we can better understand the feminine part of ourselves. If we are a male, our partner is holding a place for us to understand the masculine part of ourselves. Although this may be the opposite way most people view their relationships, how, if we were a woman, would we be better able to understand what type of woman we were unless someone could reflect it back to us as we interact with them?

FUNCTIONING HALF COMPLETE

Many of us function as if we are only half complete. If we project the vibration of half of an individual, looking around for someone else to complete us, we attract an incomplete relationship.

Movies like Jerry Macguire perpetuate this myth with lines like YOU COMPLETE ME. RUBBISH!!!! The resulting interaction with anyone attracted in this manner will come up short of what we ideally desire. Entering into any interaction from the viewpoint we need the relationship to feel complete, results in the relationship continuing to reflect and remind us of our belief in our incompleteness. What we will have is a partnership made up of two half people, truly satisfying to neither person. When we know we are a relationship unto ourselves, complete and sufficient within ourselves, we set up a vibration that attracts someone with those same qualities and assurance. Too many times people make out long, wonderful lists of all the attributes they wish their perfect partner to have. The question to ask is, are we all those things? Do we have all those attributes? Unless we are able to reflect the type of vibrational being we choose to attract, how will we ever be seen and recognized by someone who does?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE HOLD BACK

It is absolutely impossible to experience a reality if we are not the same vibration. When we are cautious, when we hold back, when we do not show who we really are, when we think we are not sufficient, not wise enough, or not powerful enough to create the reality we truly desire, we then attract a representation of our own doubt in ourselves. Remember, the vibration we are, the vibration we are broadcasting, is the reality we receive. There are no exceptions to this rule.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE

The reason for relating to someone else is for the opportunity to share who we are. Approaching a relationship as an opportunity to share attracts individuals who reflect our belief in our own completeness. When our relationships are set up this way, we are able to interact with the other person as two complete individuals coming together to share experiences. We will both know and experience the idea of personal fulfillment.

THE RESULTS OF EXPECTATIONS AND JUDGMENTS

When we put expectations or value judgments on the outcome of our relationships, we never actually get to experience the real reason we created the particular interaction in the first place. For this reason, it is important to accept relationships for what they are. If we invalidate what we have drawn into our lives, we are really invalidating ourselves.

BALANCED RELATIONSHIPS

It is important to understand why we have drawn certain individuals into our lives. We usually have attracted others to allow ourselves the opportunity to grow and to give us more information about who we are. The idea is not to become like each other. The idea is to allow each individual to be the strongest, healthiest, most balanced individual they can possibly be. Sometimes we might forget this because we think unity is the product of conformity. Unity is the product of granting and allowing equality to uniqueness and diversity. In a balanced relationship, we do not lose our individuality -- just the opposite occurs. We each become stronger reflections for each other of all that is possible for each of us. The purpose of any relationship is to allow us to be more of who we choose to be. It is like looking into a mirror and seeing another aspect of ourselves. This does not mean our relationships will be an exact 1-1 reflection of who we each are. Rather, our relationships become a reflection of what the two of us have agreed to learn and teach each other.

The best possible relationship is a balanced sharing, without dependency. Each party in a relationship has strong, natural attributes that can assist the other in their growth. If our support is aimed at creating a space for our partner or friend to grow in their own self-support, the relationship will be a happy and flourishing one. Think of it this way. Instead of constantly doling out small pieces of bread, wouldn't it be of true, lasting benefit to teach someone how to bake their own bread? If we are in a relationship where we are giving, giving, giving, it sends out the message to our partners that we do not believe they have the ability to match or mock up their own vibrations of completeness and sufficiency.

Offer support to others as long as it does not represent the idea we are taking on responsibility for them. We cannot really be responsibility for other adults. Our attempts to do this usually leads us very quickly to examine our own issues about boundaries, because taking on another person's responsibilities brings us outside of where we prefer to be. The idea of responsibility is not to lay the blame on anyone, rather it allows us the freedom to choose what we prefer. In a balanced relationship, each of us can still do what we prefer to do. We don't have to change our lives just because someone else disapproves.

There is no reason to attempt to be anything that we are not. Doing that only brings us more of what we are not. We will only become more uncomfortable, unhappy, unhealthy, and unsuccessful, if we keep trying to be something we are not. It is vital to express who we are, be who we are, and say what we think. We should only change our lives because we choose to, and because we are becoming more completely the real us. If we know we are functioning in true personal integrity, even if others around us don't like it or want us to change, we continue to be who we are. If we are doing what we enjoy and love in life, it very quickly provides us confirmation of who we really are. The idea is always to relax, have fun and be ourselves. Remember, anyone we attract into our lives by being ourselves belongs in our lives. Being of service to ourselves and others is only possible when we are complete within our own selves. If we are not fully ourselves, then the other person is not really in a relationship with the real us anyway!

CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

Negative situations are not in our lives to show us we are stuck with them or that we are bad people. Such situations happen to offer us a mirror like reflection of what we think about ourselves, or what we feel we deserve. If we find ourselves in situations we do not really prefer, we have given ourselves a very clear opportunity to change. One way to allow ourselves a chance to find out and discover who and what we are is by seeing so many examples, and creating interactions with a number of different individuals that represent who we are not. This is a very effective method of validating our true and natural selves by the simple process of elimination: Oh, I am not like that, I am not like this, I am certainly nothing like that, and so forth. Looking back on different relationships, we might say, "That wasn't me, and that wasn't me either. This is what I really am all about."

"WRONG" RELATIONSHIPS

Why would any of us create a whole series of wrong relationships? The reason itself is basically very simple. Either we have forgotten who we are, or we are afraid to accept who we are. Who we are is actually our naturally centred selves in a state of balance and complete self-acceptance. As long as we resist being our natural, balanced selves, the real us, we will not attract harmonious, long lasting, or healthy relationships. Once we become true to ourselves, we automatically attract the right person to ourselves, even as we move through changes. If someone decides to change or leave a relationship with us, realize their energy is no longer in harmony with ours. Therefore, by understanding this even if someone leaves us nothing will really be missing. We cannot miss anything from a vibration that we are not truly a part of.

HOW DO WE SHOW WE REALLY LOVE SOMEONE?

We can really show we love somebody by accepting them for who they are and by allowing them to be just where they already are. It is very important not to put any expectation on how it must be, or regret how it was or was not. When we live in the moment and trust ourselves enough to be in each and every moment, we always attract whomever is appropriate for ourselves. The best advice ever given for relationships is to trust, let go, and be ourselves. Trust is the glue for any relationship -- the trust we feel for ourselves, as well as the trust we have with others.

AGREEMENTS

Sometimes, even when we are expressing who and what we truly are, we may attract someone we

feel has a lot to learn. Because we make all kinds of agreements to be of service, we also sometimes make agreements to hold a space for others to help them find strengths and abilities within themselves as well. We may attract others into our lives so that we can be examples of what they could also be, if they choose to be aware of it. Remember, it is always their choice. We hold a space for them by our examples. Understand that we cannot possibly be in any relationship unless the agreement is a co-creation and of a similar vibration. It is important to remember and understand whomever we attract is exactly who is supposed to be there, with us, in that moment.

CHANGE

When we come from a place of integrity and changes occur then the changes belong in our lives. Fear of change is usually the fear of losing something. If we understand everything is happening as it needs to, then we never need to fear losing anything. It is usually only the fear of the change that prevents us from changing along with our partners. By letting go of our fears, we will know that no matter how much we might change, we will attract whatever and whoever is representative, harmonious, and unified with our changes. If we allow change into our lives as we naturally grow and evolve -- instead of resisting it or pretending it isn't happening -- the vast amounts of energy we used to put into resisting change become available for our own creative purposes. It has been said the only constant thing in this world is change. As we honour the changes that occur in our lives, we will find we no longer experience others who have made the choice to live and act differently. We will interact and co-create with those who exist on the same level as we do, with similar natures and vibrations. The best way to share our wisdom and ideas is to simply be an example ourselves. The energy and vibration of who we are radiates from us, and is picked up psychically by all those who are of the same vibration. If someone in our lives changes and makes the choice to leave us, we should not look upon the relationships or ourselves as a failures. The parting of ways in a relationship is the signal that the lessons both of us have chosen to learn are completed.

"CHANGING" OUR PARTNER

If we feel we have to mould, change, or manipulate our partners, the relationship bears examination. When we force someone to do something, it is a statement that we believe we will never really get what we are after, or that the person we are with will not be able to give it to us. When we force changes in our relationships, even if certain changes occur for a while, our relationships are no longer in balance or integrity. Sooner or later the individuals who are being forced to go against their true selves will be forced to leave as the relationship is no longer a reflection of the real them. Force is a non-integrated, distorted way of taking action. Remember, everyone naturally moves at the perfect rate and speed for themselves already. There is never any positive reason to accelerate someone (by force) to look and accept things they are not ready for. Even if they would be able to hear or see some part of the lesson we are attempting to force down their throats, until they are ready, in their own time and place, they will never grasp a true understanding of the lesson we are forcing them to learn. And because of our intervention, their original lesson became distorted and is much more difficult and confusing for them to learn. Usually, once interfered with, they will have to recreate their lesson all over again in an effort to counterbalance our interference. This has happened to all of us. How many times, when we sought to help someone who didn't asked for our help and upon whom we have forced our help, did their situation get worse? At first it may seem we have set things right for them for a while. After a few weeks or months, it will become evident to us that the person is now in even a worse position than before. What has happened is that their Higher Selves are so determined for them to fully understand and learn their original lessons that they have recreated the necessary energetics, except this time the lesson is ten times or one hundred times more intense than before. Each of us will keep turning up the intensity of our creations, until our original lessons have truly been understood and completed on all four levels of our being. Someone is ready to truly gain from our assistance and wisdom when they ask, of their own free will, for our guidance and insight. In such an instance, truth and wisdom is then shared, understood, and integrated in just the right way. The other person, by the fact of their asking, is in just the right place

and state where they can truly hear, know and understand what we have to offer.

SAFETY

If we feel we need to keep ourselves safe or protect ourselves, we will end up limiting the type of relationships we can create. I have been told many times by my clients that they are not currently in a relationship because it does not feel safe for them. Two things might be the cause of this. If we feel we need safety, we may somehow feel we are in a relationship that will not allow us to be our real selves. On the other hand, if we are in a relationship that is not satisfying, but we stay in it because we feel safe, maybe we are not safe with the idea of taking full responsibility for who and what we are, and who and what we could be. As soon as we stop resisting our natural selves, our reality will automatically change to allow loving and supportive relationships to come into our lives. In some cases, some clients report they need safety to avoid being in a position where they could be abandoned or vulnerable. Some of us would rather be alone than express our true inner needs. If we are in a relationship where we do not feel safe or comfortable expressing our deepest inner needs, we are alone anyway. We are simply alone together.

VULNERABILITY

In creating relationships that work with love and joy, it is important to express our vulnerability. Vulnerability has earned somewhat of a bad reputation in our society. Vulnerability really means we are open to all that we are. Vulnerability is a strength, not a weakness. Vulnerability is not exposure, it is full and total trust. Vulnerability does not mean being open to everyone and everything so they can take pot shots at us. Vulnerability means being open and available to our true, preferred selves, for when we open up to ourselves, we are open and available to the infinite Source of all creation. Connecting to our infinite creation will bring us peace, strength, and power, and it makes our lives real, joyous, magical, and happy. Strangely enough, many times we might only feel we are in control, when we are expending or exerting an effort. Vulnerability allows us to be in control effortlessly. Why would we need to expend effort to be in control of something that we already are?

COMPLETE TRUST

Trust really boils down to our own ability to trust ourselves. Complete trust occurs when we have an absolute knowingness we deserve to exist. Do we have to do something special in order to deserve to exist? No. We simply have to be. Creation has already decreed we deserve to exist. Can we give ourselves the same acknowledgment, respect, and love? We have a Divine right to exist in the manner we choose, simply because we prefer it! There is no other reason needed.

COMMUNICATION

Most of the problems that occur in relationships are caused by what is not being said, rather than what is said. Non communication, or withheld communication, is simply another way many of us hold back the real us from our partner. The problem with unspoken communication is more complex than might first be perceived. Saying "everything is all right," when we are thinking "drop dead," won't fool the other person for very long. Our real heart's truth and our honest feelings will always be psychically picked up by the other person on some level. Count on it! This is an ability we all have. It is the same sense that tells us when there has been a big fight or disagreement as we step into a strangely quiet and tense room. It is the same sense that we use psychically to energetically scan large groups of strangers at a party, as we decide who would be interesting to spend an evening getting to know. Direct unspoken communication is often used by intent by an acquaintance of mine who is well versed in martial arts. He uses it to defeat very powerful and well known karate masters. Gifted in his own right, this particular gentleman is very aware of the power of unspoken communication and uses it to his advantage. As he takes his preliminary bows before his match begins, he smiles on the outside while mentally projecting extreme violence towards his opponent. His opponent energetically and mentally picks up these projected waves of discordant

energy. These waves temporarily short out his opponents' power centres, making it almost impossible for them to defend themselves as the bout begins. Every relationship, in order to grow and flourish, requires open and honest communication coming from a point of inner truth and balance. Honest communication enables the other person to truly relate and to have a relationship with who we actually are. Open, clear, conscious communication enables the other person to observe and act with trust, for they know where they stand. By being clear and direct, they won't be receiving one message from us verbally and another mismatched or opposing one psychically. It is time to share what is in our hearts with truth, trust, honest, and clarity.

SUMMARY

True creative relationships are expressed and experienced from a state of relaxed trust and creative joy. Relationships are simply learning how to play with each other, how to love and accept ourselves unconditionally, and how to trust who and what we are. When we share ourselves in a relationship, we will feel our own sense of completeness, and we will realize we are never alone. In creative relationships, it is very important to remember how to play and balance our energy, both as an adult and as a child. To have a successful relationship, we must awaken the divine young child inside ourselves first. A young child is full of curiosity and knows the universe is beautiful and full of surprises. A young child is naturally loving and trusts in a positive way. A young child is naturally truthful and in integrity. A young child is more occupied with being natural, not normal. A young child lets their imagination soar, unlimited in the creation of a magical and miraculous world. Always, always seek out a good playmate for your primary relationships, and especially someone who knows how to play fair. Allow yourselves to remember the world is magical, and allow that magic and enchantment back into your life. Be who you are, and do the things you love to do as often as you can! That is really the only way to really live our lives.

Become What you Want to Attract

By Aaron M. Potts

One of the hardest things for people to swallow when they think about improving their lives is that they are the cause for where their life is at this moment in time.

We tend to consider our lives as the culmination of years and years worth of thoughts, emotions, and experiences, which is true. However, when looking back on our lives in those terms, we normally miss the fact that we were responsible for every single one of the moments in our life, up to and including this very moment.

It may seem like there have been people, circumstances, and events in our lives that were out of our control, but that is simply not the case. When you embrace the truth about the Law of Attraction, you must embrace the ENTIRE truth. The entire truth is that we attract all things into our lives – the good, as well as the bad.

Each person will have their own version of how this concept has manifested in their lives, but here are 3 common examples to illustrate the point.

*** Relationships**

This is probably the most common area where people attract exactly what they are looking for, but they are also very often blind to the fact that they have done so.

It is hard to swallow if you are in an abusive relationship that you somehow wanted to be in that relationship. It is difficult to believe that if your significant other was unfaithful that you somehow played a part in making that happen. It is hard to grasp the fact that you can't find "the right person" because on some level you either don't really want to, or – most commonly – you don't really even know who that person would be.

*** Career**

Most people are either participating in a career that they don't enjoy, or they are not getting everything that they want out of their career. It could be a matter of not liking your job, not making enough money, or simply not enjoying your co-workers. Whatever your individual issue is with your career, the fact of the matter is that on some level you are holding onto that situation. You are attracting the very things that you don't want out of your professional life.

*** Health**

This issue is so far out in the open for all to see, yet people routinely walk right past it without realizing the truth.

If you are unhealthy or overweight, it is because you somehow believe that you are SUPPOSED to be unhealthy or overweight. On an energetic level you are sending out the vibration that you are sick, or that you weigh too much, or that you are weak. It may be because you believe that you don't deserve to live a long and healthy life. It may be that your self-esteem isn't where it should be – even if you think on the surface that it is, which is often the case.

Each of these instances – relationships, career, and health - have their own solutions as far as how to stop attracting what you don't want. However, the bottom line is that you have to first realize that you ARE attracting what you don't want, and that is a hard pill to swallow.

Do some soul-searching about the things in your life that are not where you want them to be, and ask yourself some hard questions, while demanding some 100% honest answers:

Do you believe that – despite your bravado – that you might not be worthy of the “perfect mate”?

Do you think that even though you have a great work ethic, that you really aren’t smart or talented enough to have a high paying job, or to have the job of your dreams?

Do you honestly believe that you resonate a presence of perfect health, vitality, confidence, and self-esteem?

These questions are just examples, and you should give some thought to similar situations in your own life. Ask yourself if you are attracting the life that you desire, or if you are thinking one thing, but feeling something else entirely.

The bottom line truth of the matter is that we attract our entire lives, even the things about our lives that we do not like. If you want to stop attracting certain things into your life, then you need to Become what you want to Attract.

If you want a long-term, successful relationship full of compassion, love, and kindness, then find ways to express those same emotions to others – even to people who you have no interest in developing a relationship with.

If you desire a high-paying “dream job” then start acting like an employee who deserves that type of job. Don’t just become a good worker – become a good thinker and a good dreamer.

If your life is lacking in the health and fitness arena, then start exercising and eating right, and start thinking positive, grateful, and caring thoughts every single day. Your body and your mind will transform automatically as a result.

Stop complaining about what your life is NOT. Become the person who deserves and resonates with the kind of life that you desire, and that life will be presented to you.

Guaranteed.

About the Author

Aaron Potts offers free self empowerment teachings at <http://www.todayisthatday.com/blog/> and is the author of eBooks that teach about positive thinking, the Law of Attraction, and weight loss. Get his free newsletter or check out his books at <http://www.todayisthatday.com>

Becoming Free - A Reminder of the Principles of Life

By Michael J Roads

1: Life does not work through indecision.

Indecision promotes blocks, confusion and stress.

Make a decision and allow life to find movement through you.

Trust yourself.

2: The 3 C's of life are Courage, Capacity and Commitment.

It takes Courage and a commitment to make many of life's decisions, and capacity to follow them through.

The 3 C's of a successful relationship are Caring, Consideration and Communication.

Communication opens the door between us, consideration allows us to pass through it and our ability to care for each other unites us.

3: Truth is not truth out of timing- yet it remains truth.

We are the timing to recognize truth.

4: The mind recoils from the unknown, so we seek to make everything known, and, thus sage.

Imagination is the key to the unknown- positive, uplifting imagination.

5: For as long as we search for Our God Self, we deny that we are it.

Loving your self reveals your truth.

6: Becoming free is not changing yourself into someone you think you should be.

Becoming free is falling in love with who you are - right now.

7: Imagine a room of pitch dark and a room of bright light connected by a door.

When you open the door what happens?

Light floods into the dark room, illuminating it. Live accordingly, think thoughts of light.

8: F.E.A.R- False Evidence Appearing Real

9: Anything of the past that is unresolved is unresolved now.

Living NOW resolves the past.

10: Life flows from the inside out, never the reverse.

Understand this and you cease to be a victim.

11: Love responds - fear reacts.

Love connects - fear separates.

Love uplifts - fear deflates.

Love creates - fear destroys.

12: There is no such thing as a mistake - only experience.

There is no such thing as failure - only people's condemnation.

There is no such thing as success - only people's approval.

Let life live through you.

13: Do not get caught up in modifying your life, allow life to change YOU.

Modification is a superficial exterior veneer, change is an inner shift in consciousness.

14: Pain is a measure of your resistance to change.

15: Decide whether you want to be an onlooker of life or a participant.
This is the birthplace of choice.

16: You hear with your ears - but you listen with your mind.
You look with your eyes - but you see from the heart.

17: Consciousness is not contained in your body - you are the consciousness that contains the body.
Consciousness draws to itself form through which to express.

18: Your mind cannot exist in the moment.
You cannot think your way into the moment, you can only think your way out of it.
This indicates that your mind/intellect cannot set you free.
Only your consciousness is aware of NOW.
True freedom is a state of consciousness.

19: We each live in our own universe, a universe of our making.
It is designed to support our beliefs and our focus.
Our thoughts are our focus, so observe your thoughts, focus on your blessings, and trust.
This is how you become a participant.

20: Practise seeing all life around you as an aspect of yourself.
In this way you shatter the illusion of separation.

21: Your mind does now know the difference between what you do want or what you don't want, it only knows what you focus on. Many people focus on what they don't have, what they are incapable of doing and their sicknesses.

22: If you focus on what you do have, it increases.
If you focus on what you don't have, you will have even less.
If you focus on your capabilities, they grow, if you focus on your health, it improves.

23: Your mind does not know the difference between a powerfully imagined reality and a physical happening reality. Why? Because there is no difference.

24: You only have a problem if you believe you have a problem.

25: Live these principles and you will be practising reality.
Practise reality until you overcome the illusion.
It is only an illusion that you are not free, now!

About the Author

Michael J. Roads is an author, speaker and the founder of The Homeland Foundation, an intentional community. His latest book is *Getting There*, printed by SilverRoads Publishing. Visit his website. www.michaelroads.com

Seven Behaviors for Creating the Life You Want

By Ron Finklestein

The key to success lies in how well you create an "attitude of success." My studies have shown that combined with the correct attitude, there are seven behaviors that all successful people exhibit.

Selfishness

When I talk about successful people being selfish, I am not referring to the childish behavior where everything is "mine, mine, mine." I am referring to a mature selfishness that allows them to make decisions based on the outcomes they want to experience. Being selfish asks, How do I protect my time, energy, and money so I am only spending them on those things that will take me closer to my goals? Until you can define the type of life you want to create, it is very hard to be selfish. You can define this life through the creation of a personal vision and mission statements. After your personal vision and mission statements are complete you can create well-defined goals. After your goals are defined you can go through a barrier-busting process that will help you understand how to achieve these goals. When you complete this step, you can start being selfish. You have your personal goals defined, you know the kind of life you want, and you are ready to seek out and meet the people who can take you there.

Focus

It is very hard to be focused if you don't know where you are going. The dictionary defines focus as "close or narrow attention; concentration." Without a clear perspective you cannot focus on the desired outcome. It is too easy to become distracted, unorganized, and inconsistent. When you understand what it is you are to be selfish about, you generate a clear focus-a sense of purpose.

Discipline

Discipline is controlled behavior resulting from training and self-control. You are selfish and focused, and you now have a new weapon in your arsenal: discipline. Your mind is made up. You have decided to achieve your goals.

Being disciplined means you will not abandon your goals. Since you are creating the life you want, discipline is another tool of your success. Discipline has taught you that life is not smooth and that there are rough spots. Experience has taught you that by being disciplined, you can get through the tough spots. Your eye is on the target, and you have the discipline of a laser-guided missile; you seek out your objectives, and your focus never falters.

Persistence

Persistence can be defined as the continuance of an effect after the cause is removed. The defining moment that caused you to create your ideal life is behind you. Your goals are clear; you are focused, disciplined, and selfish. You encounter unplanned obstacles. Your persistence allows you to see these obstacles not as problems, but as opportunities. After all, if it was easy, anyone could accomplish what you are accomplishing. But not everyone is on the field of battle with you. They see obstacles and stop. You see obstacles and see opportunities. You keep your eyes clearly fixed on your objectives; you try different things to overcome these obstacles. You know where you are going. You know you can't be stopped. You know that your persistence is what drives you forward. You will find a way around any obstacle.

Ownership

Ownership is the state of being an owner. It is taking the legal right to the possession of a thing. These are your dreams, your goals, and your life; if you do not take ownership for achieving your dreams, who will? As Jesse Livermore said, "There are only two emotions in the market-hope and fear. The problem is, you hope when you should fear, and you fear when you should hope." But not you. Your fear is motivation to move you forward because you learned that when you take action,

you get results. You always hope for the best and plan for the worst. You are ready for what life throws at you. You have to be. Taking ownership is about change-making change to move forward, changing behaviors that are not working, possibly changing your friends who don't understand, dealing with the world as it is and not as you want it to be.

You own the outcome because you are clear where you want to go, and you take ownership for it. With ownership you know that if you are not getting your desired results, you can take action and change the outcome. Ownership is so very empowering. You know that if you do not have the skills, you can learn or hire someone to teach you.

Orientation toward Results

Results mean to end in a particular way. You defined your goals-the outcome you want to achieve. You defined how you want things to end, and because you took ownership, you now have the power to create your desired outcomes. You can create the results. When you don't get the results you want, you fall back on persistence, ownership, focus, and discipline and know that you have the skills, the drive, the desire, the knowledge, and the road map that will take you where you want to go. Results are simply a way of measuring your success. You either get the job done, or you don't. If you don't, because of your ownership, you go back and try something different. No excuses. No remorse. Only results. You understand, as Yoda once said, that "there is no trying, only doing."

Focus on People

Every successful person understands that his success comes with and through other people. A successful person will recognize these individuals and appreciate them for their contribution to the results. He will also assume complete responsibility for things not working. He must-there is no other course of action when you are the owner and take ownership.

About the Author

Ron Finklestein, President of AKRIS, LLC, is a small business success expert, business coach, consultant, speaker, author, and trainer. Learn more about Ron's book, *Celebrating Success!* and the free gift valued \$149 available with book purchase at <http://www.aboutbusinesssuccess.com>

Being Fully Human

By Amoráh Ross

The Final Doorway to Divine Awareness

What!????? As you read the title to this article, I can imagine that some of you are sharply sucking in air, feeling a kick in your solar plexus and/or feeling a slightly violent resistance to the idea that being fully human could possibly help you achieve the ultimate level of Divine Awareness. Yet every fiber of my being is crying out that 'being fully human' is indeed the "final frontier" to be explored on our current spiritual journey. (This idea recently floated to the top of my awareness while planning the presentation schedule for the upcoming Oneness Consciousness Conference. My guidance was quite specific about the fact that the speaking would be done in shorter segments with sound, music and body movement added at the end of each segment to help people fully integrate the information just received.)

My Body, My Self Most paths of awareness teach that you must "tame" your human emotions in order to be "spiritual;" That you must always find a positive aspect to situations; that you must NOT let your emotions get in the way; that you must not speak something that could be perceived as judgmental. As a first step in practicing heightened awareness, I found value in noticing my emotions enough to set them aside in searching for spiritual solutions to my earthly challenges.

Now, however, after years of seeking, I've found the true value of my human experience: that in order to be Spirit having a human experience, I MUST learn how to UTILIZE my emotions as key signposts for my life instead of suppressing, "rising above" or denying them. One element that needs to be in place for this to happen is for me to fully inhabit my body, head to toe, so that I can be fully engaged enough on the physical plane to FEEL my emotions and their impact on my body, mind and soul.

The question that keeps coming forward is, as spiritual pioneers, how can we make friends with that most human (and sometimes scary) part of us - our emotions?

A Resource for Context Years ago I read "Conversations with God, Book 3" by Neal Donald Walsch. I book marked the pages on which he explored the purpose of emotions for our human experience and often I've used it as a resource in working with my clients in helping them reframe situations based on their emotional reaction to them.

Now these concepts come back to me in a new light - that of partnering with my body for increasing my levels of awareness as well as for health and well-being. I'm no longer willing to suppress, ignore or "rise above" my emotions; I want to learn what doorways these human feelings can unlock on my personal roadmap to greater awareness.

In "Conversations with God, Book 3 (Pages 24- 27)," here is how God explained what was referred to as "the five natural emotions":

"GRIEF is that part of you which allows you to say goodbye when you don't want to say goodbye; to express - push out, propel - the sadness within you at the experience of any loss."

"ANGER is the tool you have which allows you to say, 'No, thank you.'"

"ENVY is the emotion that makes you want to do [something] again; to try harder; to continue striving until you succeed."

"The purpose of natural FEAR is to build in a bit of caution. Caution is a tool that helps keep the body alive. It is an outgrowth of love. Love of Self."

"LOVE, when it is allowed to be expressed and received - normally and naturally, without limitation or condition, inhibition or embarrassment, does not require anything more. For the joy of love expressed and received in this way is sufficient unto itself."

As Signposts, Emotions Can Be Very Useful Tools Indeed Knowing these "natural" purposes of emotion, I then can feel my emotions (or experience them coming at me from another person) with the intention of recognizing what that emotion is trying to signal to me. Is there a resistance to sadness or saying goodbye? Has a personal boundary been breached? Is there an unfulfilled desire to reach higher? Is Self being threatened in some way? Is an insufficiency of heart-felt connection being spotlighted? Instead of getting "hooked" into drama by emotions, these signposts help me see a much broader spectrum of the energies at work and what is being asked of me in the face of those energies so that I can continue to grow.

The Doorway to Freedom Responding to emotions in this way, there is a doorway to Center, where the Silent Witness can show the bigger picture and where the pathway is more clearly marked on anyone's personal roadmap. There is also access to greater levels of compassion as well as heightened awareness; unencumbered by the energies of suppression, the 'natural emotions' can emerge once more - the doorway to Divine Consciousness swings wide.

Making the Invisible Visible As each human learns to make friends with all emotions, embracing and honoring being fully human, the New Earth is being birthed. That New Earth will be fully formed as soon as we learn how to express our emotions in their 'natural' forms. With that tool comes not only freedom of being, but also joy, harmony and Oneness - heaven on earth is achieved.

"Make visible what, without you, might perhaps never have been seen."
~ Robert Bresson

I invite you to join me in making the invisible (our 'natural emotions') visible - each of our experiences adds to the richer tapestry of what it means to be a human being. We co-create, with ease and grace, the perfect balance of our Divine Feminine with our Divine Masculine - and we each contribute equally along the way by sharing our stories with one another in love and compassion. © 2005 Amoráh Ross, All Rights Reserved

About The Author

Amoráh Ross is an intuitive life coach, spiritual midwife, workshop leader, and Oneness Conference organizer; she is recognized for her keen sense of 'knowing' as an intuitive and her capacity to inspire her clients to fully develop and express their own unique gifts. She has the ability to tell the 'hard truth' with tact and directness, and her empathy, humor and wisdom help you find the knowledge you're searching for within a warm cloak of nurturance. She can be reached by phone at (425) 788-4303 in Washington State, by email at amorah@amorah.com, or through her website at www.amorah.com. Meet Amoráh at the Oneness Conference in Sedona AZ June 10-12, 2005 – details at www.UnityConsciousnessConference.com.

Being Inspired or In-Spirit In Your Life and Work

By Cheryl Vallejos

Many of us claim to have a spiritual path and for some that consists of going to a place of worship once a week. For others it might be reading spiritual literature and starting the day with an affirmation, meditation or inspiring quote. Still others practice various rituals that might occur daily or on specific religious holidays.

Yet, how often do you integrate what inspires you and what you consider to be in spirit or spiritual into your daily life? If you're like most people, you probably answered, "not very often." It seems that most of us isolate our spiritual beliefs and spiritual practices from the rest of our life and our work. Can you even imagine how your life and work would be different, how our world would be different if Spirit was part of everything we did?

What does it mean to be "Inspired" in your work and your life? Initially, each of us has to define what 'Inspired or in-spirit' means to us. For some it means adhering to ancient religious customs and beliefs, while for others spirituality is a way of being, a belief that we are truly spiritual beings living in a human form. That encompasses the belief that we are more than just physical, but that we exist on other energy levels. Each religious organization has further definitions as to what that means specifically.

Next, in order to be inspired or in spirit into your life, you would bring some of the energy you experience when you practice your particular path into everything you do. Here are some suggestions as to what actions you can take and what benefits you will derive. Feel free to come up with your own ideas and try them out to see if they make a difference in your work, your life and the life of everyone around you.

1. Focus on your inner being - We are so outer focused in our work and our lives that we often forget we each have a rich inner life. You know that world-the one that provides you with crazy dreams, wild fantasies and deep thoughts. Find whatever way works best for you to take 5 minutes every hour to quiet your mind and focus inward. You will bring a greater sense of peace and focus to all you do.
2. Stay in the moment - We tend to spend a lot of time thinking about the past and the future, but the truth is that the present is the only real time. Remembering to gently nudge your thoughts back to the here and now whenever you find your mind wandering will give you a much better appreciation of what you are experiencing in each moment. Affirmations, which are statements of truth expressed in the present tense, are a practical device to bring you back to the NOW. For a great affirmation program go to www.energyofthemind.com/products.htm
3. Listen to your inner guidance - We all have hits of intuition or gut feelings from time to time. However, that inner voice gets stronger the more you listen to it and acknowledge it. Wouldn't it be great to tap into it for inspiration, creativity and getting through tough challenges? It's like having your own inner search engine that taps into the inline Internet rather than the online one. Since we are all connected spiritually, our inner resources are unlimited.
4. Tune into the peaceful center - We each have a deep core of peace within, beneath the outer chaos of our professional and personal lives. It is a place where we exist as human beings rather than human doings. In that quiet pool is the essence of who we truly are, where we get a glimpse of our true nature. Tap into that pool when life gets crazy by quieting the mind in whatever way works best for you, and come out refreshed.

5. Develop a regular practice or tool - You might be more comfortable writing in a journal than meditating, but having some practice or tool you can use to connect with the deeper, quieter part of you is helpful. Suppose you are stressed during your work day and have to deal with a seeming insurmountable problem or make a huge decision. Find someplace quiet, pull out your journal and write until a solution surfaces. The more you practice, the easier it will get and you will always be amazed at what wisdom emerges from your unconscious mind.

6. Get clear on your values - Many of us write out our goals, our values, our purpose or our personal and business missions, and then put the lists away. Take these lists-or if you haven't compiled them, do so-and put them where you can look at them every day. Living from your values and your purpose in your work and your life is one of the best ways to bring who you truly are and what you stand for into everything you do.

I hope you have been inspired by these ideas and are ready to make TODAY the day you bring Spirit into your work and your life for a richer, more rewarding experience in everything you do!

Getting support If you would like assistance and direction in living a more inspired or spiritual life, you might benefit from the support and guidance of a professional coach. To find out how Cheryl can help you feel more inspired and bring spirit into your work and your life, contact Cheryl@PrimeLeaders.com

If you are interested in products that will help you get more inspired and get better and more results, please check out the affirmations at: <http://www.energyofthemind.com/products.html> Affirmations will help you spend more time accomplishing your goals instead of more time handling challenges and problems. You'll discover more peace of mind, joy in your life and continued success.

About the Author

Cheryl Vallejos is a Certified Professional Business Coach, Consultant, Speaker, and Author of over 11 books and audio series. Learn more from Cheryl by registering to receive her monthly ezine, A Joyous Journey, providing tips to increase your profits, improve your business, and help create life balance. You'll also receive a complimentary Leadership Guide when you register at http://www.endorsesuccess.com/get_37page_guide.html

Should You Develop Your Inner Guidance?

By Wendy Kay

Each and every person has Inner Guidance skills that vary in terms of intensity and strength. The strength of your abilities will depend on what you are meant to accomplish during your lifetime. If you are meant to be a healer, then you will probably have a strong healing ability. If you are meant to help the police resolve kidnapping or murder cases, then you will probably have the ability to see visions clearly or to intuitively "know" things. If you are meant to give proof to people about the existence of life after death, then you will be able to communicate with loved ones that have passed on. Each person is unique in his or her gifts.

The most typical types of Inner Guidance are:

- * Clairvoyance (the ability to see things that are not seen with the physical eyes)
- * Clairaudience (the ability to hear things that are not heard with the physical ears)
- * Clairsentience (the ability to pick up the feelings of those around you)and
- * Intuition (your "gut" feeling that tells you if something is true or false or right or wrong)

There are other types of Inner Guidance such as telepathy (hearing people's thoughts) and telekinesis (moving things using the mind) to name two, but they are not seen as frequently in people.

You will know when it is time for you to develop your Inner Guidance gifts.

Some of you will have a very strong urge or desire to develop your abilities. There is nothing in particular that would push you in that direction except for what your heart is telling you. A small percentage of you will have life altering experiences (accidents, coming back to life after being clinically dead), which activate your abilities. Some of you will experience unusual events such as:

- * Hearing someone's voice when there is nobody else around you
- * Seeing people or beings made from light and energy around you
- * Seeing energy which could be in various forms (a bird flying across the room or a shape floating in the air)
- * Seeing flashes of light or
- * Having an out-of-body experience.

These experiences will occur so frequently that you will want to go searching for answers and understanding. (You should also rule out any physical reasons for these events happening.) Prior to having these events happen, you may have less obvious experiences such as:

- * Seeing things out of the corner of your eye
- * Sensing someone or something around you when physically you are alone
- * Picking up the feelings of another person
- * Knowing when someone is going to phone you or when something is wrong
- * Having a dream or vision that comes true
- * Hearing someone's thoughts
- * Changing your eating habits to a more vegetarian diet (helps raise the vibration)
- * Having a heightened sensitivity to noise, lights and crowds.

If you are meant to develop your abilities in this lifetime, you will most likely have a general

interest or curiosity in the metaphysical realm of existence or Spirit World. You will probably start reading books on various metaphysical topics (crystals, reincarnation, Atlantis, healing, card reading, numerology, meditation, out-of-body experiences, dowsing, Edgar Cayce, auras). You might also choose to investigate various philosophies or religions such as Buddhism or Wicca. Most people will find they have an interest in receiving readings.

Exploring the Spirit World is fascinating and it can also be a bit scary. If fear is preventing you from venturing into new avenues of thought, remember one very important promise from a Higher Power Filled with Light and Love that is, "you never get more than you can handle." This is important to understand.

Another important concept that you need to understand is that the events that happen to you which are of a psychic nature do not occur by accident. You do not control them. Your Spirit Guides or a Higher Power Filled with Light and Love controls these events. With this in mind, you can relax and enjoy the adventure knowing that nothing is going to happen to you that you can't handle. You can't make these events happen and you can't stop them from happening if it is not meant to be. All events that happen to you are meant to get you to the next step on your life path (this is true not only for psychic development but for your life path in general).

You may not need to experience any of these psychic events during your lifetime. The path of Inner Guidance development is not meant for everyone although we all have some ability. If you are not meant to develop your abilities in this lifetime, you won't have the urge to pursue a path of this nature and that's perfectly acceptable. Your life path will be filled with other experiences that you need to have in order to fulfill your destiny.

Each person's path is unique and should be respected and not compared to anyone else. However, if you are meant to develop your abilities, then it will happen when it is time. For some of you, development of your Inner Guidance may start early in life. For others, it won't happen until much later. Again, it depends on what you have to accomplish during your lifetime.

If you are meant to develop your abilities, then you will be led to the means that will accomplish this goal whether it is through a correspondence course, a book or teacher. Development of your abilities can easily be a lifelong undertaking.

Wendy Kay, has been studying and researching the spiritual realm for over 20 years. In 1997 she founded her web site [oralin.com](http://www.oralin.com) which specializes in providing information for those who are just starting to explore the Spirit World or who want to expand their awareness of the universe. Her site provides over 45 psychic readings by tested and ethical Advisors and she also provides courses designed to give you a solid foundation for safely developing your psychic abilities and your intuition. Wendy Kay is a Metaphysical Teacher and Psychic and a long-term student of the Spirit World. For more information, see <http://www.oralin.com>

Beginning the Journey

By Joel Serrano

Yearning for more than what we have, we set out on journeys. It can be a journey for money, for love, or for adventure. The journey I want to speak about here, is the journey we must all make if we want the mind, body, and soul to be one. This journey lasts from one night of pure emotions to a lifetime of pure confusion. But if we are to be ourselves, we must take the journey. What happens along the way of your journey, is for you to decide. When you have set the course to go on your journey, let it begin with understanding. We must understand a few basic things.

One: Humans are not all alike, one will hate you and the other will love you. The difference in moods is the reason why humans are who they are. The knowledge that everyone is different in some way, will lead you to one giant leap on your journey.

Two: Your cravings are the reason the journey keeps lagging behind. Do not crave, and you will get. Simple as that. If you crave, then the thoughts in your mind are interrupted, and the flow of your mind, body, and soul is broken. Cravings of any kind lead you to believe that you need something to make you feel better, to make you better. The craving inside us all is what makes us lose touch with our inner being. Sometimes, we cannot stop our cravings from appearing, but it is up to us to stop them and to nurture that line of spirituality that makes us ourselves.

Three: Everything is a surprise. People and cravings can be a surprise that cannot be stopped at certain times. We must deal with the fact that surprises are always around the corner, waiting to turn right in your face. We have to deal with these surprises by taking the shock of it and turning it to something we know. Surprises will abound on your journey, some of them good, some of them bad, but all of them worth it.

There are a lot of things about your journey to understand, but the three above are what we need to focus on. Starting the journey with these understandings will make it more worthwhile and more meaningful to you, as a person. The journey begins on a grassy knoll. The bumps will be there, though, but an understanding will make the journey all the more exciting into what you can be and have always been.

The length of this journey varies from person to person. You cannot just hop on a plane and hope that the destination is fun without giving yourself time to plan. You have to believe enough in yourself to let the journey expand itself. It can be one night or a lifetime, but the payoff, the fact that you have found your true self, is priceless.

Journeys in the spiritual sense are, of course, about seeing yourself and what makes you believe in yourself. The journeys do not have to be to the ancient pyramids of Egypt, or to Machu Pichu, or even to your local church.

Since the journey begins in your mind, then begin where your mind takes you, be it at home or work. A spiritual journey is an adventure no matter where you go, but where it ends is what makes it special.

Good luck in all your journeys.

About The Author

Joel Serrano is still on his journey of finding his spiritual-self. As founder of Your Free, a non-profit spiritual organization for the enlightenment of all, he can be contacted at: ajaloko@webtv.net His website is <http://community.webtv.net/ajaloko/YourFree> Let's all start our journey

On Being Aware

From the Wisdom Of Insecurity (p69-75)

By Alan Watts

The question "What shall we do about it?" is only asked by those who do not understand the problem. If a problem can be solved at all, to understand it and to know what to do about it are the same thing. On the other hand, doing something about a problem which you do not understand is like trying to clear away darkness by thrusting it aside with your hands. When light is brought, the darkness vanishes at once.

This applies particularly to the problem now before us. How are we to heal the split between "I" and "me", the brain and the body, man and nature, and bring all the vicious circles which it produces to an end? How are we to experience life as something other than a honey trap in which we are the struggling flies? How are we to find security and peace of mind in a world whose very nature is insecurity, impermanence, and unceasing change? All these questions demand a method and a course of action. At the same time, all of them show that the problem has not been understood. We do not need action yet. We need more light.

Light, here, means awareness to be aware of life, of experience as it is at this moment, without any judgement or ideas about it. In other words, you have to see and feel what you are experiencing as it is. And not as it is named. This very simple "opening of the eyes" brings about the most extraordinary transformation of understanding and living, and shows that many of our most baffling problems are pure illusion. This may sound like an over-simplification because most people imagine themselves to be fully enough aware of the present already, but we shall see that this is far from true.

Because awareness is a view of reality free from ideas and judgements, it is clearly impossible to define and write down what it reveals. Anything which can be described is an idea, and I cannot make a positive statement about something-the real world-which is not an idea. I shall therefore have to be content with talking about the false impressions which awareness removes, rather than the truth which it reveals. The latter can only be symbolized with words which mean little or nothing to those without a direct understanding of the truth in question.

What is true and positive is too real and too living to be described, and to try describe it is like putting red paint on a red rose. Therefore most of what follows will have to have a rather negative quality. The truth is revealed by removing things that stand in its light, an art not unlike sculpting, in which the artist creates, not by building, but by hacking away.

We saw the question about finding security and peace of mind in an impermanent world showed that the problem had not been understood. Before going any further, it must be clear that the kind of security we are talking about is primarily spiritual and psychological. To exist at all, human beings must have a minimum livelihood in terms of food, drink, and clothing-with the understanding, however, that it cannot last indefinitely. But if the assurance of a minimum lively hood for sixty years would even begin to satisfy the heart of man, human problems would amount to very little. Indeed, the very reason why we do not have this assurance is that we want so much more than the minimum necessities. It must be obvious, from the start, that there is a contradiction in wanting to be perfectly secure in a universe whose very nature is commentaries and fluidity. But the contradiction lies a little deeper than the mere conflict between the desire for security and the fact of change. If I want to be secure, that is, protected from the flux of life, I am wanting to be separate from life. Yet it is this very sense of separation which makes me feel insecure. To be secure means to isolate and fortify the "I", but it is just the feeling of being an isolated "I" which makes me feel lonely and afraid. In other words, the more security I can get, the more I shall want.

To put it still more plainly: the desire for security and the feeling of insecurity are the same thing. To hold your breath is to lose your breath. A society based on the quest for security is nothing but a breath-retention contest in which everyone is as taut as a drum and as purple as a beet.

We look for this security by fortifying and enclosing ourselves in innumerable ways. We want the protection of being "exclusive" and "special," seeking to belong to the safest church, the best nation, the highest class, the right set, and the "nice" people. These defences lead to divisions between us, and so to more insecurity demanding more defences. Of course it is all done in the sincere belief that we are trying to do the right things and live in the best way; but this, too, is a contradiction.

I can only think seriously of trying to live up to an ideal, to improve myself, if I am split in two pieces. There must be a good "I" who is going to improve the bad "me." "I," who has let has the best intentions, will go to work on wayward "me," and the tussle between the two will very much stress the difference between them. Consequently "I" will feel more separate than ever, and so merely increase the lonely and cut-off feelings which make "me" behave so badly.

We have hardly begun to consider this problem unless it is clear that the craving for security is itself a pain and a contradiction, and that the more we pursue it, the more painful it becomes. This is true in whatever form of security may be conceived. You want to be happy, to forget yourself, and yet the more you remember the self you want to forget. You want to escape from pain, but the more you struggle to escape, the more you inflame the agony. You are afraid and want to be brave, but the effort to be brave is fear trying to run away from itself. You want peace of mind, but the attempt to pacify it is like trying to calm the waves with a flat-iron.

We are all familiar with this kind of vicious circle in the form of worry. We know that worrying is futile, but we go on doing it because calling it futile does not stop it. We worry because we feel unsafe, and want to be safe. Yet it is perfectly useless to say that we should not want to be to be safe. Calling a desire bad names doesn't get rid of it. What we have to discover is that when we imagine that we have found it, we don't like it. In other words, if we can really understand what we are looking for-what safety is isolation, and what we do to ourselves when we look for it-we shall see that we do not want it at all. No one has to tell you that that you should not hold your breath for ten minutes. You know that you can't do it, and that the attempt is most uncomfortable.

The principle thing is to understand that there is no safety or insecurity. One of the worst vicious circles is the problem of the alcoholic. In very many cases he knows quite clearly that he is destroying himself, that, for him, liquor is poison, that he actually hates being drunk, and even dislikes the taste of liquor. Yet he drinks. For, dislike it as he may, the experience of not drinking is worse. It gives him the "horrors," for he stands face to face with the unveiled, basic insecurity of the world.

Herein lies the crux of the matter. To stand face with insecurity is still not to understand it. To understand it, you must not face it but be it. It is like the Persian story of the sage who came close the door of Heaven and knocked. From within the voice of God asked, "Who is there" and the sage answered, "It is I." "In this House," replied the voice, "there is no room for thee and me." So the sage went away, and spent many years pondering over this answer in deep meditation. Returning a second time, the voice asked the same question, and again the sage answered, "It is I." The door remained closed. After some years he returned for the third time, and, at his knocking, the voice once more demanded, "Who is there?" And the sage cried, "It is thyself!" The door was opened.

To understand that there is no security is far more than to agree with the theory that all things change, more even than to observe the transitoriness of life. The notion of security is based is based

on the feeling that there is something within us which is permanent, something which endures through all the days and changes of life. We are struggling to make sure that of the permanence, continuity, and the safety of this enduring core, this centre and the soul of our being which we call "I." For this we think to be the real man-thinker of our thoughts, the feeler of our feelings, and the knower of our knowledge. We do not actually understand that there is no security until we realise that this "I" does not exist.

Understanding comes through awareness. Can we, then, approach our experience-our sensations, feeling, and thoughts-quite simply, as if we had never known them before, and, without prejudice, look at what is going on? You may ask, "Which experiences, which sensations and feelings, shall we look at?" I will answer, "Which ones can you look at?" The answer is that you must look at the ones you have now.

That is surely rather obvious. But very obvious things are oftentimes overlooked. If a feeling is not present, you are not aware of it. There is no experience but present experience. What you know, what you are actually aware of, is just what is happening at this moment, and no more.

We are seeing, then, that our experience is altogether momentary. From one point of view, each moment is so elusive and so brief that we cannot even think about it before it is gone. From another point of view, this moment is always here, since we know no other moment than the present moment. It is always dying, always becoming past more rapidly than imagination can conceive. Yet at the same time is always being born, always new, emerging just as rapidly from the complete unknown which we call the future. Thinking about it almost makes you breathless.

On Being and Becoming ...through our spiritual learning experiences...

By Neal Ryder

www.radianthealing.com

You have no choice but to be what you are, for you are an imperishable metaphysical entity, a form of light. The beauty of your vibrations is unique to each. The balance of service is unique to each, yet each is beautiful and cherished....

...Any learning experience is a kind of ordeal. The spiritual learning experience is one of a great deal of catalyst and change, for the spiritual seeker who attempts to accelerate the rate of his spiritual growth will discover more and more how uncomfortable change can be. So it may be that in the darker moods, one wonders whether one is spiritual enough, whether one has stayed upon the road to the kingdom that awaits. One questions oneself. The discomforts of the spiritual journey are all linked to the desire to change. It is a blessing to one who serves others when that entity understands that that which he is to do is prepared for him and sits in front of his face.

The trap of those with spiritual pride is that they would rate dramatic services above the less dramatic services and those who render them. This will never advance the cause of lightening the consciousness of Earth. Rather, it is a series of paradoxes which we suggest you consider; that is, the middle way, the *via media*, for walking in balance with the life about one in service to others. Non-dramatic servers of others, those who tend the child, those who sweep the hearth, those who work in jobs that do not seem to have satisfaction in them, are just as capable as the most experienced seeker of bringing into manifestation within their creation the love of the Infinite One. Now the paradox between judgment and tolerance or open mindedness is solved only by faith; that is, the faith that we are, that each is, that oneself is an I AM. All you are responsible for, in that regard, is learning who you are. Many there are who get so caught up in spiritual growth that they do not ever establish for themselves the roots of their faith. Consequently, they move from one spiritual practice to another, never getting the satisfaction and consolation of spiritual guidance and service to others in community. Thus we would say it is well to know the self well, to know what the physical vehicle that moves each about needs and to provide it carefully, to treat that instrument kindly, for it carries you about. Then one may turn one's face to the changing, assured of who one is. For in changing, you are not changing in kind but in refinement of quality.

Therefore, the open mind, the attempt of new things, will of course bring changes within the conscious mind and the programming of the subconscious mind as well, and this, as always, will be experienced as times of discomfort, frustration, sorrow, anger or some other negative stress. From within the illusion that is the picture that the eyes carry to the brain. This is not an accurate picture, for in retrospect one may always discover that where there was catalyst for change and the difficulty of changing in order to be of more service to others, there has also been the balance of learning that intensifies during traumatic events. Thus each seeking entity must do the work of discrimination and judgment for himself. Let no one express truth to you in a way which is infallible, but, rather, allow that which is infallible, the Creator-self within, to have constant daily opportunities to center and tabernacle with the One Infinite Creator.

Now we realize that none of you knows precisely how to know the self. May we suggest that especially in the mated relationship, the mate which is upon the spiritual quest with the other mate functions as teacher and mirror so that that which one hears comes into the bio-computer of the mind, is filtered through subconscious biases and thus becomes a rather distorted reflection of yourself. When conversation takes place, the two seeking entities are seeking to aid each other, to comfort each other, to console each other and to learn together. Thus they become honest. They become malleable to speaking clearly on any subject.

The spiritual is a matter of life and, in this illusion, death, for that which you do within this illusion, the choices that you make here, will in turn affect your being at the harvest and the more polarized towards the light you have become, the more loving, the more compassionate, the more accepting, the more peaceful, the more joyful, the more light you may accept in joy and use. And in that term, Light, we do not mean simply the photon, but, rather, the energy that is the Creator's. The photon is the manifestation of that Great Original Thought of Love. So we would suggest that each examine the portions of experience which have caused each to feel an emotion, for emotion is a very deep and purified kind of thinking. As one gazes into one's prejudices and biases, one has the opportunity to attempt to balance them, to acknowledge the paradox, the opposite, and to see that they are two sides of one thing, that all is one, that there is no separation.

Now one may polarize and continue changing in any circumstance or condition.

We suggest that you see the balance and walk the middle road, using your discrimination after you have heard the ideas that are presented to you, not judging ahead or during the experience, but allowing each learning experience its own shape and space and colour, allowing it to sink into that portion of the mind which is far more accurate, that portion of the mind which lies below the level of conscious thought. In meditation this is done, and it is well done to be daily in meditation. The goal you seek is to be in a state of consciousness within which is preserved the feeling of unity with the One Creator, the experience of tabernacling in meditation, the experience of opening the inner door by meditation. Many times learning will come to a seeker through dreams, daydreams or visions. These should never be ignored, but should be valued as deep indicators of who you are. Seek that inner fire. Seek to deepen the ability to worship the Creator, to give adoration, praise and thanksgiving to the Creator for all things, including those challenges which have been set up that you may learn what you intended to when you came here. You shall never be rid of your selfhood. It is only possible to be unaware of it. The practice of honesty with the self is the cornerstone of this basically analytical process.

Many entities, therefore, experience great difficulty and have designed that in place in the life experience for the purposes of learning to serve without expectation of return. This instrument has a great of trouble remembering that it is a service to receive, and we would remind each that those who receive are as blessed as those who give. The blessedness lies in the compassion between the two people. That which is done grudgingly is not going to polarize your consciousness towards the positive, so if it is impossible to serve cheerfully, it is well to move into solitude and meditation until one has the balance back, until one's faith is firm, until one no longer feels despair.

Thus the illusions of illness, limitation, financial ruin and any other life disturbing patterns may well not be disasters at all but, rather, marvellous challenges that enable you to polarize thousands of times more quickly than we ever could within our density, which is the fifth, or any other density besides your own. The third density is the intensive density. It is the density of making the choice to serve the Creator by serving the self or to serve the Creator by serving others. We ask each to release the fear of living in this illusion and to become content with whatever conditions prevail, accepting any condition as agreeable, even though it may seem to be a serious challenge or difficulty.

There is much to be said for sheer persistence and the refusal to rebuke the self. For the more unsparing you are of the self in the attempt to realize the Creator-self within in manifestation within the illusion, the more difficulties you will experience. Allow the fact that this is an illusion to sink deeply into the mind.

The art of becoming is not an art that is won easily. It is a craft, and you are the artist. It is a play, and you the actor. Know yourself as well as you can, and then listen open-mindedly to all information and put it to the test within, and within you will come the answer, for you will

recognize your own truth. Each entity has a slightly different path to the Creator. What is functional for one entity may be useless to another, with the exception of the practice of silent meditation and listening.

We wish you to be extremely nurturing of yourselves as you perceive failure within the illusion. You have no idea of how you are doing within the illusion. You will not know how you have done until you have left the heavy chemical illusion that you experience and are once again able to look at the life experience as part of what this instrument would call the Akashic Record, turning the pages of the life, gazing at the tapestry one has woven of love and sorrow and service and selfishness. May each weave the most beautiful tapestry he can. May each look to the life experience as to a poem, an attempt to write each line with grace and beauty. In this you are supported and are never alone, for the Higher Self, under any guise which you wish to call this energy, is with you as comforter and nurturer, and when despair does overtake the soul, we ask that you suspend all judgment, all discrimination of the self, and move into an awareness that one is being held in the infinite arms of the Infinite Creator, that one is in truth nurtured.

Being Spiritual

Becoming Spiritual & Performing Miracles

By Wayne Dyer

This article presents 8 beliefs & practices to cultivate in order to manifest miracles in our life.

Becoming a spiritual being is synonymous with becoming a miracle worker and knowing the bliss of real magic. The differences between people who are non-spiritual, or "physical only", and those whom I call spiritual beings are dramatic. I use the terms spiritual and non-spiritual in the sense that a spiritual being has a conscious awareness of both the physical and the invisible dimension, while the non-spiritual being is only aware of the physical domain. Neither category, as I use them, implies atheism or religious orientation in any way. The non-spiritual person is not incorrect or bad because he or she experiences the world only in a physical manner.

Below are 12 beliefs and practices for you to cultivate as you develop your abilities to manifest miracles in your life. Becoming a spiritual being as outlined here is an all-out necessity if real magic is your objective in this lifetime.

1. The non-spiritual being lives exclusively within the five senses, believing that if you cannot see, touch, smell, hear, or taste something, then that something simply doesn't exist. The spiritual being knows that beyond the five physical senses, there are other senses we use to experience the world of form.

As you work toward becoming a spiritual being as well as a physical being, you begin to live more and more consciously within the invisible realm. You begin to know that there are senses beyond this physical world. Even though you cannot perceive it through one of the five senses, you know that you are a soul with a body, and that your soul is beyond limits and defies birth and death. It is not governed by any of the rules and regulations that govern the physical universe. To be a spiritual being means that you allow yourself the option of being multi-sensory. Hence a whole new world opens up. As Gary Zukav writes in *The Seat of the Soul*, "The experiences of the multi-sensory human are less limited than the experiences of the five-sensory human. They provide more opportunities for growth and development and more opportunities to avoid unnecessary difficulties."

2. The non-spiritual being believes we are alone in the universe. The spiritual being knows he or she is never alone.

A spiritual being is comfortable with the idea of having teachers, observers, and divine guidance available at any time. If we believe we are souls with bodies rather than bodies with souls, then the invisible, eternal part of ourselves is always available to us for assistance. Once this belief is firm and unshakable it can never be doubted, regardless of the rational arguments of those who live exclusively in the physical world. For some this is called intense prayer, for others it is universal, omnipresent intelligence or force, and for others it is spiritual guidance. It matters not what you call this higher self or how you spell it, since it is beyond definitions, labels, and language itself.

For the non-spiritual being this is all hogwash. We show up on Earth, we have one life to live and no one has any ghosts around or within to help out. This is a physical-only universe to the non-spiritual being and the goal is to manipulate and control the physical world. The spiritual being sees the physical world as an arena for growth and learning with the specific purpose of serving and evolving into higher levels of love. Non-spiritual beings accept the existence of a supreme being or God, not as a universal force that is within us but as a separate power that will someday hold us accountable. They do not see themselves as having assistance or a higher self, unless they have the

kind of direct experience of divine presence recorded by St. Paul or St. Francis of Assisi. Spiritual beings simply know, through their personal experience of having been in contact with their own divine guidance, that they are not alone, and that they can use that guidance to become miracle makers in their lives.

3. The non-spiritual being is focused on external power. The spiritual being is focused on personal empowerment.

External power is located in the dominance of and control over the physical world. This is the power of war and military might, the power of laws and organization, the power of business and stock market games. This is the power of controlling all that is external to the self. The non-spiritual being is focused on this external power. By contrast, the spiritual being is focused on empowering himself and others to higher and higher levels of consciousness and achievement. The use of force over another is not a possibility for the spiritual being. He or she is not interested in collecting power, but rather in helping others to live in harmony and to experience real magic. This is a power of love that does not judge others. There is no hostility or anger in this kind of power. It is true empowerment to know that one can live in the world with others who have differing points of view and have no need to control or vanquish them as victims. A spiritual being knows the enormous power that comes with the ability to manipulate the physical world with one's mind.

A mind at peace, a mind centered and not focused on harming others, is stronger than any physical force in the universe. The entire philosophy of aikido and the Oriental martial arts is based not on external power over the opponent, but on becoming at one with that external energy to remove the threat. Empowerment is the inner joy of knowing that external force is not necessary to be at harmony with oneself. To the non-spiritual being, no other way is known. One must constantly be ready for war. Even though the spiritual masters to whom they often pledge allegiance speak against such use of power, the non-spiritual being simply cannot see other alternatives

4. The non-spiritual being feels separated and distinct from all others, a being unto himself. The spiritual being knows that he is connected to all others and lives his life as if each person he meets shares being human with him.

When a person feels separate from all others he becomes more self-centered and much less concerned about the problems of others. He may feel some sympathy for people starving in another part of the world, but that person's daily approach is, "It's not my problem." The splintered personality, the non-spiritual being, is focused more on his own problems, and often feels that other human beings are either in his way or trying to get what he wants and so he must "do in" the other guy, before he gets done in himself.

The spiritual being knows that we are all connected, and he is able to see the fullness of God in each person with whom he makes contact. This sense of connection eliminates much of the inner conflict that the non-spiritual being experiences as he constantly judges others, categorizes them according to physical appearances and behaviors, and then proceeds to find ways to either ignore or take advantage of them for his own benefit. Being connected means that the need for conflict and confrontation is eliminated. Knowing that the same invisible force that flows through himself flows through all others allows the spiritual being to truly live the golden rule. The spiritual being thinks, "How I am treating others is essentially how I am treating myself, and vice versa." The meaning of "love thy neighbor as thyself" is clear to the spiritual being, while it is considered nonsense by the non-spiritual being. Negative judgment is not possible when one feels connected to all others. The spiritual being knows that he cannot define another by his judgments, that he only defines himself as a judgmental person.

5. The non-spiritual being believes exclusively in a cause/effect interpretation of life. The spiritual being knows that there is a higher power working in the universe beyond mere cause and effect. The non-spiritual being lives exclusively in the physical world, where cause and effect rule. If one plants a seed (cause), he will see the result (effect). If one is hungry, he will seek food. If one is angry, he will vent that anger. This is indeed a rational and logical way to think and behave, since the third law of motion for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction is always operating in the physical universe.

The spiritual being goes beyond Newton's physics and lives in an entirely different realm. The spiritual being knows that thoughts come out of nothingness, and that in our dream state (one-third of our entire physical lives), where we are in pure thought, cause and effect play no role whatsoever.

6. The non-spiritual being is motivated by achievement, performance and acquisitions. The spiritual being is motivated by ethics, serenity and quality of life.

For the non-spiritual person, the focus is on learning for the purpose of high grades, getting ahead, and acquiring possessions. The purpose of athletics is competition. Success is measured in external labels such as position, rank, bank accounts, and awards. These are all very much a part of our culture, and certainly not objects to be scorned, they simply are not the focus of the spiritual being's life. For the spiritual being, success is achieved by aligning oneself with one's purpose, which is not measured by performance or acquisitions. The spiritual being knows that these external things flow into one's life in sufficient amounts and that they arrive as a result of living purposefully. The spiritual being knows that living purposefully involves serving in a loving fashion. Mother Teresa, who has spent many years of her life caring for the most downtrodden among us in the slums of Calcutta, defined purpose this way in "For the Love of God:"

"The fruit of love is service, which is compassion in action. Religion has nothing to do with compassion. It is our love for God that is the main thing, because we have all been created for the sole purpose to love and be loved."

It is in ways such as this that the spiritual being's inner and outer reality is experienced. It is not necessary to become a saint ministering to the impoverished to become a spiritual being. One simply must know that there is much more to life than achievement, performance and acquisitions, and that the measure of a life is not in what is accumulated, but rather in what is given to others. Living ethically, morally and serenely while being aligned with a spiritual purpose is at the core of his being. Real magic cannot be experienced when your focus is on getting more for yourself, particularly if it is at the expense of others. When you experience a sense of serenity and quality about your life, knowing your mind is what creates such a state, you will also know that from such a state of mind flows miracle-making magic

7. The non-spiritual being has no place within his awareness for the practice of meditation. The spiritual being cannot imagine life without it.

For the non-spiritual being, the idea of looking quietly within oneself and sitting alone for any period of time repeating a mantra, emptying one's mind, and seeking answers by aligning oneself with one's Higher Self borders on lunacy. For this person, answers are sought by working hard, struggling, persevering, setting goals, reaching those goals and setting new ones and competing in a dog-eat-dog world.

The spiritual being knows about the enormous power of the practice of meditation. He knows meditation makes him more alert and able to think more clearly. He knows the very special effect

meditation has in relieving stress and tension.

Spiritual people know, by virtue of having been there and experienced it firsthand, that one can get divine guidance by becoming peaceful and quiet, and asking for answers. They know they are multidimensional and that the invisible mind can be tapped at higher and higher levels through meditation, or whatever you want to call the practice of being alone and emptying your mind of the frenetic thoughts that occupy so much of daily life. They know that in deep meditation one can leave the body and enter a sphere of magic that is as blissful a state as any drug could temporarily provide.

For the non-spiritual being this is perceived as an escape from reality, but for the spiritual being it is an introduction to a whole new reality, a reality that includes an opening in life that will lead to miracle making.

8. For the non-spiritual being, the concept of intuition can be reduced to a hunch or a haphazard thought that accidentally pops into one's head on occasion. For the spiritual being, intuition is far more than a hunch. It is viewed as guidance or as God talking, and this inner insight is never taken lightly or ignored.

You know from your own experience that when you ignore your intuitive proddings, you end up regretting it or having to "learn the hard way".

To the non-spiritual person, intuition is completely unpredictable and occurs in random happenstance. It is often ignored or shunned in favor of behaving in habitual ways. The spiritual being strives to increase consciousness concerning his intuition. He pays attention to invisible messages and knows deep within that there is something working that is much more than a coincidence.

Spiritual beings have an awareness of the nonphysical world and are not stuck exclusively in a universe restricted to the functioning of their five senses. Hence all thoughts, invisible though they may be, are something to pay attention to. But intuition is much more than a thought about something, it is almost as if one is receiving a gentle prod to behave in a certain way or to avoid something that might be dangerous or unhealthy. Although inexplicable, our intuition is truly a factor of our lives.

For the non-spiritual person, this seems to be merely a hunch and nothing to study or become more attuned to. The non-spiritual person thinks, "It will pass. It is just my mind at work in its disorderly way " For the spiritual person, these inner intuitive expressions are almost like having a dialogue with God.

Benevolence

From The Science of Becoming Oneself

By H. Saraydarian

"To give is a divine attribute. The inexhaustibility of giving is found in varying degrees in all nature. But fire is the element in which giving is most apparent. The very principle of fire is transmutation and a constant giving. Fire cannot exist without the sacrifice of giving, likewise the fiery seed of the spirit exists through giving. But the sacrifice is a true one only when it has become the very nature of man."

The word "benevolence" is composed of two words: bene and volence. Bene means well, or good; volence means to will, to do. It is an act of benefaction or an act of goodwill. Benevolence, or benefaction, or goodwill, is the act or activity by which you express your inner goodness through your thoughts, feelings, words and actions.

Man in his essence is a drop of goodness. It does not matter where he is or what he is; he is still a drop of goodness in his essential being. Man may act wrongly from the viewpoint of other people. He may have wrong feelings and distorted thoughts, but behind these distortions and aberrations there is the essential goodness in the depth of the human soul.

Sometimes man is like an enslaved king. His enemies have chained him at his feet and hands, and he is unable to act as a king, to use his authority and his royal will. He is chained and like a puppet in the hands of his enemies. Psychologically, it is the same with many people. They are slaves of their habits, vices, subconscious urges; slaves of their bodies, emotions, even of their minds; slaves of religious or political doctrines and dogmas. They are slaves.

But if you release them, you will see that there is a splendid beauty in them, a radiant goodness.

That is why Christ said to love our enemies, for behind factors, behind masks, there is goodness in them. There is the Spark of God in them, and we love men for the sake of the good in them and because "they don't know what they are doing."

If a man is doing anything against the good, even intentionally, it still does not mean that he is evil in his inner essence. It does mean that he is chained, aberrated, and distorted somewhere in his mechanism.

The sun shines behind clouds, smoke and dust storms. It is there in its beauty, but if sought through these obstacles is lost and does not even exist. Take away the dust, take away the smoke, the clouds, and you will find the sun unchanged, beautiful and glorious. The same is true of man. We may say that evil people are sick people. Some times their sickness is incurable for a long time and is contagious.

In our world, we know that ill will is widespread; evil works are everywhere. Gossip, hatred, jealousy, and various kinds of crimes are common, and people are trying to find solutions to these individual and social problems.

Psychosomatic medicine, psychiatry, and other psychological and medical methods, even the religions, and trying to find the means to heal individuals, groups, and even masses of people. But most of them are trying to find the key where it is not kept. The key is in man himself. The panacea is the inner man, the real essence of man, the Real Self. Try to release the essence, and you can gradually solve all problems.

This inner essence is goodness itself. It is fire; it is light; it is love; it is power; it is beauty and bliss; it is life itself! It is the source of all our highest inspirations.

We now know now about the stupendous energy of the atom. We released the atom. Now it is time to release the fire in man. Imagine how far humanity could be expanded if the fire were released. It will be the new age of spirit, the "Spiritual Age" about which all-true seers of the ages dreamed and spoke.

"The Fire of Benevolence creates the most beautiful transmutation."

"If each one filled with goodness would sow it with every touch, what a myriad of benevolent sparks would be sent out into space one must sow good with each glance of the eye and each

touch."

How can one release this Fire? How is one to release the good in man which is his true essence? The answer is this: Teach children and men everywhere the science of doing good. Teach them how to think about the good, how to feel the good, how to speak about the good, how to express and live the good.

One they start to release the inner-fire, their life and environment will gradually change. This current of fiery energy will heal all psychological cleavages in man, in the family, and in the nations.

The mind of man will gradually receive increased light. The heart of man will gradually change into a powerhouse of love and radiance, and the body of man will be healthy, shining, and strong.

It will wash away all those thought forms, illusions, and glamour's which are poisonous and which cause disorders in the nervous system, in the glandular system, and in the life of man.

A small act of benevolence, a small act of goodwill releases a beam of light from the inner core, from the fiery goodness in man. This light works miracles in man and in his social relationships. It starts an inner clearing, and produces a healing energy which washes all causes of suffering, pain and misery.

"Striving towards good avails itself of all higher paths . . . Thus, the streams of light conquer in limitless cosmic action."

There are two very important injunctions given by two wise people. The first one says: "Man know thyself." The second says: "Man be thyself."

We can know ourselves by being ourselves. The shortest, wisest way to be ourself is by expressing, radiating our Real Self, our inner essence.

This true expression of the essence is called by many names but fundamentally they are all the same. It is called goodwill, benevolence, sacrifice, or service.

One of the master minds said:

"Service is the scientific mode, par excellence, to evoke spiritual integration and to call forth the resources of a divine Son of God."

Every good thought, every act of goodwill, every word expressed from our heart shortens the distance between our two selves; the small self lost in the illusions and glamour's of the world; the other Self, found in the blue sky of joy and bliss.

Our destiny is to release ourselves, and to be ourselves. Only by this path is created all beauty, joy, progress, and health of humanity.

Beyond Appearance

By Nevill Drury

From The Visionary Human

Mystical Consciousness and Paranormal Perspectives

The word 'visionary' means different things to different people. For some it has the connotation of one who is a dreamer, who is out of touch with reality, or who spends time speculating on essentially impractical ideas or schemes. However a visionary may also be a person who sees more clearly, who can anticipate possibilities and who can look beyond appearances. This is the emphasis I am dropping here, for I am concerned primarily with the visionary as a person who has greater access to states of reality than is normally the case. Note that I used the word 'states' in the plural: much of this book will deal with the concept that there are many planes of reality available to human perception and that our normal consciousness restricts us to but a small range within the spectrum of experiential possibilities.

An interesting example of what I am referring to here is provided by an artist I know who suffered both a near-death experience and a stroke that left him partially paralysed. However, as a result of these experiences he had a highly developed 'psychic' awareness: he was able to project his consciousness beyond his body, see through physical walls and observe discarnate human forms in the street outside his outside. These forms would come and go and seemed to co-exist quite happily with physical reality. This particular artist is quite a down-to-earth person and had no belief in 'ghosts' prior to his stroke. However, he became curious about these spectral beings were. When he described their appearances to his neighbours he discovered that he was actually able to identify some of them as deceased former residents of the streets where he lived.

Examples of this sort are a challenge to our familiar concepts of 'reality'. I am taking the position here unashamedly, but supported, I believe, by a large body of evidence that mystics, artists and visionaries who explore transpersonal and paranormal realms of consciousness have access to a broader terrain of sensory and inspirational information.

There is no doubting that the area of mysticism, visionary consciousness and the paranormal will, to some, seem very suspect indeed. However, I hope that even sceptics will find some encouragement here at least to raise questions about what we regard as 'normal reality'. After all, our scientifically developed world-view in modern western society is itself an intellectual construct and, while it has served us well, there are clear signs that our paradigms of reality are in need of some revision or at least expansion. Such concepts as mystical enlightenment and visionary consciousness are, for some most people, at the edge of normal human experience. Events of this sort do not happen very often and are certainly not mainstream in terms of the everyday reality most of us are familiar with. But then our particular society, which emphasises a pragmatic materialist approach to reality, does not like to dwell overmuch on areas of human experience which are difficult to quantify, measure or anticipate. Our scientific method, which demands replication, insists that new hypotheses be tested against what has been systematically established already. This is all well and good, but it means that our world-view is necessarily and inherently reductionist. When new types of data comes along that impinge on our dominant paradigms, our first instinct is to ignore them or sweep them under the carpet.

I believe that much of the emerging paranormal data falls into this 'too hard' category. As readers will see later in this book, there are profound implications for philosophy, science, psychology and religion in the now extensive evidence relating to out-of-the-body consciousness and the near-death experience. It also seems to me that we need to devote more particular attention to the study of altered states of consciousness in general, for such states are an intrinsic part of the human condition.

The eminent American psychologist Dr Charles Tart has proposed the idea of 'state-specific science' science where the mode of investigation is specifically adapted to the area it is investigating. Tart has emphasized that it is rather difficult for a scientist used to exploring physical processes to be equally adept at evaluating such inner workings of the psyche as mystical consciousness or out-of-the-body perception especially if he has had no personal experience of states like these. And it is worth emphasizing that our modern western science, for all its achievements, has its greatest expertise in dealing with and exploring external reality. It is much less at home accounting for the events which arise in the inner world of the mind and spirit.

Nevertheless, as human beings, we all recognise that we live both in the outer and the inner worlds of experience. Our brains and nervous systems receive stimuli from the external world and, through complex processes of sensory coding, establish an operative perceptual reality in which we can function. Understandably, most of us assume that 'reality is out there' but in fact the world we perceive is only a construction. The human brain is the end-product of some 3000 million years of biological evolution and the reason we see the way we do, and agree substantially on a 'consensus reality', is because as human beings we have all evolved with comparable facilities. The psychologist Dr Robert Ornstein expresses this very succinctly as follows:

Personal consciousness is outward orientated [and] seems to have evolved for the primary purpose of ensuring individual biological survival We first select the sensory modalities of personal consciousness from the mass of information reaching us. This is done by a multi-level process of filtration, for the most part sorting out survival-related stimuli. We are then able to construct a stable consciousness from the filtered input.

So is the world of physical reality the only reality? The data on parapsychology, mysticism and visionary consciousness, as well as information provided by the study of cognitive anthropology, mythology and comparative religion, suggests it is not. It is through the inner world of the psyche that fluid domain of inspirational images, dreams, fantasies and sacred archetypes that human cultures have derived their mythologies, cosmologies, religious beliefs, art, music and literature. The psyche, after all, is the wellspring of creativity and it is through imagery that the inner realm are revealed to us.

As Mike and Nancy Samuels note in their exemplary book *Seeing With The Mind's Eye*: 'An image held in the mind is a direct experience of the inner world. In the outer world we limited by the laws of matter in what we can experience. In the inner world there is no limit to what we can experience.'

If this is so, why do so many members of our philosophical and scientific community play down its significance? Freud regarded mystical consciousness not as an experiential breakthrough but as a regression to a primitive, infantile state of human development. Professor Richard Gregory, a former Director of the Brain and Perception Laboratory at the University of Bristol, has been similarly disparaging:

To the mystic, dreams and hallucinations are insights into another world of reality and truth. To these thinkers the brain is a hindrance to understanding a filter between us and a supraphysical reality Thee down-to-earth, however, including the empiricist philosophers the brain is to be trusted only in health, and hallucinations, although interesting and perhaps suggestive, are no more than aberrant outputs of the brain, to be mistrusted and feared To physiologists hallucinations and dreams are due to spontaneous activity of the brain, unchecked by sensory data.

Dr Steven Rose, Professor of Biology at Britain's Open University, has similarly written in his book *The Conscious Brain*: 'It is highly probably that in due course it will be possible to explain the

"mystic experience" in terms of neurobiology.' Like Professor Gregory, Rose's view of mystical and visionary experience is that essentially it is a pathological condition.

The techniques of obtaining a mystic experience are all, whether quick and chemical or long and physical, those of diminishing the effectiveness of the cortex, of temporarily blasting some of its circuits, by means of food or sleep deprivation, or by excessive sensory input, or by thrusting a biochemical spanner into the cerebral works. In so far as the function of the brain is to enable the organism to exist in harmony with, survive in, operate upon, and understand the environment of its owner, the non-mystic brain manifestly functions better than the mystic one. The survival value of the mystic experience is low, and in evolutionary terms its potential or desirability is clearly equally low. Like poetry, music or art, its effects may be a moving and significant part of the experience of being human. But so, for some, may be the artificial induction of an epileptic fit by stroboscopic flashes.

However, such perspectives are really predicated on a conventional assumption of what it means to be 'normal'. Orthodox Western psychology and biology tend to regard human consciousness simply as a by-product of the electrochemical functioning of the brain and nervous system. Human beings consist at a fundamental level of a cluster of physical parts—a skeleton, muscles, tendons, a system of veins and arteries, internal organs, sense receptors and a nervous system—and when these parts function efficiently together, such humans are able to operate and perceive the real world. As Dr Gunther Stent, Professor of Molecular Biology at the University of California, Berkeley, has put it:

Most biologists are naïve realists, just as are most practising scientists. Like people-in-the-street, they believe that there exists a real world of things external to them and independent of their experience of it—and that this real world actually is as they see, hear, feel and smell it.

So any departure from normal brain functions is by definition abnormal, any venture into altered states of consciousness necessarily 'pathological'. After all, as Dr Gregory has noted, our normal perceptual filter processes restrict such psychic imagery from waking consciousness and thereby keep us 'sane'.

However, the situation may not be as clear-cut or as self-evident as these conventional perspectives suggest. One can pose the question: What if we were able to integrate such visionary impressions into our consciousness without having them disrupt our external reality? What if we could integrate these psychic events in such a way that they could enrich our lives rather than unleash a state of confusion or disorder? This, I would suggest, is the crux of the issue: it is not the visionary images themselves which are the problem; it is how we assimilate and apply such perceptions in our lives. A misguided teenager who takes LSD and then drives a car off a cliff-edge while under the illusion that he can fly like an eagle has clearly failed to integrate the visionary impressions he has received in his altered state. But an artist or musician whose creative vision enables him to communicate more sensitively, or with greater insight and expression, has certainly used his intuitive faculties to great benefit. So it is more a matter of how we engage ourselves in the visionary encounter with the mind than whether the information reaching our brains derives from a 'real' or an 'imaginary' source.

Nevertheless, such states are not always easy to describe and this is possibly a reason for their lack of scientific recognition. Mystics have often referred to transcendental experiences as 'awesome' or 'ineffable', but terms like these do little to convey the transformational qualities of such experiences.

Fortunately, while researching this book, I was able to discuss this issue with the well-known consciousness researcher, Dr Timothy Leary. His response was very much to the point:

The brain processes 125 million signals per second, so there's a lot of show-biz going on inside the brain. In the psychedelic or visionary experience the brain operates using algorithms which are much more complex, but essentially similar to those used by a computer. All through history, mystics and visionaries have come back from their experiences saying 'Wow, it's ineffable you can't put it into words.' Words are just lumbering along at two or three a second and your brain is pouring out at 125 million signals a second. Great artists occasionally have come back from their voyages within with 'still shots' or 'snap shots', as it were. Hieronymus Bosch is one who comes to mind. The great visionary musicians and film-makers all have the ability to make explicit some of the wonder and complexity of the inner panorama. All matter and energy in the universe is just frozen information.

At this stage we should also distinguish between the words 'mystical' and 'visionary' since for many people they do not mean the same thing. The great Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung, believed that mysticism was a fundamental category of human experience and that it was grounded in the encounter between the ego and the 'numinous' such psychospiritual events taking place deep in the collective unconscious, or the mythic levels of the mind. However, other commentators have distinguished between western mysticism, which places more emphasis on visions and revelations, and eastern mysticism, which regards visionary imagery as essentially illusory. As Dr Arthur Deikman explains, mysticism takes us finally beyond form and appearance: 'Repeatedly the mystical literature stresses that sensate experiences are not the goal of mysticism; rather it is only when these are transcended that one attains the aim of a direct (intuitive) knowledge of fundamental reality.'

Visionaries, on the other hand, are evoking images through their various approaches to the inner world: they can manifest them in their art, literature or religious belief systems. Some of these images may derive from relatively accessible regions of the psyche while more archetypal content comes from deeper and more profound levels. Some images, too, are metaphors pointing beyond form to the transcendent mystical reality Deikman is referring to.

So while visionary consciousness is a less transcendent realm of perception than the mystical experience of Unity Consciousness, any substantial expansion of our perceptual horizons beyond the purely physical is impressive enough. Even such transitional 'visionary' stages of consciousness demand new psychological refinements and revised frameworks of scientific evaluation. Out-of-the-body and near-death experiences are difficult to explain in terms of materialist reductionism and it would seem that, from a paranormal viewpoint, a return to some sort of variation on Descartes' mind/body dualism is called for. In operative waking consciousness, mind and body clearly function in tandem, but states of dissociate visionary consciousness require a very different model of causality. And while orthodox neurobiologists may be quite convinced that the physical brain is the source of consciousness, as the noted Philosopher and psychologist William James observed, it is by no means obvious, in terms of scientific observations, whether consciousness is generated by the brain or transmitted through it. As we will see, the paranormal evidence suggests strongly that the latter is the case.

My own belief is that the projection of consciousness beyond the normal frame of reference lies at the very heart of visionary illumination. A visionary, in these terms, is one who can transcend his familiar environs and enter the inner world of imaginal reality. Sometimes this inner journey may head off on a kind of psychic meandering but at other times it undoubtedly leads to experiential breakthroughs and even towards the mystical attainment of Unity Consciousness itself.

The visionary process can be disarmingly simple, as the following description of inspirational Taoist artists indicates.

Chinese painters are said to have lived for weeks on end in the mountains and forests, among animals, or even in the water, in order to lose themselves completely in nature. Mi Fei called an oddly shaped rock his brother; Fan K'uan (circa 1000 AD) lived in the mountains and forests, often spending the whole day upon a crag and gazing about him, just to drink the beauty of the countryside. Even when there was snow on the ground, he would wander to and fro by moon light, staring determinedly ahead, to achieve inspiration. Kao K'o-ming (tenth century AD) loved darkness and silence; he used to roam about in the wild and spend days on end contemplating the beauty of peaks and woods, oblivious of himself. When he reached home again he retired to a room where he would not be disturbed and allowed his soul to pass beyond the bounds of this world. In this condition he produced his pictures.

Body Talk: What is Your Body Telling You?

By Johanna Putnoi

Polish the heart, free the six senses
and let them function without obstruction,
and your entire body and soul will glow.

-- MORIHEI UESHIBA

Right now, in this very moment: What is your body telling you?

- Is your stomach tense with anxiety, or warm with relaxation?
- Is your forehead furrowed in concentration, or are your eyes wide with wonder?
- Are your feet happy in your shoes?
- Is your breathing substantial yet tranquil?
- Are you comfortable inside your own skin?
- Are you looking out through your eyes, taking in sound through your ears, feeling the temperature with your skin, inhaling the scent of the air?
- Are you living in your body right now?

Can you remember a time when your stomach knotted up in fear, your heart raced before an exciting challenge, you intuitively moved closer to a new love? Can you recall how your mind interpreted what your body felt? Did it berate you for being so weak (or cowardly or childish or out of control), ignore the sensation, and make your body do the exact opposite of what it knew was right?

"Trust your gut instinct"... "I knew in my heart it was the right thing to do"... "I just had a feeling"... Our language reflects our understanding that the body has real wisdom and knowledge. Why, then, do we spend most of our time trying to override its signals?

The human body comes equipped with an innate ability to intuit real danger, and a brilliant physical response system that knows when to run and when to fight -- even when we are actively not listening to the information we are receiving from our senses. The body also has the inborn ability to know when we are safe, to know who can nurture us emotionally, and to bond in love and support with others.

That's right: We are born with an innate instinct to survive and prosper, to love one another. One of the intrinsic ingredients that allows us to thrive is the experience of pleasure. However, when we are not actively listening to the information we are receiving from our senses, when we are taught that the language of the body will get us into trouble, it is much more difficult to respond naturally, to bond in long-lasting satisfying relationships with others.

Feeling fully alive means engaging life with our senses and instincts wide open. Touch is the mother of the senses. It is born with the oldest, largest, and most sensitive of our organs, the skin. Ashley Montagu, in *Touching*, his wonderful book about the significance of the skin, says:

"The skin is the mirror of the organism's functioning; its colour, texture, dryness, and every one of its other aspects, reflect our state of being, psychological as well as physiological. We blanch with fear and turn red with embarrassment. Our skin tingles with excitement and feels numb with shock; it is a mirror of our passions and emotions."

The skin covers our entire body. It is the foundation on which all the other senses are based. Our skin is the interface between our nervous system and the environment in which we live. It connects the outside to our insides, and vice versa. Neuro-anthropologist Andre Virel says, "Our skin is a mirror endowed with properties even more wonderful than those of a magic looking glass."

The skin is an essential player in the conundrum of our existence, in our striving for radiant well-being and connection to all things. It is our skin that allows us to differentiate between sandpaper and marble, glass and water, hot and cold, pain and pleasure. When we add taste, smell, sight, and hearing to this biological equation, a magnificent symphony of feeling and sensation informs our experience. Without our senses we are like stick figures -- without sense and sensibility, forever ensnared in the modern disease of cerebral reasoning.

Unfortunately, most of us learn at an early age that the life of the mind is the real life, the important life, the body's high commander. The fullness of life -- sensation and emotion -- are subjugated to what we think at any given moment. Without the full palette of sensual input, life is reduced to a monochromatic dimension that has little room for the colours and sounds and smells and tastes and sensations that enable us to experience genuine pleasure and delight.

The Language of the Body

When we are warm and safe and well-nourished, our muscles relax, our blood flows easily, and we feel a sense of well-being or authentic pleasure. When we are in danger, cold and hungry, we feel anxiety and fear. Our muscles tense up, our breathing gets shallow, and we get ready to run.

I call this intrinsic intelligence natural embodiment. We are naturally embodied when we can experience sensate pleasure on a regular non-sexual basis, when we can deeply relax into ourselves, when we can give freely to other people and receive from them easily, when we know the difference between hedonism and authentic pleasure.

Animals move freely, effortlessly. They drop down for a nap when they are tired, they eat when they are hungry. We envy this natural state, but it is not ours. Being human means we have self-awareness. As human beings we are born with the unique ability to consciously observe and control our own behavior. Sometimes this is what gets us into trouble. Sometimes our minds don't like what we see, or we fear what might happen and we override our bodies' messages. Yet this awareness can also work to our benefit: We can train ourselves to move and think and hear and see and feel in ways that bring the world to life in infinite, unseen detail, much as a trained violinist can make a violin sing in tones that are beyond the reach of the student.

Conscious awareness naturally includes the language of the body. It helps us respond more honestly to what is happening in the moment. It helps us filter out neurotic thinking in favour of natural embodiment. I know this is true because I see it every day.

For more than twenty years I have worked with hundreds of disenfranchised human beings who are in search of their bodies and don't know it. Like most of us, they suffer terribly from our culture's mixed messages. Many of them are full of guilt and shame, trying unsuccessfully to reason their way through life. They have very little real information about the nature and function of their bodies' desires, illnesses, knee-jerk behaviors, and pleasures. Instead, their minds have developed elaborate mythologies about what might happen if they let go and allow their bodies to speak to them. Surely, they think, they would lose control sexually, or hurt themselves, or do something they would regret. Their fears are deep and powerful and keep them in the dark about how the body actually works. Paradoxically, they take their health for granted.

When we feel sick, we passively let the doctor tell us about our afflictions and follow medical directions without question. Our ignorance is staggering.

The last two decades of the twentieth century have been characterized by a frantic search for self-improvement and purification: We join programs to give up smoking, drinking, and drugs. We train our bodies in gyms. We eat carefully controlled diets to starve our bodies into submission. We buy books on how to improve our sex lives. We live hard and fast, seeking excitement, and then recover by meditating on inner peace, chasing out-of-body experiences and longing for a less corporeal world. We spend billions of dollars on diet, fitness, entertainment, and religion, and we are still not satisfied.

The simple truth is this: In seeking to perfect our bodies, tire them out, or escape them altogether, we have forgotten a fundamental point. We can't go anywhere without them, even though we try. The body matters. It's a resource, not an object to whip into shape. It is you.

Having a body is what being a human is all about.

About The Author

Johanna Putnoi is a dancer, writer, and somatic educator who lectures and leads workshops, seminars, and trainings in applied somatics, the movement arts, and the enneagram. She teaches throughout the United States and Europe and is a somatic counselor and popular workshop leader at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, CA. She also teaches Somatics and Healing at Stanford University. Visit her website: www.sensesopen.com This article was excerpted with permission from her book "Senses Wide Open", ©2000, published by Ulysses Press, Berkeley, California, USA <http://www.ulyssespress.com>

Boundaries and Forgiveness: One at the Expense of the Other?

By Johanna Vanderpol

In my life and in other peoples' lives, I see people wanting to be forgiving. I see them sacrifice their boundaries. I see them thinking that in order to be forgiving, they need to sacrifice their boundaries. I believe that this is flawed thinking.

I have learned and continue to learn that boundaries are a healthy part of our spiritual makeup and contribute to growth. I have had to make a conscious effort to identify my boundaries. I have had to recognize when people have violated my boundaries. And I have had to confront them when they have crossed my boundaries and inform them that they cannot do this again.

It has been a process of effort and discomfort. It has shown me how my self-doubt has caused my boundaries to weaken. Whenever I have allowed my boundaries to weaken mainly because of my self-doubt, it has had adverse consequences. And when I have chosen to give myself permission to have a boundary and reinforced it when necessary, it has had a positive effect. Is the effort and discomfort worth it? Absolutely.

Asserting my boundaries has had unexpected results. People have left my life. People have chosen to have no further contact with me. At first, these outcomes left me feeling shaken. But I came to recognize that I did not want people in my life that couldn't respect me in the first place. So, it was good that they left. At first, I felt rejected. But later I felt like it was an organic outcome.

I also discovered that when I first started asserting my boundaries, I did it in a very intense, angry and resentful way. Partly because I had let it go on too long. I did not know how to proceed nor did I have the skills to proceed. I also felt angry at the person for putting me in this position in the first place. The anger drove people away. They could not handle someone being angry with them. I had started asserting my boundaries, but was doing it in a way that was alienating people. Alas, I did not need to be angry with myself because I did not do it right the first time. It was unrealistic to expect myself to find the 'right' way the first time.

Eventually, as I started to understand what was happening, I was able to start asserting my boundaries in a more matter-of-fact way. And I was able to do it as the violation occurred. This was a gradual process. This new way placed less stress on me and informed the other person without them feeling offended. Now what happens is people who can accept my boundaries become closer to me and the people who cannot accept my boundaries still leave. It still shakes me up when relationships terminate, but I am learning that it does not mean there is something wrong with me.

This work is life changing and well worth any discomfort you go through. I was able to proceed more successfully through this transition with the help of a psychotherapist. She was able to help me see some of these insights. My life is now less chaotic, more enjoyable and contains more spiritual growth. The chaos of people causing unnecessary drama in my life has been eliminated. This has allowed a sense of peace in my life. I now freely and consciously choose the people and the activities in my life. It is lived on a higher plane. And all because of honouring boundaries.

So, what is forgiveness, really? Does it mean to forgive and forget? No. Not always. Does it mean we allow someone to hurt us again? No. Not if we respect ourselves. Forgiveness means that we recognize that the other person is doing the best they can do with the resources, skills and life experiences they have. Forgiveness comes from a place of compassion in ourselves. It can feel like a paradox to be understanding of a person who wronged you. It feels like it should be the other way around. But, many times, in reality, it is not. This is for us to forgive, learn to protect ourselves without isolating ourselves, and free our energy to put into ways that are more valuable.

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About the Author

Johanna Vanderpol is a professional coach, author and speaker on emotional intelligence, emotional well-being and de-stressing. For more free resources and articles as well as her latest products in this field, go to <http://www.johannavanderpol.com> and download exercises and articles complimenting this article on the support page.

Are Your Boundaries Hiding Your Light?

By Ada Porat

Are your boundaries protecting you or suffocating you? Boundaries indicate where our no-go zones are: they are intended to define and protect that which is valuable to us.

We may also put up boundaries to protect ourselves from being hurt. While boundaries do afford protection, they can also create walls between us and others, blocking out new growth, learning and freedom.

Just think how often we hold back from revealing our true identity, beliefs or feelings until we feel safe that the other person will accept them. We may also hold back from sharing new insights out of fear that family and friends will disagree or ridicule us.

So what defines a healthy boundary from an unhealthy one? Acting out of fear rather than from confidence usually gives a good clue. When we start creating boundaries based on fear, these boundaries tend to hold us back from the very interaction that we crave with others. Instead, we may find ourselves cut off from others, unable to share insights along our journey of inner growth and expanding awareness.

Are you living in the closet, imprisoned by your fears or beliefs? Have you put up walls between yourself and others around you, believing they wouldn't understand? Are you hiding your truth from co-workers, friends or loved ones, believing that they wouldn't accept you if they knew what you really believe?

When fear drives us to hide behind boundaries, we deprive ourselves and others from the benefit of sharing our unique perceptions of the human experience. As humans, we all share similar experiences on the journey through life. When we give ourselves permission to share perceptions and insights, the simple act of sharing can result in profound healing and encouragement.

Sharing our truth with others is not about trying to convince them to see things our way. Rather, it is about being honest and transparent in our personal process of growth. And yes, sometimes it can be scary!

When sharing your perspective with someone from the heart, it always makes a difference. At times, we may sense that someone is not ready for deeper levels of sharing. That does not mean that we should not share our truth at all – it merely means that we should be sensitive to how much to share, and not overwhelm them.

If great inventors throughout history had not shared their brand new ideas and concepts with the world, we'd still be living without electricity, thinking the world is flat, and travel by foot. Your insights may not seem as enormous as inventing space travel, yet they may be very important to the person you share with.

Have you ever shared something with someone, only to have them respond with, “Thank you, that’s exactly what I needed to hear!” They may have been waiting for a clue or confirmation to guide them in a new direction, and your words provided that.

When we allow the walls of protection to come down and dare to share aspects of our personal journey from the heart, that act of sharing becomes a gift. Those who hear our truth, have free choice to receive and apply aspects of our truth to their lives.

When we remain behind boundaries of safety, everyone misses out. We miss out on the opportunity to emerge from behind our walls of self-protection to share truth, light and love. We also rob others of the opportunity of receiving that gift, and to choose how to respond.

Personal boundaries can become a comfort zone that needs a little stretching. Growth comes when we are willing to emerge from behind the safety of that comfort zone. Sometimes we take the initiative to share with others, and at other times it is the gentle exposure to another's perspective that helps us break free from the confines of our limiting beliefs.

We are all both teachers and students. We learn by being exposed to different perspectives and information we're not familiar with. Sometimes we learn from people's mistakes, and at other times we learn from their examples. Others offer us mirrors in which to see ourselves - opportunities to learn and share what we have learned. When we start to consciously participate in this process, we can greatly expedite everyone's learning process.

According to the book Cultural Creatives, there are over 50 million people who desire to create meaningful change in the world. Are you one of them?

If you desire to make a meaningful difference in the world we live in, consider dropping some of the defensive boundaries that hold back your light. Start peeking out from behind your boundaries and allow your light to shine!

When you emerge to share from the heart, you'll find others eagerly waiting to respond. Let your light shine and help bring about the change you would like to see in the world. Shining your light can help light the way for someone else!

About the Author

Ada Porat uses body/mind/spirit techniques to facilitate personal growth and balance for clients. Her innovative approach has brought about profound results for individuals internationally. For more information on vibrational healing, ascension and life balance coaching or to sign up for her inspirational newsletter, go to: www.AdaPorat.com

Capability (What Can You Do?)

By David Cameron

What is capability? What can you do? What is can?

You say, "I wish I could do that. But I can't." Sometimes the thing you desire seems most evasive and elusive to you. You may seem to think that you need money or something else that is external to you for you to be able to achieve your desire. And because this external thing is away from you and you don't have it, you think that you are doomed because even that seems elusive. So you are stuck in a vicious circle. You accept that, you fear it.

But before you accept something that has absolutely no value to you, take another look. Fear is a thing we are conditioned to accept without question, yet it has absolutely no value. Next time you accept fear, ask yourself what value it really has for you. Escape is not a value. There is nowhere to run. Eventually, you will be found and you will have to face yourself. Running away from a problem is an idea that stems from the illusion that there is a you with a problem, and a you that can escape the you with the problem. Insane? Yep! The first step to getting out of a problem is knowing and accepting that you are the problem, and then you become the solution. Nothing outside changes, but as you change, a new outside replaces the old. The law of attraction and the law of cause and effect work this way.

For now, let us define capability. What is can?

Everyone has things that they can do now that they could not do before. You can now walk while as a child you could not. The ground never changed, but you did. You can now read while you once could not. The English language never changed, but you did.

At one time, Bill Gates could not write software, now he can. The world did not change, Bill did. At one time, Jesus could not perform miracles, then he did. Miracles did not change, Jesus did. At one time the Buddha was not enlightened, then he was. The ways of the universe did not change, the Buddha did.

Do you get the picture? There are a million things that a person can do now that they could not do years ago. Why?

It is never those things that changed. What changed was the idea that this person had of himself or herself. Have you seen the movie The Matrix? When Neo changed his idea of himself, he was able to do the undoable. It is so with everyone.

So what is can? What is capability? It is nothing more than a shift in what you think you are. What You Really Are is a being with infinite possibilities? Everyone is. We are all literally an idea. As such, success is not something we can chase and get, it is something that we attract by the persons we become. We become those persons by changing the idea of what we think we are.

The problem is not with the world. The problem, if there is one, is with your recognition of yourself and your world. The way you perceive and interpret yourself and your world is a system. Change that system, through seeking new truths, and you change your world.

To put it in another way, on earth you are a being that has experiences. These experiences are determined by your thoughts, which are determined by your perceptions. And these experiences are experienced through perception. It is a cycle. The key here is that perception is a learnt system. You learnt your own way of perception as you grew up. Whatever you accepted as true from your

parents, friends, teachers, and so on, is what builds your framework of perception. Perception is a learnt system. You learn it, and you can just as easily unlearn it. You unlearn it by replacing it with a new system, and you get a new system by seeking new truths from books, guides, your higher self, and so on. The world that you perceive is perceived differently by the next guy. We are all seeing an illusion, an interpretation of energy activity that we are the creators of. The Real world is seen through vision, not perception. And vision only comes when you finally drop all your judgement of what you see, when you let it tell you what it is instead of you saying what it is. But that is another story all together.

You are in charge of 'can', and no one else. People can tell you that you can't, all day long, until they grow hoarse and lose their voices. It will have absolutely zero effect on you. Unless you accept it. What did you accept as a child? Do you like it? Then un-accept it. Change. Re-create yourself. Have a new idea of who you are!

There is a lot of help available nowadays that was never there before. We now have a deeper understanding of our universe and the way it works. Web sites such as www.imagesofone.com get us headed in the right way within a click of a mouse. Authors and speakers now grace our talk shows and bookstores giving us exactly what we need just at the right time. All that is left is for you to make the step.

About the Author

Article written by David Cameron, CEO ImagesOfOne.com, author of Raising Humans and A Happy Pocket Full of Money, and developer of the Prova LifeGoals Effortless Achiever+ and Prova LifeMap Numerology software. These and titles such as Think and Grow Rich, As A Man Thinketh, and more are available for download at <http://www.ImagesOfOne.com>

The Seven Chakras - Gates to Freedom

By Savitri Simpson

What Is a Chakra?

Chakra is a Sanskrit word literally meaning wheel or circle. In a deeper sense the word describes the whirlpools or vortices of energy located along the central axis of our bodies, in the “deep” or astral spine. The chakras are a part of what might be called our spiritual anatomy. Just as there is an anatomy to the physical body and maps to the physical world, so also there is a definite anatomy of our spiritual beings, as well as maps and guideposts to follow along the path of inner awakening. If we understand this spiritual anatomy, then we will find it much easier to advance in our search for God.

For example, the point between the eyebrows (the sixth chakra) is that part of the body where the mind becomes focused automatically in ecstasy or just in concentration. Perhaps you’ve noticed the unconscious tendency people have to knit their brows, or frown, when engrossed in a project or making an important point in conversation. Understanding this truth, and consciously putting our attention at that point, we discover that the mind actually does become focused there. This is one of the central teachings of yoga.

Yoga is a continuous tradition of teachings and techniques that help the ascending soul to understand that there are higher levels of consciousness that transcend lower levels of awareness. Generally speaking, information about the chakras comes from India and from the ancient science of yoga. Yoga is a true and universal teaching, yet yoga does not have a corner on truth. Anyone who finds spiritual freedom or oneness with God, no matter whether they are from an Eastern or Western background, discovers the same truths. Yoga’s unique value lies in its scientific approach to finding God, based on an ancient tradition of experimentation. It offers non-sectarian guidance and wisdom for those seeking higher awareness, based on centuries of experience.

Spiritual awakening is not a vague, mystical experience. All true teachings, although some less specifically than yoga, point to very particular realities. As an example of this, we find statements in every scripture that say that heaven is “above” and hell is “below.” But no telescope has ever shown us angels flying around in outer space. Nor has any deep well-drilling equipment brought up screaming and protesting demons. Heaven and hell are not “up” and “down” objectively speaking – what is up for us is down for people in Australia. This concept has no cosmic relevance, but it does have infinite relevance for the individual.

We can easily see this relevance in our instinctive responses to life. When we feel uplifted or high, or downcast or low, we use expressions which reflect these feelings. Spiritual awakening implies raising of energy and consciousness in the body. And hellish consciousness, materialistic consciousness-that which takes us away from joy and down into suffering and pain-is always a descent. Isn’t it true that every time we feel wonderful, we experience a rising energy inside ourselves, and we look up?

You never see people smiling and looking upward, saying, “I feel so depressed.” Likewise, you don’t see people slumping, looking down and droopy, saying “I feel so happy.” Quite the contrary, for these physical reactions are manifestations of universal truths, based on the way we are made. What yoga does is particularize these truths by showing that outer experiences of joy or sadness are caused by energy moving in the deep spine. But yoga doesn’t teach this concept as a dogma. It says: “Try it! Experience it!” For everyone who has tried it, has experienced it.

When our energy is uplifted in the spine we begin to approach divine consciousness. But in the

beginning of our spiritual quest, we encounter what might be called “gates” or “doors” (words often used to describe the seven chakras) that need to be unlocked.

Locating the Chakras

The spinal centers, or chakras, are found at the points where tributary streams of energy (prana or life force) from the body join the upward flow of energy in the deep or astral spine. The astral, or energy, spine is not the backbone (those knobs that can be felt along the back), but runs more or less through the center of the body. Energy flows through the central nervous system and through the astral spine. In our unawakened state, the main energy-flow is downward, away from the brain, and outward to the organs and limbs.

The chakras correspond to the spinal plexuses in the physical body, from which nerves branch out to provide energy to the different body parts. As we go deeper in meditation and prayer, uplifting our consciousness, the energy begins to flow upward in the spine. Try to feel this internal “river of life” at your center as the location of the chakras.

First Chakra

The first chakra is located at the base of the spine. It is also called the muladhara, or coccyx center. From this center radiate the nerves that go to the lower parts of the body: the anus, and the legs.

Second Chakra

An inch and a half above the first chakra is the swadisthana, or sacral center. The nerves from this center operate the reproductive system.

Third Chakra

Opposite the navel in the astral spine is the manipura, or lumbar center, the nerves from which operate the digestive system and all the internal organs and glands in the abdominal cavity (spleen, liver, kidneys, adrenals, etc.).

Fourth Chakra

At the region of the heart in the spine is the anahata, or dorsal center, from which nerves radiate out to the heart, lungs, and chest, and into the arms and hands.

Fifth Chakra

The vishudha, or cervical center, from which nerves radiate to the throat, neck, and vocal chords, is opposite the throat in the spine.

Sixth Chakra

The highest spinal center is located in the medulla oblongata, at the base of the brain just above the place where the skull connects with the neck. Its positive pole is the ajna chakra, at the point between the eyebrows. The medulla oblongata is the center through which cosmic energy feeds the entire body with prana (life force or conscious cosmic energy).

Seventh Chakra

The sahasrara chakra, is located in the cranium, at the top of the head. This center is traditionally known as the thousand-petaled lotus, or crown chakra.

Functions of the Chakras

In addition to their physical functions, the chakras store and distribute energy and information. They also serve as the location of our psychological or mental tendencies, habits, and desires. In fact, the astral spine is a long, downward extension of the subconscious mind. Our inner struggle to grow and change spiritually takes place between the pull of the soul from above and the pull of

matter and material involvement from below.

Every unfulfilled desire, every wave of like or dislike, every karmic action, creates a subtle vortex of energy. These energy vortices are held together by centripetal thoughts, such as: “I want this; I reject that; I like this; I don’t like that; this is what I have done; that is what I failed to accomplish.” The ego hugs these thoughts and impulses to itself until they gain release outwardly in action, or inwardly in self-realization. To work out all desires or karma in the outer world is, ultimately, not feasible, for out of every fulfilled desire there arise two, or twenty, or a hundred other new desires.

These vortices of desire, also called vrittis, enter the subconscious and sink to their respective levels in the spine in the area of a specific chakra, according to the relative grossness or refinement of the energy they express. Their location in the spine depends on the chakra with which their vibrations are in harmony (“like attracts like”). The more spiritual a vortex, the higher the center around which it settles; the more materialistic a vortex, the lower the center. Very old vortices, as yet unresolved, are submerged, so to speak, by more recently created vortices, and have little or no effect on the waking consciousness. They continue, however, like little ripples on the surface of larger waves, to obscure the clear reflection of the Eternal Spirit, long after the larger waves of the initial desire or feeling have subsided.

The energy of these vortices, when released to flow upward, combines to produce a mighty river of energy before which no obstacle can stand. A strong upward flow of energy in the spine dissolves those vortices automatically, just as a strong flow of water in a river dissolves the little eddies along its banks. Thus an increase of the flow of energy inward and upward through the astral spine is a major tool for awakening and unlocking the chakra “gates.”

Excerpted from Chakras for Starters: Unlock the Hidden Doors to Peace and Well-Being.

About the Author

For over 20 years, Savitri Simpson has taught and inspired thousands of aspiring souls to their greatest good with the ancient teaching of Raja Yoga. She is a long time teacher at The Expanding Light, Ananda’s Yoga and Meditation Retreat. <http://www.expandinglight.org>

Savitri currently teaches classes in the chakras, meditation, and meditation teacher training. <http://www.expandinglight.org/med/medtraining.htm>

An expert in Chakras, for the last 15 years, she has taught hundreds of classes, workshops, and seminars on understanding and awakening the chakras. She also is the author of “Chakras for Starters” book and video as well as a video / DVD called “Yoga Postures to Awaken the Chakras.”

Change vs Transition

By Beth Densmore

“There is a time for departure, even when there’s no certain place to go.” -- Tennessee Williams

The words change and transition are often used interchangeably. In truth, they have very separate and different meanings.

Change is a one-time occurrence: we change jobs, change clothes, change living arrangements. Change is a shift from one person, place or thing to another.

Transition is the ongoing process of dealing with a change. Transition is letting go of how things were and embracing how things might become. Transition is a shift from one state of being to another.

Change can be self imposed or imposed upon us. Buying a new home is usually a change we impose upon ourselves. Moving into the new home is the change. Learning to let go of the way things were is the transition. In moving to a new home this could be dealing with a new route to work, missing our old neighbours, learning to use new appliances. Until we are comfortable with the new and willing to let go of the old we are in transition.

The death of a loved one is a change imposed upon us. Not only did we not choose the path we are on, but also we aren’t even sure if we can see a path. We are confused, frightened and sometimes feel powerless to accept the change thrust upon us. We can’t move because we are unable to let go of the past and can’t see what might be ahead. As we learn to accept that the old is no more and that we must embrace the new, we are in transition.

Sometimes transitions are not created by change (or at least not by change we can identify), but, by an internal shift in our being: a shift that tells us something is different in the way we feel about certain people, places, or things. Transition can sometimes precede change. When we decide to look for a new job, we don’t just wake up one morning and decide to make a change.

Rather, it is usually an idea that has been formulating for some time (transition). We may have been unhappy in our job for a long time, wanting more responsibility, a higher salary, a new boss or even a new career path. When we have accomplished the “idea” time we are ready to make a change.

So far it looks as if our lives are in a continuous stage of transition and they are. With that said, it is important to develop the skills to live in transition. Transition periods can be the most productive periods of our lives, if we understand that letting go is not dismissing what has happened. Transition is, instead, the period in which we accept what has happened and we search for the path to follow forward. That search can lead us to new and creative ways to live our lives.

About the Author

Beth Densmore is a Personal Life Coach who offers support, inspiration and motivation to those who are in transition and want to achieve a goal. For more information and more free articles like this, visit her site at <http://www.newfocuscoaching.com>

Supporting Yourself Through Change & Growth

By Ada Porat

It has been said that change is the only constant in life. Change is taking place everywhere around us, all the time. As we navigate the winds of change, we all need support: whether going through a divorce, recovering from an illness, embarking on a spiritual awakening or starting over in a new community.

All forms of change require us to learn new ways of being and functioning. One of the most valuable gifts you can give yourself during times of change is to find appropriate support. A basic understanding of the learning process that moves us through change will boost your ability to find meaningful support for every stage of your journey.

Humans move through three core stages in every area of change and growth – whether you are trying out a new sport or adjusting to life after losing a loved one. You may find yourself at a beginning stage in one area or your life and an advanced stage in other areas of your life. Success lies in being able to determine how your personal learning needs to be supported with appropriate feedback, support or adjustment. When we get stuck in any one stage, growth stagnates.

Beginning Stage – Knowledge

The beginning stage of learning or change is the thinking or cognitive stage. This is the stage where you may decide to learn more about something - perhaps you choose to explore spiritual realities and delve into many traditions, teachings and materials. During this stage, you spend a lot of time acquiring information, processing new concepts mentally, and figuring out how everything fits together.

During the beginning phase, personal growth tends to be sporadic, uncoordinated and often somewhat lopsided – not unlike watching a toddler taking their first solo steps. Mistakes are common and it is often difficult to filter out irrelevant information, since discernment is a skill that gets refined with time and practice. You may get overwhelmed easily when there are too many things happening in your life at one time or if you put pressure on yourself.

One of the most valuable forms of support during this phase is to ask for constructive feedback and encouragement from others. You can also support your own progress by giving yourself room and grace to fail, and making a commitment to keep going after each setback. Repeated effort provides the practice needed to become more familiar with the new skill or learning.

Intermediate Stage - Application

In the intermediate stage, you start applying what you have learned so far to implement meaningful change into your life. You now move beyond simply knowing about things into practical application of your knowledge; you experiment with new and different ways of being in order to live it. During this phase, you start connecting the dots in your learning. With the experience gained from practical application, you start shifting your perspective to embrace new attitudes. On the spiritual journey, this stage finds you moving out of the intellect and into the heart, from where you start clearing away everything that is illumined by your emerging Higher Awareness as no longer useful.

During the application stage, you may try many different approaches to your goal before experiencing a sense of accomplishment. Clients looking for tools of self-transformation often experiment with different meditation techniques or forms of exercise during this stage. Since

practical application brings about real-world outcomes, you may also become acutely aware of the external environment in which you operate. This heightened sensitivity can bring with it a strong need for external encouragement on your progress to build confidence and assurance. If not balanced with your personal convictions, this need for external affirmation can evolve into expectations of external validation that may erode your personal power.

On the journey of personal growth, you will spend most of your time in this stage, continuously challenging and clearing outdated beliefs to facilitate continued growth. Constructive feedback becomes vitally important and you may rely on a few trusted sources for feedback. There is also a need to balance input from others with increasing responsibility for your own growth. You take on more responsibility by actively maintaining balance, clearing out dissonant beliefs, aligning to your core truths and reconciling your inner life with outer differences.

Advanced Stage - Integration

In advanced states of learning, you take full responsibility for your actions and your behavior becomes self-regulating. You have moved from the stage of knowing about things, to doing it, and now you are becoming it. You no longer look outside yourself for affirmation, guidance and support, but find it through your ever-present connection to Source. Listening and dialoging with the Divine Presence within, becomes an automatic, on-going process that facilitates personal diagnosis and adjustment in areas of imbalance whenever needed.

Functioning at this level brings about a keen awareness of your interconnectedness to all forms of life. This emerging awareness makes you highly effective at being a positive influence for change, shifting the level of consciousness around you simply through the sum total of what you have become. At this level, growth or development may be incremental and may appear smaller, because the individual deals with fine-tuning and deep inner work that may not be visible to others.

The next time you feel a little lost on your path, take a look at which stage of learning you are at in the area where you feel wobbly. Then, find support that will offer you appropriate correction and feedback for that stage of your process. You'll be amazed at the difference this awareness brings!

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About the Author

Ada Porat uses body/mind/spirit techniques to facilitate personal growth and balance for clients. Her innovative approach has brought about profound results for individuals internationally. For more information on vibrational healing, ascension and life balance coaching or to sign up for her inspirational newsletter, go to: www.AdaPorat.com

The Art of Making the Right Choices

By Vitae Bergman

The gift of life necessarily comes with a curse. For with this precious gift an inescapable question arises: what does one do with this life we are given? A century ago, such a question was almost unthinkable, at least for most individuals. There were few choices over which to decide. And most individuals had literally no choice in the matter. If they were men, they did what their fathers did. And if they were women, they either got married or taught in schools or worked in hospitals. Only in some cases were men and women able to carve out careers.

Today, the situation is entirely different. Today, we must create our lives from the bottom up, and in every way imaginable. We have to decide how we are to make a living, where we are going to live, how we intend to organize ourselves around a lifestyle, meaning with what gender we will identify, with what form of education we will connect ourselves, with what type of friends we will engage ourselves...even what kinds of foods we will take into our bodies; and then, we even must decide the source for this food whether from locally, organically grown suppliers or from mainstream supermarkets.

The list of decisions we must make is endless. No wonder that more and more people have become anxiety ridden. Confusion has given rise to a perplexity no other time in history can match. And as a consequence, more people are asking some basic questions. People are beginning to ask what is their real purpose; for instinctively they know that once the real purpose is found, decisions can then be made in accordance with that purpose.

"If only I knew what my real purpose for this life I am living truly is, then I will know how to live it."

This is not simply a personality issue. No longer is it a feasible option to make choices based on requirements rooted in egoic self-examination. Nor can the old aptitude testing devices suffice in showing us the way. The world is changing too rapidly for such outmoded means. We have become permanently bombarded with an ever-expanding list of choices, so-called opportunities—each and every one of them promising us the ultimate happiness we all presumably seek.

Our world is exploding. And so we are becoming more insistent. We no longer ask, "What do I want?" We don't know what to want anymore. There is so much to want. Chasing after our wants has gotten us fragmented, scattered, out of touch with whom we thought we were.

We have come instead to acknowledge the importance of first knowing, "What is my purpose?" Knowing our purpose orients us in the right direction for realizing a satisfying life. And to know our purpose, we must go deeper within our self. We must delve past our ego self to the core of our being. To put it precisely, this is a soul question we need to ask. We must ask, "What is it that Soul has brought me into this life to accomplish?"

In other words, the real question can only be, "What is my Soul purpose?" What am I here to accomplish for the benefit of Soul? It must be understood that each of us is a soul being alive in a human body. We have come to the earth plane for two reasons: 1, to help heal the planet (restore its natural balance), and 2, to heal our self (restore our soul psyche to its natural balance).

As souls, we have come into the earth plane innumerable times, first as innocent beings not fully aware of the distortions life in this dimension exerts upon the purity of our being. Thus, from lifetime to lifetime, our souls have become scarred. We have created karmic scars. Our soul psyches have gotten out of balance. And so, in this current age, our souls now desire healing; and this

healing can only occur in the dimension in which the imbalance took place, namely, on the earth plane. We are here to help restore balance to our soul psyche. When the egoic self-which is our personality-aligns with the soul and offers itself in service to soul purpose, then it can be said, we are on the path leading to inner joy.

As humans, we have been given life to serve soul. And as there are no two humans alike, so also are no two souls alike. Thus, there are as many individualized purposes as there are souls on earth. Each one of us must look within to decipher the hidden message that leads us to our purpose. There are many technologies for making this journey within, most of which belong to the realm of the esoteric sciences. For more than 30 years, the art and science of numerology has been for me the most useful, the most penetrating tool for this kind of self-discovery. Several years ago, I wrote a book titled "Numerology for Soul Awakening," which addresses the task of uncovering your individualized soul purpose.

About the Author

Vitae Bergman has been a professional numerologist for over 30 years. He offers a study course available online at <http://joyfulnumerology.com>

Words That Inspire – CHOICE

By Julie Cohen

WORDS THAT INSPIRE

A monthly quick shot to motivate you, in less than 45 seconds, from Julie Cohen Coaching

What CHOICE do you want to make?

Dictionary*says:

the act of choosing, power of choosing, a person or thing chosen, the best part, care in selecting.

What it REALLY means:

making a commitment to what matters to you; acting on your priorities and your values; expressing to yourself and to others what you want and need in your life.

Why it MATTERS?

CHOICE moves you from stuck into action; from uncertainty to decision. CHOICE gives you freedom from ‘what should I do?’

Questions that INSPIRE:

- What CHOICE do you want to make?
- What is preventing you from making a CHOICE? What would simplify this CHOICE?
- What would it feel like if you already made the right CHOICE for you?
- What are your values and priorities that influence this CHOICE?
- What can you do today to act on this CHOICE?

I would love to hear your answers and comments.

Take 45 seconds to reply to these questions at Julie@juliecohencoaching.com

I will keep all responses confidential and reply directly to you.

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*(Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, 1977, G. & C. Merriam Co.)

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Definitions - Clairvoyance, Clairaudience and Clairsentience

By Glenys Fallon

In life we are all different therefore we will all perceive or be sensitive to energy differently and there are four ways to interpret an incoming thought, pattern or energy. Most of us will perceive primarily by one and partially by the other three.

Clairaudience - Intuitive

This is a person who will pick up a thought and hear it. This person's mental or intellectual understanding is very important and they can make good leaders. We all know someone that we would say was a mental person, always having to understand mentally. They carefully think things through. If this person were to become enlightened they would have the ability to become a medium, someone who channels information from entities who have passed over, because their most heightened sensitivity is to hear.

Clairvoyance - Visionary

This is a person who will pick up a thought and see it. This person has the ability to transform a thought into a vision, symbol or in colour by using their mind's eye. If an artist, a decorator, a creative person, someone who mainly uses the right side of their brain were to become enlightened they would have the ability to read auras, our chakras, draw guides and this is how they would channel what they received because the ability to see images is their most heightened sensitivity.

Clairsentience - Prophetic (1)

This is a person who will pick up a thought and just knows it. This person is sensitive to precognition and has hunches, dreams and knowings and this person usually deals with the future or present and how it will affect another. If you were to meet an enlightened Prophetic you would be able to get some information about your 'line of probability', tomorrow is not set in time remember. This could be a person who has a dream about something and that dream turns out to happen in reality. They have the ability of prediction because they 'just know' and can tune into and understand their hunches.

Clairsentience - Feeler (2)

This is a person who will pick up a thought and transform it immediately into a feeling. This person's life can revolve around how it feels to them. Their sense of touch is well-developed and they have the ability to know people by feeling what they feel. After enlightenment, this is someone who would have the ability to practice psychometry. The ability to put something belonging to someone in their hand and read the energy. Depending on their other gifts, they could tell the past, present or future from the energy. They have the ability to feel how others feel but only on the emotional level. They will be able to not only empathise but experience their pain, loss, grief etc. For instance, if they were to channel energy from a person's past life they would experience the pain and hurt that that soul experienced in that past lifetime.

About the author

Glenys Fallon practices Spiritual Psychology and Metaphysics. She has extensive experience in the area of reincarnation.

Are You Codependent or Independent?

By: Brian Maloney

Why is it that depending on others to fulfill our self worth is a concept that we all can relate to? Sacrificing what our thoughts, emotions, decisions, and likes or dislikes are, for the betterment of someone else's.

It is as if depending on the other person who you hold so high is more fulfilling than standing alone, independent of the other. Its root resides in a past when a person didn't realize they really had wings that could fly. Therefore, for fear of abandonment, they suppressed their own self worth, avoided confrontation, and then continued to please who they were dependent upon.

In contrast, the counter dependent person who has someone co-dependent towards them, is pretending that they don't need anyone else and have concluded that people only need them.

Both co-dependency and counter dependency are an internal defense systems that shield and protect from past wounds of abandonment. They both are dysfunctional and lead the co-dependent person down a tattered road of unfulfillment and eventually depression.

Perhaps, it could be said that all of us are, to some degree, dependent upon others because, after all, we are social creatures who inevitably need each other in some capacity.

However, when it saps your very core of enjoying the gift of life God gave you, then the sun never rises and the darkness only gets darker.

We came into this world alone and we will also leave that way!

Inner strength comes from a true respect and love for yourself, no matter what the situation or condition is. Although, deep within many of our wounded souls, that love is not strong and therefore self respect is not properly attained.

This is where your deep-seated self-worth is obtained and how you perceive yourself. In addition, it is the weakened aura you emit to others see you that is not totally erect, but somewhat wilted.

Many of our true societal problems, whether they are insecurity, control issues, co-dependency, addictions, manipulative personality disorder, seclusion, or simple anger, stemmed from a lack of self love, self worth, and self respect. Hence, people replace one problem for the another!

If you are lonely inside and do not feel as though you can love the real you, then any and all subsequent relationships will feel that same inner turmoil until your inside is truly loved!

These social problems listed above can intertwine, commingle and cross each other's boundaries in a very insidious manner.

There is not one issue more serious than the other, they are more or less on an equal plane and being dependent on another, is certainly no exception.

By not allowing one's self-worth to be determined by another's perceptions, by not feeling that being loved by another is conditional on living up to the expectations of others, or merely pleasing them, is absolutely critical to healthy functioning!

Taking full accountability for the way you feel instead of others making that discerning

determination allows you to be self dependent, kicks out the crutch, and makes you stand alone.

As scary as that may seem to some, it is by far the best way to perceive your self-worth. Trusting that you can own your own emotions, whether they are anger, happiness, setting boundaries, or leaving, is how we can come to the serene life we always dreamed of as a child.

These decisions and self-adjustments for the better can be made! It takes a personal acceptance and a subsequent love for yourself: then the fragile person previously tethering by a string, is now firmly tied unto itself, immersed in self confidence and independent, not codependent.

About The Author

Brian Maloney - ValuePrep.com

Want to improve your personal values? Get high-quality-relationship advice from a 'Logical' standpoint. Visit <http://valueprep.com>

How to Escape Your Comfort Zones

The Secrets of Unbundling Your Life

By Lee Johnson with Albert Koopman

What Are Comfort Zones? And Why Should We Escape?

We all have our comfort zones – havens of security, familiarity and comfort. But why, you may be asking, should we escape? Surely a comfort zone is our reward for hard work, the place we've struggled for so long to get to? The place everyone wants to be? And wants to stay?

These are good questions. But don't be fooled – because there's a lot more to comfort zones than meets the eye.

The first problem is that comfort zones are comfortable – at least superficially. And because they're comfortable, they lull us into a false sense of security and well-being. Yet the very fact that you have started reading this book proves that, despite your 'comfort'. You have a vaguely uncomfortable feeling that this may not be altogether a good thing.

That's good! Feeling uncomfortable is a really good sign; it's when we're blissfully oblivious that we've got a real problem. It's when we're not uncomfortable that we aren't motivated to confront our true feelings and simply run away from them – and are doomed to remain trapped in those Comfort Zones.

Slipping into a Comfort Zone is a simple process. When we are comfortable, our activities and behaviour tend to take on familiar patterns. Patterns become habits; habits become routines; and before we know it those routines become a rut. And the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth of the excavation!

Of course, the most obvious of all is the material Comfort Zone. It's one of the easiest to get trapped in, and one of the most difficult to escape from. After all, it's the embodiment of the Great American Dream; the pursuit of success and wealth and all their external symbols. Perpetuated by movies and soap operas and reinforced by advertising, the material Comfort Zone seems, for most people, to have become the very purpose of life.

But there are also many other less obvious Comfort Zones. I'm talking about the invisible prisons of social and parental conditioning, of societal and cultural norms, of systems and rules and conventions, and a thousand other factors that are all just bricks in the walls of the prisons that surround us and prevent us from growing.

If we look at them objectively, Comfort Zones are almost inevitably states of limbo, secure castles in which we have imprisoned ourselves or allowed ourselves to be imprisoned by others. We perpetuate – and grow – those high walls by not being aware of them, or by refusing to recognise that they're there. And so we compromise and rationalise and convince ourselves that it's simply our 'fate' to be in our current situation... and, after all, we could be worse off, couldn't we?

Mostly, we don't even realise we're in Comfort Zones. And so we simply shut off any ideas of the alternatives, of the options that lie outside our own narrow existences. Because it feels so safe and comfortable within, even to think of venturing outside our castle (and I'm not necessarily talking about a physical escape) seems foolish and risky and scary.

And the fact is, it is risky and scary. But definitely not foolish. Recognising that we are trapped in a Comfort Zone – and that there's a whole lot more to life beyond the walls of our self-imposed

limitations – is the first step towards escaping it and gaining mature wisdom and insight into our lives. Like the alcoholic, whose healing process can only begin once he has stood up in front of his peers or looked into a mirror and admitted that he is an alcoholic, so we can only begin to escape our Comfort Zones when we admit that we are trapped in them. Until that moment of honest self-confrontation, nothing can happen.

A second important step is accepting the fact that risk and pain are essential and inescapable components of this escape, as they are of any change or transition. In its most trite form it's a question of 'no pain, no gain'. Until we confront this fact, and until we muster the courage to leave behind the temporary and unfulfilling 'myths' of security and familiarity and material possessions (and they are myths, no matter how real or vital they may seem to you now), we can never begin the process of discovering our true selves and leaning what is truly meaningful and fulfilling and worth while in life.

The Honesty to Confront Your Self in the Mirror of Truth

It's all about honesty. Honesty with those around us, but most of all honesty with ourselves. In order to become our true selves, we must have the courage to be ourselves and follow our own dreams. If we can't do that, then the life we're living isn't our own. Isn't that a terrible admission – that the life you're living isn't your own? How can we ever be self-fulfilled or at peace when we are lying to ourselves?

Real honesty also means bridging the gap between 'Who I am' and 'What I do'; and between 'Ought to be' and 'Is'. It is being what you believe in; letting every action and behaviour be an expression of who you are inside. And you simply can't do that until you recognise and realise to what extent your life is being restricted, and how many of your actions are motivated by external forces rather than internal desires.

Only you can admit that you are trapped in Comfort Zones. But, like the alcoholic who can't begin to be cured until he has the honesty to confront that fact and commit himself to doing something about it, you have to go through the same process in escaping your Comfort Zones. And, unfortunately, nobody can do it for you – even though, as you'll see later, there are people who can lead you to the water (as this book does), but then it's up to you to decide whether you want to drink.

How Do We Recognise These Comfort Zones?

There are many different types of Comfort Zones and, as I said earlier, most of the time we aren't even aware that we're in them. And you can't solve a problem until you know exactly what that problem is. So, how do you recognise your own particular Comfort Zones?

You already know about material Comfort Zones, and they're fairly easy to identify. But let's look at another simple example.

You may be trapped in a dead-end job, hating every moment, resenting your boss, your circumstances, your pay package. And yet you just carry on from one dreary or stressful day to the next. You win of dreaming the sweepstakes or hitting that huge jackpot, and walking into the boss's office, telling him his fortune, and walking out into a new life – perhaps retiring to a desert island. (Don't we all have these dreams some time or another?)

Problem is, your chances of winning the sweepstakes or hitting that big jackpot are about as remote as your Fairy Godmother appearing, or a Knight in Shining Armour arriving on a white steed to rescue you, or any of the other unrealistic fantasies we invent to make our realities tolerable.

The reality is that you have to get real.

You have to realise that you are the Knight in Shining Armour, that you are the Fairy Godmother who can miraculously change your life for the better. And you can only do that when you can see things in true perspective. You can see the lush green fields and mountains of the world that lie beyond your Comfort Zones only when you have broken down the high castle walls that imprison you. Yet most people find it more comfortable simply to remain where they are, to make excuses and compromises.

But why do you put up with a life of compromise? Why do you continue to suffer, escaping only in day-dreams? The truth is that although you may be unhappy and unfulfilled, this discomfort is relatively more comfortable than the alternative – like waking up one morning and walking into the boss's office and handing in your resignation.

You are afraid of the void beyond – the unknown world. WHAT ELSE WILL YOU DO? Will you find another job? What will it pay? What will your friends/family think? That's why, even if actually offered another job, most people still find it very disconcerting and disturbing to actually 'take the leap', to find the courage to leave behind their Comfort Zone and accept the risks and unknowns of a new job. And even when they've decided, they often have difficulty taking the step of actually doing the things necessary to implement the change: writing the letter of resignation, telling the boss, making a firm and final date for leaving.

Being stuck in a lousy job is only one example trapped in a Comfort Zone. There are many other examples: an unhappy or stagnant relationship, an unfulfilled marriage, restrictive religious or social norms, a smothering small town with no future, an inhibiting, aggressive, over-competitive city.

The fact is, unless things become completely intolerable, or until you are fired or retrenched or dumped and forced to do something about it, it's more comfortable for you to stay where you are than to face it and risk change. And so you stay put. And become more and more trapped.

Perhaps your own particular Comfort Zone is mainly a psychological one or emotional one; perhaps you are inhibited from progressing in your life by some past, often long-forgotten incident or traumatic experience or parental reproach or religious rule or societal norm.

For example, you may have been brought up in time when pre-marital sex was considered taboo by society. Entrenched by what you heard in church. Made more real by someone you know becoming pregnant and being ostracised by family and friends. And twenty or thirty years later, even though the attitudes of society have changed dramatically, even though your parents and teachers and church ministers may all be dead, your attitude and behaviour is still governed by an amalgam of all your past lessons and entrenched beliefs. And this may be inhibiting your entire life, affecting your relationships with members of the opposite sex, preventing you from making a full and satisfying attachment...leaving you trapped in your Comfort Zone of loneliness.

Invariably, each Comfort Zone is unique to each individual and very complex in its uniqueness, being an amalgam of many factors interacting powerfully with one another. And even once you recognise your own particular Comfort Zones, and realise that you're trapped, why don't you simply escape? Unfortunately, it's a lot harder and a lot more complex than it seems – and for these

reasons you don't simply walk out on your lousy job.

Although you may be lonely and unhappy and unfulfilled, the truth is that the discomfort that you feel is relatively more comfortable than the alternative – that is, asserting yourself against everything that you have based your past behaviour, changing your entrenched beliefs to fit the new changed you within a changed society. In short, simply being honest with yourself in what you really want and desire in life, and having the courage to go out and get it.

But Why This Obsession With Change and Growth? Why Can't We Just Stay Where We Are, Secure In Our Comfort Zones?

Many people asked me this question when I first started working on this book and exposed them to my ideas. They asked me how I could be so arrogant as to expect everyone to think as I did – namely, that growth is the most important and worthwhile task we all have in life, and that stagnation is therefore the most worthless.

My answer is that these are not just my subjective thoughts and opinions – they are in fact universal truths. This is my reasoning:

Everything in the entire universe is in a constant process of movement, of process and growth. Decay and death are not only valid parts of this eternal and ubiquitous process – they are essential aspects of it....for only through decay and death can new birth begin.

And yet man, with his rational mind capable of contemplating his own destiny, seems to have the dubious talent and desire consciously to suspend or delay or manipulate this process in himself.

For example, medical science prolongs an often fatally diseased physical life; social mores and the institution of marriage often prolong fatally diseased relationships; psychological hang-ups and defence mechanisms such as rationalisation perpetuate and prolong fatally diseased emotional, material and spiritual wastelands – those most insidious of traps that I call Comfort Zones.

Unless we recognise the fortresses we have built around us, unless we confront our own honesty, unless we recognise that risk and pain and death of the familiar and the comfortable are essential companions to the inescapable process of growth and rebirth, and should therefore be welcomed and embraced, we cannot even begin to break down the restraining walls and lower the drawbridge to a new and fuller existence.

I think Morris West expressed it perfectly in his book *The Shoes of the Fisherman*:

It costs so much to be a full human being that there are very few who have the enlightenment or the courage to pay the price... one has to abandon altogether the search for security and reach out to the risk of living with both arms.

One has to embrace life like a lover.

One has to accept pain as a condition of existence.

One has to court doubt and darkness as the cost of knowing.

One needs a will stubborn in conflict but apt always to total acceptance of every consequence of living and dying.

That's what escaping Comfort Zones is all about – to abandon altogether the search for security and reach out to the risk of living with both arms.

If you're not prepared to do that, if you'd prefer to keep your security bubble of rationalisations and

illusions and self-deceptions intact rather than confront the truth and your own honesty, if you're not prepared to take the risks and face the consequences, then burn this book now. Because once you've begun the journey, once you have taken the blinkers off your eyes and your mind and soul, you will never be able to fool yourself again. You will either have to continue the journey, or live forever with the knowledge that you are living a compromise.

And that is the most uncomfortable Comfort Zone of all.

The Significance of Creativity

By Doug Friedenber

In thinking upon the role of individual creativity in the transformation of the planet, let us first consider and clarify our understanding of the creative process. For the purpose of this series of thoughts, we will focus upon creativity as the giving of form to that which is formless. A view of creativity from this angle will, it is hoped, lead to some interesting observations.

There are many examples of the form-giving process. We have but to look at a painter who gives form to his way of seeing the world; the dramatist who gives form, tangibility, to subtle emotions. Then there is the philosopher, who may give a verbal form to abstract ideas, or even to a moral basis for right behaviour in the world. But in our stated context, the most significant example would be the individual who embodies in his own life the highest spiritual and moral principles he is capable of expressing. For creativity is not the exclusive province of the artist; creative life is a n opportunity and responsibility of every conscious individual.

Essential, the role of the creator is that of a mediator, a transformer of energy, be it thought energy or the energy latent in matter. We may recall Einstein's relativity equation, which proved that energy and matter were one and the same, the conversion factor being light. We may also recall the occultist's reiteration of this fact in the statement that spirit (energy) is matter in its highest form; matter is spirit in its lowest aspect. And we may touch upon man's place in the cosmos by noting that the creative human being, through the light of consciousness, transforms energy and provides a vehicle for its expression within matter.

The creative individual is somewhat like a moveable electric socket. Just as a socket provides a door between pure electric energy and its visible uses, such as providing light and heat, or activating types of machinery, so the creative individual provides a physical outlet for the expression of any ideas and energies he can contact.

Just as electricity flows spontaneously through any channels that are presented, so the energy which flows through the creative individual manifest spontaneously, as it is focussed and directed by that individual. The specific focus and direction of this spontaneity is dependent upon the receptivity, or conductivity, of the individual's environment and his personal tendencies. The flow of ideas and energies through creative people ranges from the artist as his easel to the conscious soul utilising his very lifetime for the expression of some ideal or work of God.

The question is, how does creativity help to transform the planet, to help establish a world order based on right relations between man and man, and between man and the other kingdoms of nature, a world whose keynote is harmony?

A simple review of history reveals the importance of creative of creative endeavour. Human advancement has depended upon those who could contact and express coherently those energies and ideas whose expression could lead to humanity's next step in religious, political, educational, and scientific terms. It has depended upon those who have gained the ability to touch in varying degrees the source of all wisdom.

Even as history demonstrates the value of creativity, it does not reflect the number and quality of the individual lives who, 'sight unseen', have helped to shape the course of human events. The dual recognition of what history says and what it leaves unsaid suggests our own significance as creative agents at this time. There have been hundreds who worked as effectively in relation to their own spheres of influence as did Christ or Einstein in theirs; many have played their parts in the anchoring of new ideas and qualities within the life of humanity who remained unknown save to their friends and co-workers. Likewise, each individual can now, through a creative responsiveness

to the needs of the time and a vision of the future, establish the patterns of cooperation and concern for the welfare of all men which will serve as the foundation of a new era.

As an example, let us consider the group of individuals all over the world in whose lives the energy of goodwill is a reality. Goodwill has been described as man's first attempt to express the love of God; it is love in action, a dynamic force capable of remaking the world. Through this group of men and women, the energy of goodwill is substantiated; it is made apparent for all to see. This thereby sets an example for the future actions of all peoples.

One may express goodwill in all aspects of life. Those who are concerned with the arts express goodwill in the works they produce, but there is also the creativity of the shopkeeper who looks out for his patrons as well as himself. There is the creativity of the plant manager who motivates his workers by his respect for their rights and his inspiration, rather than the use of his authority. There is the creativity of the farmer, who enters into a harmonious relation with the land and the vegetable kingdom. In short, there is no area in which goodwill cannot be expressed in a creative fashion.

The effectiveness of these modes of creativity in bringing about change may seem small when considered individually. There is a definite effect, however, and when the global group is considered, the effects are far beyond any expectations. The demonstration of techniques of goodwill has an impact on the minds and hearts of all men which cannot be achieved by the most enlightened discussions. For this reason the truly creative individual will always be distinguished by his willingness to do as well as to speak of doing.

The value of creative initiative in effecting change is inestimable. The welfare of our planetary society depends upon those who can sense new ways of working and demonstrate these ways to their fellow beings. Let each of us, then, renew his effort to stand in creative spiritual being. Let each of us do his part to implement the solutions to the problems which face humanity as a whole, for the solutions are available to those who will to know. And let us all, joined in one subjectively linked group, work together in creating the new world we have envisioned.

Cognizing the Spiritual World

From A Way of Self-Knowledge

By Rudolf Steiner

Insight into the results of spiritual science comes easier when, in ordinary soul life, you focus on what produces concepts that can be expanded and transformed such that they can then gradually approach the processes and beings of the spiritual world. This path requires patience. Without it, you will be tempted to imagine the spiritual world as too much like the physical, sensible world. Indeed, unless you walk this path patiently, you will be able to form neither a true picture of spirit itself nor of how it relates to human beings.

Spiritual events and beings press toward those who have prepared their souls to perceive them. But they impose themselves upon us in a way that is completely different from the way physical facts and beings do. We may, however, gain an idea of this very different mode of appearance if we contemplate the process of memory.

Long ago, or perhaps more recently, you experienced something. Then, at a certain moment, occasioned by this or that, a memory of the event rises out of the substrate of your soul life. You know that what has arisen corresponds to an experience, and you relate it to that experience. But in the present, in the moment of remembering, you have nothing more of the experience than an remembering image.

Imagine an image arising in your soul that is like a memory image, but is not a picture of something you experienced before. It expresses something foreign to your soul. This gives you some idea of how the spiritual world first appears in the soul that has been sufficiently prepared.

Because the spiritual world first appears in the soul in the form of images, people who are insufficiently familiar with the workings of the spiritual world will always object, saying that all supposed spiritual experiences are nothing more than vague memory images, which the soul does not recognize and so takes to be revelations of a spiritual world. One cannot deny that it is certainly difficult to differentiate between illusions and reality in this realm. Indeed, many people who believe they have had perceptions of the suprasensory world have in fact merely seen only memory images that they do not recognize.

To see clearly in the spiritual world, a person must learn about the many possible sources of illusion. For instance, you may have once seen something so fleeting that its impression did not fully enter your consciousness. Later, a very vivid image of it perhaps in a highly altered form arises within you. You may well then swear that you never saw it before, that you have had a genuine inspiration.

This is one of the reasons why it is quite understandable that the results of suprasensory vision seem highly questionable to those unfamiliar with the special features of spiritual research. In my book *How to Know Higher Worlds* I explain the gradual development of spiritual vision. If you read that book carefully, you will certainly be prepared to distinguish between illusion and spiritual reality.

Nevertheless, the following must still be said. Spiritual experiences occur, at least in the beginning, as images. They rise as pictures from the depths of prepared souls. The important thing is to have the right relationship to those pictures. In fact, they have value for suprasensory perception only if the way in which they present themselves shows that they are not to be taken literally. If we take them as they appear literally, they have little more value than common dreams. We must consider them as if they were letters of the alphabet laid out before us. We do not focus upon the form of the letters. Rather, we read in them what is expressed through them. Just as something written does

need to be described in terms of the form of the letters, so the images that form the contents of the of the suprasensory vision do not require to be understood as pictures. Of themselves, they make us turn completely away from their pictoriality and lead the soul toward the suprasensory process or being they express.

You cannot complain that a text from which you can learn something new consists only of well-known letters of the alphabet. Similarly, you cannot object because the images in suprasensory consciousness contain only things borrowed from normal life which, to an extent, they do. What those images borrow from normal life is unimportant for genuine suprasensory consciousness. The important thing for suprasensory consciousness is what the images express.

To cognize the spiritual world, you must first prepare your soul to see the pictures that arise in the spiritual field of vision. At the same time, you must carefully develop the attitude that you will not remain with the images but will rather, relate them in the right way to the suprasensory world. True suprasensory vision, therefore, has not only a capacity to see an inner world of images; it also has another capacity, one comparable to reading in the sensory world.

When you begin, you must imagine the suprasensory world as lying completely outside normal consciousness. Nothing at all of ordinary consciousness can enter that world. The soul is touched contact with the spiritual world is established when the powers of the soul life are strengthened by meditation. Through these soul powers, pictures arise from the flux of soul life.

In themselves, these images are like a great tableau, woven entirely, by the soul itself. To be precise, they are woven from powers the soul has gained in the sensory world. The images woven in the soul can be compared only to memory. The clearer we are about this, the better we shall understand clairvoyant consciousness, for then we shall have no illusions about its pictorial nature. On the contrary, we will develop a proper feeling for the way we should relate to the images of the suprasensory world. That is, we are brought much closer to the nature and processes of the sensory world through our sensory impressions than we are to the suprasensory world through supersensorially beheld images. Indeed, we could even say that those images are, initially, a kind of curtain that the soul places between itself and the suprasensory world when it feels touched by that world.

It is important that you find your way to suprasensory experience step by step. Experience gradually provides a proper interpretation, a right reading. More importantly, suprasensory experience, the vision itself, will demonstrate that what you see has nothing to do with memory images drawn from ordinary experience. Many absurd things have had certain suprasensory insights. How many there are who, convinced of the reality of repeated earthly lives, relate certain images that arise in their souls to experiences of previous earthly existence. You should always be suspicious when such images seem to point to a previous earthly life that, in one way or another, is like one's present life or when they allow you to use an imagined earlier life to make it easier to understand rationally your present life.

When a true impression of a previous earthly life arises in real suprasensory experience, it is usually one that would be impossible to think up based upon all the desires and goals of your present life. For instance, you may receive an instantaneous impression of a prior earthly life in which you possess faculties or the like impossible in your present life. Such images that accompany our more important spiritual experience rarely come from memories of ordinary life; usually, they are images we would never have thought of ordinarily.

This is true to an even greater extent in the case of genuine impressions from the purely suprasensory worlds. For example, it is often impossible to form images from ordinary life that

relates to the existence between earthly lives that is, to the period between your last death and your present birth on earth. From that state, you can learn that, while you were in the spiritual world, you developed interests in people and things that completely contradict the corresponding interests you actually developed during earthly life. You recognize that in earthly life you are often led to develop affection for something that you avoided during your spiritual life between death and birth and could arise from memories is necessarily different from the impression you receive from real perception of the spiritual world.

Naturally, when I describe things in this way, those unfamiliar with spiritual research may object. They may say, "I can see you are very fond of this idea. But human nature is complicated. Every interest, every affection has its opposite secretly mixed into it. It comes to you at a definite moment, in connection with a specific thing. You take it to be a prebirth experience. But perhaps it is actually explicable through quite natural facts that may lie in the subconscious soul."

Generally, we cannot say much against such an objection since, in many cases, it is certainly correct. It is not easy to obtain incontestable knowledge through suprasensory consciousness. It is true that someone supposed to be a spiritual researcher can err by attributing a subconscious memory to an experience of pre-birth spiritual life. But it is also true that spiritual scientific schooling leads to a level of self-knowledge that includes the subconscious soul and that, thereby, genuine spiritual science can free itself from illusions in this regard.

Here we need affirm only that true suprasensory insights are those in which, in the act of cognition, one can differentiate between what comes from the suprasensory worlds and what comes from imagination. This capacity to differentiate is acquired through experience in suprasensory worlds. As a result, one can differentiate between perception and fantasy, just as one can tell the difference between a red hot poker you touch with your fingers and one you simply imagine to be hot.

Ebrace Colour

A on-line series that offers a practical look at the nature of colour and how we can apply back into our lives, bringing about a sense of inner being and balance. "Embrace Colour" is present by Gayle Friedman from the Sunshine Colour Academy - Cape Town South Africa. Gayle can be contacted on +27 (0) 829584801 / info@sunshinecolouracademy.com
Or visit her website for more info: www.sunshinecolouracademy.com

This weeks colour - BLUE

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax. Imagine yourself sitting on a cool blue lace agate stone under a waterfall of cleansing blue light from the sky purifying your brain allow the blue to flow into your throat opening to clear expression, than your neck across your shoulders down your arms and then flush through your whole body via the spinal chord cleansing, cooling, renewing cells and out through feet into the earth.....

Complimentary colour: Red

Element: Ether & Water

Astrology Sign & Planet: Virgo & Mercury

Chakra & Gland: Throat & Thyroid, parathyroid

Body parts: neck, shoulders, mouth, respiration, thoracic 1 and cervical 7

Energy body: Etheric Template Physical Higher aspect

Meridians: Bladder (yang), Kidney (yin)

Musical Notes: G

Key Words : Loyal, honesty, cooling, calming, communication, peace, pain relief, direct, clarity, healing, antiseptic, anti-bacterial, creative expression

Use for Healing: acute pain, fevers, burns, sunstroke, inflammations, grief

Contraindications: colds, muscle contraction, paralysis, poor circulation, depression.

Food: kelp, blueberries, fish, food growing on trees,

Aromatherapy Oils: chamomile, marjoram, tea tree, thyme, cypress, lavender

Crystals: blue lace agate, aquamarine, fluorite, tanzanite

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This weeks colour - INDIGO

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax...

Imagine yourself sitting on a cool lapis lazuli indigo rock in the middle of the deep blue ocean the sea flowing gently around you absorb the indigo into your brain through the brow, skull bones, the matter, into the neurons ..sense a peacefulness, a silence within, nothingness filling your head eyes, nose, ears allow brain, nerves to rest it is safe.....

Complimentary colour: Orange

Element: Ether

Astrology Sign & Planet: Libra & Venus

Chakra & Gland: Brow & Pituitary

Body parts: Brain, eyes, nose, ears, forehead, skull

Energy body: Celestial Emotional Higher aspect

Musical Notes: A

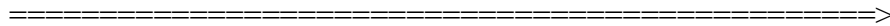
Key Words: Peace, balance, meditation, wisdom, calming, scientific data, astringent, depressant(to much), no material attachments, liberation, master of self, proud, mental manipulation, authoritarian, objectivity, reverence, neutrality, loneliness, right/left brain balance

Use for Healing: Pain, diarrhoea, psychic exhaustion/cleansing, sedative, sinus, migrane, insomnia, deafness, stops nose bleed, kills bacteria/parasites,

Contraindications: Schizophrenia

Food: black beans, wild mushrooms, soya sauce, black beans

Aromatherapy Oils: bay, cinnamon, clove, frankincense, grapefruit, jasmine, neroli, nutmeg, ylang ylang,



This weeks colour - VIOLET

Sit comfortably , close your eyes, take deep breathes in and out, and relax...

Imagine yourself sitting on a big amethyst crystal.

Connect to a point on the crown of your head imagine a violet flower opening ...energized by the violet sky of an evening sunset allow the violet to purify your brain, down your spine, into the nerves, the organs, the tissues, the cells, cleansing, purifying your whole mind heart body.... in the moment you are one with Spirit....embrace.....

Complimentary colour: Yellow

Element: Ether

Astrology Sign & Planet: Scorpio & Pluto

Chakra & Gland: Crown & Pineal

Body parts: Head, hair, CNS

Energy body: Ketheric Mental Higher aspect

Musical Notes: B

Key Words: Relaxing, hyponotic, narcotic, spirituality, service, healing, seeker of truth, contemplation, one with creator, understanding, miracle worker, access to unconscious/subconscious , healing, closure, inner calm,

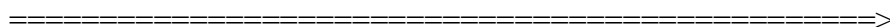
Use for Healing: Depression, migraine, baldness, parasites, anxiety, spiritual fear (negative entities), evoke angelic realm protection

Contraindications: none

Food: eggplant, purple onion, purple grapes

Aromatherapy Oils: frankincense, lavender, sage, sandalwood

Crystals: Amethyst, sugilite, diamond



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Or visit her website for more info: www.sunshinecolouracademy.com

This weeks colour - ORANGE

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and take a deep breath in and out. Imagine yourself sitting in a cave, deep in the centre of the earth- warm sunlight shining in from above, warm orange water seeping up from the earth, a fire in the centre of your cave and glowing orange crystals all around. Absorb the orange through your feet into your navel area, warming your reproductive organs until you feel inner warmth glowing , vitalizing your emotional body healing , nourish inner child male and female within...

Complimentary colour: Indigo

Element: Water & Fire

Astrology Sign & Planet: Taurus & Venus

Chakra & Gland: Sacral & Female - Ovaries Uterus, Male – Testes Prostate

Body parts: colon, mammary glands, lymph, digestion, lumbar spine

Energy body: Emotional lower aspect

Meridians: triple burner (yang) & pericardium (yin)

Musical Notes: D

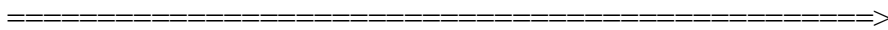
Key Words: tonic, creativity, pregnancy, trauma, sympathetic, understanding deep insight, antidepressant, social, passion, ecstasy, dependency co – dependency independence, practical, joy, sexual expression, freeing action, repression, manipulation, clairsentient - become one with others and psyche them out to help.

Use for Healing:

Contraindications: excessive physical sexual energy

Food: carbohydrates, oranges, mandarin, carrots, butternut, fish, food growing just above ground, leafy greens.

Aromatherapy Oils: citrus oils, carrot, clary sage, jasmine, geranium, rose, rosewood, palmarosa, marigold, ylang ylang, patchouli, Crystals: Tigers eye, carnelian, calcite



This weeks colour - RED

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax. Imagine yourself sitting on a big red jasper crystal. Your feet rooting deep down into the centre of mother earth - red volcanic lava, rising up through the roots into your body - warm red energising your blood, bones, muscles, organs, cells and settling in your pelvic bones. Take as much as you need to feel safe in your legs and feet supported by earth.

Complimentary colour: Blue

Element: Earth & Fire

Astrology Sign & Planet: Aries & Mars

Chakra & Gland: Base & Adrenals

Body parts: blood, muscles, bones, coccyx, lower limbs, kidneys, bladder, bowels, genitals .

Energy body: etheric lower aspect

Meridians: small intestine (yang), heart (yin) & triple burner (yang), pericardium (yin)

Musical Notes: C

Key Words: grounding, safe, strengthening, birth, stimulating, stability, courage, action, warming , outgoing, violence, fear, anger, irritability, impatience, inactive, aggression , greed

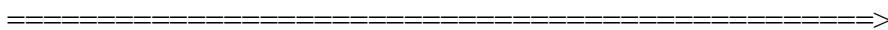
Use for Healing:

Contraindications: fever, inflammations, ulcers, swelling & hyperactive.

Food: protein, root veggies, beetroot, tomatoes & red apples

Aromatherapy Oils: benzoin, ginger, pine, sage, ruby grapefruit, sandalwood, rosewood, marjoram, vetivert, petitgrain, myrrh, rosemary, bergamot, juniper, camphor

Crystals: jasper, garnet & obsidian



This weeks colour - YELLOW

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out and relax. Imagine yourself sitting on a warm yellow citrine crystal. Warm father sun shining down on your body entering at your solar plexus centre under your ribs...bringing an inner glowing light into your digestive organs shining up and down your spine nourishing your whole nervous system absorb as much as you need...

Complimentary colour: Violet

Element: Fire & Earth

Astrology Sign & Planet: Gemini & Mercury

Chakra & Gland: Solar Plexus & Pancreas Spleen

Body parts: diaphragm, stomach, liver, gallbladder, adrenals, small intestines, autonomic nervous system, thoracic 12 & lumbar 1 spine

Energy body: Mental lower aspect

Meridians: stomach (yang), spleen (yin)

Musical Notes: E

Key Words: bright, warmth, happy, communication, self-confidence, concentration, uplifting, sunny, acquired knowledge, quick, critical, anxious, egocentric, perfectionist, workaholic, anger

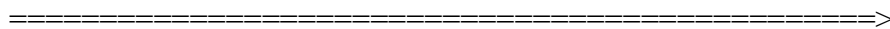
Use for Healing:

Contraindications: nervous conditions, inflammation

Food: bananas, pineapples, melons, cheese, food growing between the ground and the trees-grains, lemon, spices

Aromatherapy Oils: basil, cardamom, camomile, cinnamon, citronella, clove, coriander, fennel, ginger, nutmeg, peppermint

Crystals: citrine, tiger's eye, yellow agate



This weeks colour - GREEN

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax. Imagine yourself sitting on a big green aventurine stone. Fresh green grass all around you, green rising up through your feet, into your body. Green trees above, breathe the green into your lungs then via the heart into the bloodstream.... green balancing and healing cells... oxygen flowing wherever it's needed...

Complimentary colour: PINK

Element: Air & Wood

Astrology Sign & Planet: Cancer & Moon

Chakra & Gland: Heart & Thymus

Body parts: heart, lungs, arms, hands, circulatory, respiration, lymph, thoracic 4 & 5 spine

Energy body: Astral

Meridians: Gallbladder (yang), liver (yin)

Musical Notes: F

Key Words : love, balance, harmony, abundance, relaxing, new beginnings, empathy, humanitarian, friendly, nature, growth, fertility, healing, generous, desireless- desire, jealousy, envy, feeling trapped, moody

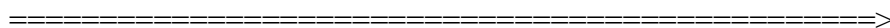
Use for Healing;

Contraindications: cancer use soft green

Food: green leafy vegetables, lettuce, cabbage spinach, sprouts, wheat grass, foods growing on trees-fruits nuts

Aromatherapy Oils: lemon, lemongrass, pine, cypress, juniper, eucalyptus, peppermint, lime, tea tree, benzoin, niaouli, thyme, cajaput,

Crystals: aventurine, amazonite, jade, malachite, tourmaline



This weeks colour - PINK

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax....

Imagine yourself sitting on a gentle rose quartz in a beautiful garden surrounded by bushes of pink roses take the aroma into your heart which is filled with warm red blood, call in white light from Spirit to the Heart and as it blends with red of the Blood, beautiful soft pink flows to the whole body taking a feeling of unconditional love to all the cells, soak it in as Spirit unifies with Soul enhancing Body.....

Complimentary colour: GREEN

Astrology Sign & Planet: Leo & Sun

Chakra: Heart

Body parts: Heart, whole body

Energy body: Astral

Meridians: to heal all

Musical Notes: F

Key Words: Unconditional love, harmony, ecstasy, female, mother love, safe

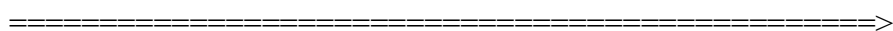
Use for Healing: all areas of physical, emotional, mental, spiritual pain or illness in body

Contraindications: none

Food: watermelon, strawberries, rose water

Aromatherapy Oils: rose, rosewood, palmarosa, geranium, clary sage, yarrow

Crystals: rose quartz, rhodocrosite, watermelon tourmaline, rhodonite,



This weeks colour - SILVER

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breaths in and out, and relax...

Imagine you are sitting on the great mother earth, a silver haematite cooling your life force. Allow the energy to flow up the spine into left bodygaze up to a great big full moon, a glowing silver ball of light radiating down from the top of your head energizing your right brain, down your spine, shining into the left side of your body, connecting you to the female intuitive, nurturer within.....

Complimentary colour: GOLD

Astrology Sign & Planet: Sagittarius & Jupiter

Body parts: Right brain left side body

Energy body: Female self, little girl, mother principle, wise women

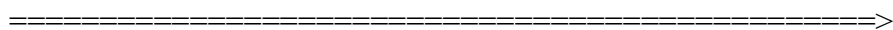
Meridians: Conception Vessel (yin)

Key Words: Moon, Earth, female, intuition, creativity, protection, purity, lightness of being, nurturing, womb

Use for Healing: Hot inflamed physical/mental conditions, mirror away negative energy, germicidal, antibiotic conditions, fevers

Aromatherapy Oils: Sage, juniper, cypress, eucalyptus, tea tree

Crystals: Haematite, galena



This weeks colour - GOLD

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, take deep breathes in and out, and relax...

Imagine you are sitting on a great big gold pyrite rock warmed by the sun draw the golden light up your body through your spine into the right side of your body and up into your left brain where it connects to golden light glowing down from the great father sun ...draw the power, strength and protection into you body enriching your inner male

Complimentary colour: SILVER

Astrology Sign & Planet: Capricorn & Saturn

Body parts: Left brain, right side body

Energy body: Male self, little boy, father principle, wise man

Meridians: Governing Vessel (yang)

Key Words : Sun, male, active, intellect, protector, wealth, wisdom, holiness, status, splendour,

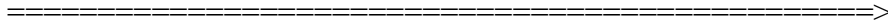
enlightenment, strength

Use for Healing : Immunity, Nerve weakness, addictions, disgust, general debility

Contraindications : Hot conditions

Aromatherapy Oils: Calendula, carrot, lemongrass, vetivert , bergamot

Crystals: Pyrite



About the Author

Gayle Friedman PMIAC + Allied Health Professions Council of SA, has been in the Health Care Field for 20yrs and is a qualified Aromatherapist, Colour Therapist, Reflexologist, Pregnancy Therapist, and Yoga Teacher for pregnant-women and children. She incorporates breath-work, colour energy balancing, visualisation and meditation in all her modalities. Gayle founded The Sunshine Health Academy Cape Town in 1984.

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Conscious, Intelligent Self-control

By Foster Bailey

Conscious, intelligent self-control is one of the most valuable assets we can have.

This is particularly so in this age of confusion when humanity is so rapidly maturing. We are today more responsible for our own future than ever before and we cannot control ourselves. At present the vast majority of human beings are controlled by their physical needs and their emotional urges. The immediate objective for man is mental control and the ultimate goal and destiny is soul control. To put it tritely, I am a soul and I have a physical body. The soul, or self, will ultimately become as real to us as a strong personal desire now is.

Meanwhile, we must deal with the present conditions of life or we remain as helpless children. Whether we control circumstances or are controlled by them is up to us. As adults we can and should control our own lives consciously and intelligently. Truly, as has been well said, our future is determined by the values we choose to live by now. The right to choose is an all important right essential to freedom. The only hope of a better world to live in is to preserve that right and to choose wisely. This requires intelligent thinking and thought leadership is the most needed leadership of all.

The most important study that our education system should promote is the study of man himself. We study everything else ad nauseam. We can learn much by studying human behaviour, even more by the study of man himself. The question is pressing in on us of what a man really is, which is the study of life itself. This includes man's relation to God and clarifying just what we mean by God. Is there a God, is not sinful to ask, and for an adult humanity the answer must be reasonable and not, as in the old days, on imposed authority under penalty of ending up in hell. Hence the importance of the injunction: 'Man Know Thyself', and the study of psychology.

Let us be as practical as possible in so profound a subject and consider man as he appears to be by his five senses; but now science has broken that limitation and we have mastery over many things our five senses cannot register. Indeed, we have so much power that, if misused, we could destroy humanity. We are increasingly destroying factors necessary for human life on this planet which we cannot replace. The greatest danger to man has become himself. There is so much evidence of survival after so-called death that the intelligent student can no longer ignore it, but immortality is quite another matter. The idea that I want to be 'me' forever is rather unattractive in a world in which we are so uncomfortable. Definitely man is not merely a physical body and losing that body is not the end of him. Also there is a lot more to us than our desires and emotions, however strong, and it is only commonsense to train ourselves to control them.

This we can do by our own intelligence but it requires effort. It is the road to freedom and we need to free ourselves from ourselves. We can be objective about our own lives and be wise about the objectives we choose to live by but this necessitates self control and right use of the knowledge we now have. We have built a civilisation characterised by greed and cruelty and have become inhuman, which is to say more like animals. We are dominated by the motive of more for me which we can no longer justify because competition has become so dangerous, particularly between nations. Genuine, honest cooperation for the benefit of both parties must be the foreign policy of the nations if we are ever to stop killing and torturing ourselves. Indeed cooperation has become a must for survival.

Seven Easy Steps to Improve Your Concentration Powers

By Leon Edward

If you have the willpower you can easily learn the skill of mastering the power of concentration very quickly.

You've heard the saying, "If there is a will, there is a way" the same holds true with concentration. Diane Sawyer is a very popular and well-known television news correspondent. When Diane was once asked about what has led to her professional success, she had only one answer. That answer was being able to pay attention.

So the question still remains, "How do you learn to maintain your focus and enhance your concentration?"

The list below is helpful suggestions to improve your ability to concentrate in the most effective way possible. These tips apply whether you are at school, an important business meeting, at your office busy with work, or if you are just trying to finish a specific project.

1. Do five more

You are either one of two types of persons in this world. Either you know how to go through and eliminate frustration or you are the type that only wishes they are able to work through it.

So try to concentrate and focus in doing an additional five more things. This type of mantra is best used when you feel like giving up.

An example might be if you are reading or writing and you no longer want to continue to read or write, push yourself to do just five more pages. Complete five more math questions or if you are exercising add an extra five minutes on the treadmill. Remember that athletes build their own physical physiques by pushing themselves to the point of exhaustion, that also helps to develop mental stamina.

2. Take one step at a time

There may be times when you feel like you are a scatterbrain because your mind is filled with many ideas. Controlling your brain is the key.

Do not worry about lots of matters, prioritize tasks and do only those that are needed.

For instance, you cannot help but think of your mounting bill problems and this causes you to quit focusing on your presentation that needs to be done in five minutes. Tell yourself that after the presentation you can then focus on ways to pay off your bills. This gives your mind closure and allows you to focus completely on the presentation.

3. Get tunnel vision

You can actually cup your hands around your eyes and this could serve as a mechanism to tell your mind to stay on task.

Case in point: you are in a room and you need to study but there are many distractions preventing you from concentrating. Cupping your hands around your eyes will help your brain to remember to focus and keep it on task.

4. Keep a notepad handy

That way when a thought pops up and distracts your focus, you can write down the thought immediately.

By writing it down you effectively get the thought out of your mind. Now you will focus on the job that you need to accomplish at the moment.

5. Take a break

You are not a machine. You may need to take a break to be able to effectively focus on the job that you have to do.

You can manage the job more effectively by using breaks to break your tasks into smaller parts. Try taking a walk outside or go out for lunch.

6. Record your start and end time

When doing work, try to record the time you started and the time that you lose focus.

This helps you know how much time you actually spent doing work and when you began losing your concentration. Being aware of this leads to understanding.

7. Mix up your activities

It is wise to change the activities you do so that you keep your mind alert and not bored.

A bored mind is not completely on its game and will wander.

All in all, these activities and suggestions should be practiced regularly to help you to be able to focus and concentrate on the things that really matter most to you.

About the Author

Leon Edward helps people improve IQ, focus, memory, concentration, public speaking, time management and reducing stress. Download his IQ Mind Brain Memory Self-Help library at his website <http://www.IQMindBrainLibrary.com>. Visit his Self Improvement Articles at <http://www.AwesomeSuccess.org>

Courage

From The Psyche and Psychism

By Torkom Saraydarian

Courage is psychic energy which leads us to a planned and contemplated act of sacrifice.

What is psychic energy? The psyche is you, the real you. If you are able to detach yourself from your physical, emotional and mental vehicles, and from their distortions, inertia, glamour's and illusions, you will find your true Self. The moment of finding your Self is a moment of radioactivity. This radioactivity is called psychic energy. It comes from the core of your being, and when it manifests through sacrificial deeds, we say that man has courage.

In every act of courage, we have three major elements:

- a. Contact with your true Self
- b. Careful planning or contemplation
- c. Selflessness

In this case, contact with you true Self means to have an experience of freedom from all limiting walls of your personality in which you see the vision of your future becoming.

In planning and contemplation may take one minute or one year, but your action is definitely conscious and you have full knowledge of the possible consequences. You are using your discrimination; you are using your intelligence in each act of courage. An act of courage is not an act of foolishness. A true act of courage carries a deep wisdom, a clear discrimination and a developed skill-in-action.

The next element is selflessness. Selflessness is the foundation of courage. To be courageous means to give yourself for others, to detach yourself from your self-pity, touchiness and security.

Before a man reaches the full expression of courage, he learns to welcome blows on behalf of others. He stands for the true rights of others; he protects them from any kind of evil attack but he does this without exception. Through such a life, he attracts the attention of his Higher Self and eventually stands within his own inner Light. No one can have a virtue if he is not sacrificial in his own nature. Selflessness is the road leading us to our true Self.

Courage cannot be attained in one day. You work for it for centuries. Every little act of selfless service, every little act of welcoming risks on behalf of others, slowly carries you up to your true Self. Watch the building process of a great palace or temple. It is not built in one day. It grows, stone by stone, very gradually. The masons build it with extreme care. Thus courage is built. Psychic energy will never express itself unless you build a path for its expression, and the path of expression is nothing else but your sacrificial deeds for others. Courage, the energy flowing from your core, is group conscious in its action. If an act is separate, stupid, unrighteous or selfish no matter how big an act it appears to be it is the result of your glamour's, illusions, fears vanity or greed.

Thus true courage has a more inclusive goal: When it radiates itself, it is for a group need, a national need, an international or global need.

Courage has eight landmarks in its expression:

1. Absence of Fear.

When courage radiates outward, it wipes away all fear because at the moment of its flow, you are at the centre of your true being and not identified with your physical, emotional and mental nature. When you are truly your Self, fear does not exist for you. You have fear only when you are identified with your not self or with your false self, with your garments, with clothes that you wear as your physical, emotional and mental vehicles. Nothing in these vehicles should prevent you from making a sacrificial act. That is why they must be trained from childhood to be sacrificial, to be obedient to the inner command, to the urge of the Indweller. When you are concentrating on yourself or are identified with your vehicles and their interests, you cannot perform courageous acts. Often courageous acts go contrary to the interests of these vehicles if they are not purified. Radioactivity starts when you begin to decentralize yourself. Decentralization releases your true Core and your essence radiates. Now you are not a crystallized energy or ridge but an energy flow, a psychic flow. In such a state you are turning into energy, into a flow, and dissipating all crystallizations and attachments. Such a state of being makes fear impossible to exist. Every time you are in fear, you cannot perform sacrificial actions.

2. Discrimination.

We cannot release true courage unless we are instinctively, intuitively and intelligently discriminative of how, when and where to use courage. There is a very fine dividing line between a courageous act and a foolish act. A courageous act has pure discrimination. All courageous acts must be harmonious with the divine Plan, with the line of evolution, with the karmic secrets. This needs the power of discrimination. Discrimination is called *Buddhi* in Sanskrit and that is spiritual insight, intuitive perception, penetrative insight into the causes of things on subtle planes of existence. That is why a truly courageous man is also a true disciple, a true initiate, a true prophet who stands for righteousness. He acts when he penetrates into the casual world and sees the necessity to act. It is not the courage of the western movies where they kill each other "courageously" for money, treasures and properties.

3. Vision for a greater whole.

Courage is motivated by a sense of unity. As it deepens, man achieves greater purity and radioactivity and embraces greater units within his heart. All his acts eventually turn into acts that unify the whole of mankind and create greater understanding between nations and between the kingdoms of nature. Such courage turns into a unifying energy. The greatest courage is the courage that unifies and faces all attacks of those whose life is dedicated to dividing, to separating and to exploiting. Such a man stands for one humanity and faces all those problems which are the result of separate interests. M. M. refers to this point when He says: "Try to unfold the power of insight, That you may perceive the future unity of mankind . . ." Courage not only works for the greater whole, but also makes others work for the greater whole. Courage is so contagious. One courageous man can set aflame the heart of thousands of people and lead them into courageous action. Because of one courageous man, spiritual evolution goes forward. Courage electrifies you because it releases your true Self from its hindrances and chains. It touches your Inner Core and helps you to see the real issue. Once you have touched your Inner Core, you are radioactive, fearless and clear-sighted. One courageous man can change the destiny of a nation or even the destiny of the world, if he is in the right position. Each courageous man who comes to the world, such as Socrates, Gandhi or Christ, uplifts the whole world to a higher degree of understanding and cooperation. Courage must expand and involve the whole. If it does not expand it turns into selfishness, cruelty, crime, and destroys itself.

Insight also can be defined as a vision which can see the future culmination of the causes not yet in action. This means that a man of insight can see the seeds and simultaneously see the seeds blooming and becoming a beautiful flower or a huge tree. He is seeing the cause, and, within the cause, the effect of the cause. His consciousness is not only embracing the past and the present, but also the future. In this case we define the present as the process of moulding the future. Thus the

man of insight "perceives the future unity of mankind" and does not waste his lives fighting for separative goals, which is common for average persons. A courageous man is one who proceeds against the tide, against the current. In separative goals, one always puts the interests of the personality first. Goals that lead you towards unity are based on your Soul-consciousness or your basic insight of the future.

4. Courageous people are linked with a great source of energy with which they can do almost anything.

We read in the Teaching: "Not only the direct link with the Lord, but even an unconscious striving towards Hierarchy creates a glimpse of communion with cosmic forces . . ."

Also

". . . Fate can be overcome if thou manifest the Christ, Who sacrificed Himself for Truth."

It is impossible to be a courageous man without such a link or communion and without the manifestation of Christ through all your activities. A "direct link with the Lord" is the cause of inexhaustible energy. To manifest Christ means to be fused with the Lord with such intensity that He lives through you and wipes away all that limits you on your path to divinity. A greater voltage of psychic energy comes from the Hierarchy, especially from the Heart of the Hierarchy, the Christ. Fusing ourselves with Him provides us with an inexhaustible supply of psychic energy which in turns into courage in all our endeavours in any field. Fate is the prison which we build through all activities on the three planes of the personality. It is possible to destroy this prison through manifesting the Christ, or letting Him steam forth into all our activities, feelings, emotions and plans. Fate is the controlling machine that we created in the past and now we are mechanically conditioned by it. Once we transcend it, it loses its control over us because our will no longer takes its orders from that control mechanism, but receives its orders from enlightened centres of spiritual realms.

5. Persistence.

M. M. Says: ". . . Nothing can divert the fiery man from his goal. Neither by day nor by night does he forget his predestined path. He is indifferent as to where his ascent will be accomplished. The condition of his body has lost importance for the striving spirit . . ."

Persistence is a continuous effort and striving towards the goal. That is what real concentration is: when your goal, like a huge magnet, attracts you, polarizing all elements around you to serve your ascent. Only through persistence does psychic energy pave the way for victory. No obstacle can hinder our path if we do not give up. Persistence allows psychic energy to gather its momentum, its right voltage and sharpness. Courage never gives up because as the obstacles meet courage, courage increases its strength. All great works in any field of human endeavour are the result of persisting courage because the courageous one knows instinctively that the victory will be one.

6. Experience.

Experience is the knowledge which is accumulated within your consciousness through your failures and successes. Because of your failures and successes you now know what to do. Courage automatically uses those ways and means which lead you to success. This does not mean it does not create new ways for achievements, but it uses all available data to secure its success. Experience is an ever-growing ability to understand the laws and principles of nature; this brings success which, in turn, helps your achievement. Experience even helps you see that there are failures which are really successes and are successes which lead you to failure. Any time a success stops, it turns into failure. Any time a failure is stopped, it turns into success.

7. Joy.

There is no courage without joy. Joy radiates from courage. If there is no joy in a courageous act,

you will find that the motive power of such courage is not the psyche or psychic energy but a glamour, illusion or a post-hypnotic suggestion. Through joy, courage becomes contagious. It radiates and magnetically gathers all those who are willing to cooperate with the act of courage. M. M. Says, "Joy is a special wisdom." Joy provides the energy that flows into courageous acts and protects the flow from any sidetracking influences. It keeps the vision of the achievement present in the eyes of the courageous man, thus providing steady inspiration for his efforts. Joy heals the wounds received on the path of a courageous life. Joy disperses any negative accumulations in the aura of the courageous one. It builds a shield around the person through which all of the arrows of the adversary cannot penetrate. Joy changes bitterness into love; it nourishes the nerves and strengthens the heart. M. M. says: ". . . A smile carries power."

If there is no joy in your efforts, you are destined to failure, or your efforts will lose the goal and turn away from it and change into an effort of self-seeking. All negatively polarized force eventually comes back and strikes the source. All positively charged energy creates no reaction that can hinder your path. Joy gives the quality of positivity to all your actions on all personality levels. Never was a command rejected when it was given with joy. Joy carries the command to your Innermost Centre, where you can see it as it is. You obey the command, not because it is given by someone, but because it is necessity, a task, a responsibility.

"Joy is the manifestation of the Creator's Power, illuminating a world in darkness. And Our Teaching enables all to share it, through labour."

Look at the Milky Way. What a tremendous beauty and expression of power! What a great manifestation of joy! It is this joy that penetrates your Innermost Being and leads you to greater works of courage. The power of the Creator releases the power of creativity in you. It is in this creative labour that you share in the joy of the Creator.

8. Virtue.

A courageous man is a man of virtue. All vices and character defects create fear, short-sightedness, instability, lack of persistence and failure.

A virtue is the flowering of the psyche or the psychic energy. An energy release from our Innermost Core turns into a destructive energy when it hits vices located in the lower mind, the astral body or the etheric body. A real act of courage cannot be performed before we clean all our vices to such a degree that they are not restimulated, creating a chaotic condition in the personality, or do not leak the energy or misdirect the energy into the channels of vices.

Virtues provide those conditions in which a released energy gathers momentum, creates enthusiasm and paves the way for greater success. The Ancient Wisdom tells us that no virtue is granted to you or given to you; you work for it. If you are a musician, a great talent, or a great genius, you worked for it, age after age, striving in the same condition, having the same interest and knocking on the same door on different levels and with greater and greater intensity. And when, life after life and age after age, you are running with the same striving and enthusiasm, you are releasing the talent within you, the genius within you. That is how virtues come into being. If you have any virtue, you worked for it by exercising your courage.

If something is given to you, you don't have a personal virtue or any merit because of it. You must have a virtue as a goal in front of you and work for it, develop it, unfold it and open your nature towards greater beauty. If you do not do it, no one is going to do it for you. Virtues are expressions of your Inner Divinity. They synthesis of all the virtues is your real self. Gradually, your personal virtues change into group virtues, into global virtues, as your Self merges Himself deeper into the Great Existence.

Creating A Balanced Life

By Kevin Sinclair

A balanced life is harmonious. Your work, family, play are all in harmony with each other. Your spirit is settled and you have a sense of peace. So many people have imbalances in their lives and in their spirits and in their lives.

Having a balanced life allows your creativity to flow and positivity to become the driving force in your life. You are as a leaf on the stream, moving with the flux and flow of the water. The balance of your spirit and all aspects of your life leave you with a sense of deep peace.

*** Why Balance is Important**

Balance allows you to have a peaceful experience. Imbalance in your spirit or in any area of your life creates disharmony in every aspect of your life. In short, imbalance in one area floods into the other areas of your life.

This leads to anxiety, insomnia, discontent, anger, depression and other negative feelings. You feel a need to rush, to move through life at lightening speed. You miss out on so much, from your family to your job to your own life. When you have all aspects of your life in balance, you do not experience these feelings.

*** How to Achieve Balance**

There are several actions that you can incorporate into your life to achieve balance. These simple steps can be applied to any aspect of your life, but balance begins from within with a cleansing of your spirit. It seems to grow from there and eventually reaches every part of your life. All you have to do is allow it.

- * Be patient.
- * Free your spirit of negativity - get rid of negative thoughts, negative feelings.
- * Make a conscious effort to achieve balance in your life - take control and own it.
- * Simplify your life - remove the clutter from your life, both figuratively and literally.
- * Slow down - calm the frantic rushing about and slow down.
- * Only you can make you happy.
- * You can not make anyone love you.
- * In order to love someone completely, you must first love yourself.
- * Accept the things that you can not control - learn to let go.
- * Spend quiet alone - for some people, daily quiet time is difficult to attain. But even just 5 minutes can make a world of difference.
- * Look for the good and the beauty in the things around you.
- * Meditate.

These things may seem simple and even common sense, yet so many people overlook them and move through life with such urgency, attempting to control everything and everyone around them - and they are miserable. Practicing these simple steps daily will help you to achieve balance.

*** How to Maintain Balance**

Achieving balance may seem difficult at times, but maintaining it can, at times, be even more difficult. Once the "honeymoon" is over it is easy to slowly slip back into your old habits. The best thing that you can do is to take one step each week or each month. Incorporate that step into your

life. The following week or month, incorporate another one.

As you take on the challenge to achieve balance in your life gradually, you will, in effect, be practicing one of the most integral factors of balance - patience. And with that patience you are incorporating these practices into your life gradually as you allow each to become a part of your being.

Each step will bring you closer to a peaceful enlightenment of sorts. Your priorities will shift, your focus will sharpen and your attitude will improve. There will be times when you are tempted to push all these steps aside and revert to your prior self, but if you breathe, close your eyes and regain your focus by releasing that negative impulse, you will maintain your balance.

Conscious breathing is a wonderful exercise, not only to relax and become focused; it is also wonderful for maintaining balance in your life. As you breathe in, be conscious of the positive air that you are drawing into your body, the positive energy and is moving through you. Each breath out releases you of the negativity that pervades and withers and burdens spirit.

* Where do I go from Here?

With these tools before you, all you have to do is accept them. Only you can achieve happiness, contentment and balance in your own life. And once you have attained these things, let it flow to others. You will likely have people asking you how you stay so calm. People may ask you why you are always at such peace.

Without a doubt, achieving and maintaining balance in your life will make your relationships stronger and your love much, much deeper. You will perform better at work and you will not feel burdened by things that you can not control. However, the most important thing that you can do once you have found balance in your life is to show someone how to achieve it in theirs. Reach out your hand to a spirit that is suffering and your balance will be even more increased.

About the author

Kevin Sinclair is the publisher and editor of My-Personal-Growth.com, a site that provides information and articles for self improvement and personal growth and development.

<http://www.my-personal-growth.com/>

Creativity as the expression of the Soul

By Rene Yohannan

No man by himself can build that which is lasting, that which endures, that which can truly serve, for in isolation man is but a wanderer, lost in the desolation of his own darkness. But filled with the light of God, filled with His love, and open to its continuing flow, man is able to give, to create and build that which serves all humanity.

The secret of creativity lies in our own posture, our own attitude and our true intent. To realise this is to acknowledge the source which feeds us and to recognise that that source is not our own but rather that we are a part of it, and serve it through the living and expression of our lives.

For man, related to the material world, is unable to comprehend the fullness of the possibilities he himself contains. This is so because man is more than just a creature of this planet; man is a spiritual being, and to see himself, to feel himself, he must look to his own spiritual nature, to his own soul. Unless he does this, he is doomed to remain upon the surface of this world, to see but a part of himself, and to lose the meaning of himself, that meaning which he desperately needs.

Many of us feel within ourselves certain desires and urges perhaps bordering on the realms of fantasy, it is often difficult to disclose what is deeply felt by us to others, to manifest in the world the way we truly desire. Some may recognise how they would want things to be, but feel at the same time a great chasm lying between what they feel and its realisation. It is easy to muse, somewhat difficult to think things out in order, and even more difficult to bring into being through our outward activities the product of our musing and thinking. For many of us it is difficult to correlate that which we feel within, perhaps in an almost mysterious way, to that which we feel to be the realities of the world.

Within every human being, within the totality of his individuality lies the truth of himself, the meaning of his own being. But the total individual is not an island, is not an isolated bit of animated consciousness, for through his own soul he is joined to God, and it is through that union that his own truth may be made evident to him. For God is truth, God is reality, and separated from Him, there is no reality or truth. Apart from God there is only illusion, and if we are not in communion with Him, we exist in illusion and are victims of our own meanderings.

Thus to find the meaning of our life, we must find truth. To find truth we must find God. And to find God, we must look into ourselves, not in the material sense, but in the spiritual sense, and to do this, the little self that we know must be put aside, that the real Self may be known to us.

We are born with elements of utility in us, gifts of creativity, and these gifts are contained within our being as kernels of possibility, as nuclei capable of development and blossoming. These gifts, these talents, we cannot recognise in full form until they are used, not for the benefit of ourselves, but for our fellow man. For in seeking not for ourselves but for others, with our true intent not related to self but fully in the spirit of giving, our talents are brought into use, into a balanced service, and thus are able to grow to their full capacity.

By seeking first the source within us, looking inward for our direction rather than outward, we may come to understand ourselves, to discover the purpose of our being, and to feel the joy of true communion. It is easy to look outward, to want to plunge into activity, to use ourselves in this age which so needs the active participation of all. But in doing this without looking to our own soul and to God for direction, we are establishing our relationship only to the world, and in so doing are limiting ourselves, to be pulled by the world. It is only through God that the world may be conquered. It is only through Him that we are able to apply ourselves in a manner which best

accomplishes that which we are capable of doing.

For by relating ourselves only to the world, our vision is constrained to the vision of the world, and we become, though our intent may be honourable, as the blind leading the blind. But a greater vision is available to us, a perspective which enables us to see beyond the limitations of the world and thus truly to help where we may help, and truly to serve where we may serve, and in doing so to find ourselves, to discover within ourselves all that we are. This is why we must turn inward and seek that source which works through our inner being. We seek not to remove ourselves from the world, but rather to live in the world more fully.

The needs of the world are many, and those needs buffet us on all sides; we cannot ignore them, for wherever we go their urgency calls to us, demanding from us that something be done, that we turn our attention to them. But desire alone, the needs of the sick, do not make a man a physician. He who desires to heal, who feels a calling within himself must develop his own potential, that he may truly aid those whom he wishes to aid. Unless he does this he is liable to cause more difficulty than he cures.

In the application of ourselves as ordinary world related individuals, little is known of the overall pattern of our own being, let alone the overall pattern for humanity. We cannot know what we are doing unless we raise ourselves beyond this clouded domain; and the way to do that is to look within ourselves and to follow the urgings of the quiet voice within us, for in that voice is contained a direction which includes the germ of the overall pattern both for ourselves and for others.

It is not always easy to follow the prompting of our inner self, for often that which we feel is at variance with our ordinary reasoning, and in conflict with the logic of the world. But we are not here dealing with worldly philosophies and the like, but rather with something of a transcendental nature, and the voice that we hear within us is an echo of the voice of God, and it is His Word that we heed.

All that has come into the world, all that has prepared man for the coming of a new age of truth, all that has had meaning and value for him has been derived from the very source which we seek today. Thus it is only in this way that we can recognise that which is best applicable for ourselves in the light of the past, to meet the needs of today, and to fulfil the promise of the future. The answer to the needs of man cannot be derived by the compilation of all that has been and all that is, for that in itself is but a partial viewpoint, not only in the sense of time, but also to the extent of visibility and to the capability of those who attempt to abstract the underlying fundamentals. These fundamentals, real though they are, are not within the grasp of humanity in terms of the understanding familiar to man. But their essence is contained in the quiet voice within us, and for that reason, this voice is to be listened to and followed, for only then can we engage in activities which build in the lasting way, the way of God.

In the unfolding of the new age many individuals are finding within themselves promptings which move them towards disassociating themselves from what has been, and are seeking new areas in which they might express themselves in a manner compatible with their own feelings. Confusion among those who feel inspired to do things which differ from that which has previously been done is naturally to be expected. There is confusion because the outer being of each of us, the physical man, has grown accustomed to a world of forms, and seeks therefore to channel his ideas within forms whether they be new or old.

The inner urges of the new generation, a transitional generation, are indications of a vast creative impulse, a creativity whose fruition extends beyond the confines of man's domain. Thus it is no wonder that there exists an alien feeling between old forms and ideas, and new ideas. It but remains

for the new spirit to emerge, first into conscious thought and then into physical reality, and in that way establish the fulfilment of the individual lives which seek to express themselves as they truly feel they should.

In bringing out the latent patterns, allowing the inner creativity to develop and blossom into fullness, it is necessary that each of us first look within, and in doing so, become selfless that we may turn outward again. By then turning our attention to others, we widen our own inner channel to God, and more and more can His love flow through us, and more and more can we discover our own capabilities in full use. There is then established a creative experience, a flow which enables us to use our being, a utilisation of all our talents and characteristics in just the right way of balance. In opening ourselves to others we open ourselves to God, and nothing stands in the way of His love. Others feel from us that which God gives to us and which we in turn give to them, and they in turn open themselves to us, and we feel their love as they themselves are filled with God's love.

The white light of God's radiance shines through each of us, and we in turn form it according to our own pattern of being, the pattern of our own soul. Thus our individuality is brought out by love and given to others, as their individuality is brought out by that same love and given to us. In this way men recognise one another, and through recognising one another, recognise God. The One becomes many and the many become One, and all is in balance and in harmony with a peace and joy beyond our present understanding. Thus is the promise of the new age fulfilled.

As love fills each man, as brothers are recognised as brothers, as the creativity of man blossoms from the spiritual into the material world, then indeed shall the Kingdom of Heaven come upon Earth. Then may God dwell in the heart of every man, illuminating all as though myriads of reflecting mirrors, and then may the river of life flow through the entire being of each of us, filling us with love as man stands up and reaches out to achieve his destiny.

Creative Imagination

From Esoteric Psychology II (pp 246-249 & 428-430)

By Alice Bailey

Much is heard today of the New Age, of the coming revelation, of the imminent leap forward into an intuitive recognition of that which has hitherto been only dimly sensed by the mystics, the seer, the inspired poet, the intuitive scientist and the occult investigator who is not too preoccupied with the technicalities and the academic activities of the lower mind. But one thing is oft forgotten in the expectancy. There is no need for too great an upward straining or too intense an outward looking, to use terms which the usual limited point of view can grasp. That which is to be revealed lies all around us, and within us. It is the significance of all that is embodied in form, the meaning behind the appearance, the reality veiled by the symbol, the truth expressed in substance.

Only two things will enable man to penetrate into this inner realm of cause and of revelation. These are:

First, the constant effort, based on a subjective impulse, to create those forms which will express some sensed truth; for thereby and through this effort, the emphasis is constantly shifted from the outer world of seeming to the inner side of phenomena. By this means, a focussing of consciousness is produced which eventually becomes stable and withdrawn from its present intense exteriorisation. An initiate is essentially one whose sense of awareness is occupied with subjective contacts and impacts, and is not predominantly preoccupied with the world of outer sense perceptions. This cultivated interest in the inner world of meaning will produce not only a pronounced effect upon the spiritual seeker himself but will eventually bring about the emphasis, recognised in the brain consciousness of the race, that the world of meaning is the sole world of reality for humanity. This realisation will, in its turn, bring about two subsequent effects:

1. A close adaptation of the form to the significant factors which have brought it into being on the outer plan.
2. The production of a truer beauty in the world, and therefore, a closer approximation in the world of created forms to the inner emerging truth. It might be said that divinity is veiled and hidden in the multiplicity of forms with their infinite detail, and that in the simplicity of forms which will eventually be seen, we shall arrive at a newer beauty, a greater sense of truth, and at the revelation of God's meaning and purpose in all that He has accomplished from age to age.

Secondly, the constant effort to render oneself sensitive to the world of significant realities and to produce, therefore, those forms on the outer plane which will run true to the hidden impulse. This is brought about by the cultivation of the creative imagination. As yet, humanity knows little about this faculty, latent in all men. A flash of light breaks through to the aspiring mind; a sense of unveiled splendour for a moment sweeps through the spirant, tensed for revelation; a sudden realisation of a colour, a beauty, a wisdom and a glory beyond words breaks out before the attuned consciousness of the artist, in a high moment of applied attention, and life is then seen for a second as it essentially is. But the vision is gone and the fervour departs and the beauty fades out. The man is left with a part sense of bereavement, of loss, and yet with a certainty of knowledge and a desire to express that which he has contacted, such as he has never experienced before. He must recover that which he has seen; he must discover it to those who have not had his secret moment of revelation; he must express it in some form, and reveal to others the realised significance behind the phenomenal appearance. How can he do this? How can he recover that which he has once had and which seems to have disappeared, and to have retired out of his field of consciousness? He must realise that that which he has seen and touched is still there and embodies reality; that it is he who has withdrawn and not the vision. The pain in all moments of intensity must be undergone and lived

again and again until the mechanism of contact is accustomed to the heightened vibration and can not only sense and touch, but can hold and contact at will this hidden world of beauty. The cultivation of this power to enter, hold and transmit is dependent upon three things:

1. A willingness to bear the pain of revelation.
2. The power to hold on to the high point of consciousness at which the revelation comes.
3. The focussing of the faculty of the imagination upon the revelation, or upon as much of it as the brain consciousness can bring through into the lighted area of external knowledge. It is the imagination or the picture-making faculty which links the mind and brain together, and thus produces the exteriorisation of veiled splendour.

When modern psychologists comprehend more fully the creative purpose of humanity, and seek to develop the creative imagination more constructively, and also to train the directional will, much will be accomplished. When these two factors (Which are the signal evidence of divinity in man) are studied and scientifically developed and utilised, they will produce the self-releasing of all the problem cases which are found in our clinics at this time. Thus we shall, through experiment, arrive at a more rapid understanding of man. Psychology can count definitely upon the innate ability of the human unit to understand the use of the creative imagination and the use of directional purpose, for it is found frequently even in children. The development of the sense of fantasy and the training of children to make choices (to the end that ordered purpose may emerge in their lives) will be two of the governing ideals of the new education. The sense of fantasy calls into play the imagination, perception of beauty, and the concept of the subjective worlds; the power of choice, with its implications of why and wherefore and to what end (if wisely taught from early days), will do much for the race, particularly if, at the time of adolescence, the general world picture and the world plan are brought to the attention of the developing intelligence. Therefore:

1. The sense of Fantasy
2. The sense of Choice
3. The sense of the Whole
Plus
4. The sense of ordered Purpose

Should govern our training of the children who are coming into incarnation.

The sense of fantasy brings the creative imagination into play, thus providing the emotional nature with constructive outlets; this should be balanced and motivated by the recognition of the power of right choice and the significance of the higher values. These, in turn, can be developed selflessly by a due recognition of the enviroing whole in which the individual has to play his part, whilst the entire range of reactions are increasingly subordinated by the understanding of the ordered purpose which is working out in the world.

These are the basic premises which should emerge in the techniques which psychology will use when it has reached the point of accepting (or at least experimenting with) the above ideas.

Cultivating Your Self-Esteem

By Brian Tracy

Your self-esteem is probably the most important part of your personality. It precedes and predicts your performance in almost everything you do. It is the energy source or the reactor core of your personality, and how much self-esteem you have determines your levels of vitality, enthusiasm and personal magnetism. People with high self-esteem are more positive, more likable and more effective in every part of their lives.

Everything that you do or say or think will affect your self-esteem. Your job, therefore, is to keep your self-esteem high and positive on a continuing basis.

Probably the best definition of self-esteem is this: the level to which you respect and value yourself as an important, worthwhile person. People with high self-esteem feel terrific about themselves and their lives. When you feel really good about yourself, you tend to be the very best person you can possibly be.

Your level of self-esteem is really your level of “mental fitness.” It’s a measure of how healthy, hardy, and resilient you are in dealing with the inevitable ups and downs of daily life. Your self-esteem determines how much peace of mind and inner contentment you experience. It is also closely linked to your health and levels of energy. People with high self-esteem are seldom sick and seem to have an inexhaustible flow of energy and enthusiasm that progressively moves them toward their goals.

How much you like and respect yourself also determines the quality of your relationships with people. The more you like and enjoy yourself, the more you will like and enjoy others, and the more they will like you. In fact, when your self-esteem is hurt in any way, the very first thing that is affected is the way you get along with people.

To perform at your best and to feel terrific about yourself, you should be in a perpetual state of self-esteem building and maintenance. Just as you take responsibility for your level of physical fitness, you need to take complete responsibility for the content and quality of your mind.

I have developed a simple formula that contains all the critical elements of self-esteem building, and you can use it on a regular basis to assure maximum performance.

This formula is comprised of six basic elements. They are: goals, standards, success experiences, comparison with others, recognition, and rewards. Let’s take them one at a time.

How much you like and respect yourself is directly affected by your goals. The very act of setting big, challenging goals for yourself and making written plans of action to achieve them actually raises your self-esteem, which causes you to feel much better about yourself.

Self-esteem is a condition you experience when you are moving step-by-step toward the accomplishment of something that is important to you. For that reason, it’s really important to have clear goals for each part of your life and to continually work toward achieving those goals. Each progressive step causes your self-esteem to go up and makes you feel more positive and effective in everything else you do.

The second element in self-esteem building is having clear standards and values to which you are committed. Men and women with high self-esteem are very clear about what they believe in. The higher your values and ideals are, and the more committed you are to living your life consistent with those values and ideals, the more you will like and respect yourself, and the higher your self-

esteem will be.

Lasting self-esteem comes only when your goals and your values are congruent—that is, when they fit into each other like a hand into a glove. Much of the stress that people experience comes from believing one thing and trying to do another. But when your goals and values are in harmony with each other, you feel a wonderful surge of energy and well-being, and that's when you start to make real progress.

Many people tell me that they are unhappy with their job because they can't seem to achieve success no matter how hard they try. I always ask them if they are doing what they really care about and believe in. In many cases, people realize that they are not happy with their job because it is the wrong kind of work for them. Once they change jobs and start doing something that they really enjoy, something that is more consistent with their innermost convictions, they start to make real progress and get a lot of satisfaction out of their work.

The third element in self-esteem building involves having success experiences. Once you have set your goals and standards, it is important that you make them measurable so that you can keep score of your small and large successes along the way. The very act of setting up a goal, breaking it down into smaller parts, and then completing those parts makes you feel like a winner and causes your self-esteem to go up. But remember that you can't hit a target you can't see. You can't feel like a winner unless you clearly lay out the standards by which you are going to measure your success and then achieve those standards.

Let's say that you set a goal to sell a certain amount or earn a certain amount of income in a given year. If you break that down into monthly and weekly goals, and then you achieve the first of those goals, you will feel great about yourself. Each time you reach another milestone, your self-esteem and ability to perform will increase, and you will feel encouraged and enthusiastic about the next challenge.

The fourth element of self-esteem is comparison with others. Leon Festinger of Harvard University concluded that in determining how well we are doing, we do not compare ourselves with abstract standards, but, rather, we compare ourselves with people we know. To feel like a winner, you must know for sure that you are doing as well as or better than someone else. The more you know about how well the others in your field are doing, and the more favorably you compare with them, the more you will feel like a winner, and the higher your self-esteem will be.

Successful people continually compare themselves with other successful people. They think about them and read about them and study their performances, and then they work to surpass them one step at a time. Eventually, successful people reach the point where they compete only with themselves and with their past accomplishments. But this comes after they have moved to the top and left many of their competitors behind.

The next element for self-esteem is recognition of your accomplishments by people whom you respect. To feel really great about yourself, you need the recognition of people you look up to and admire, such as your boss, your coworkers, your spouse and people in your social circle. Whenever you are recognized and praised for any accomplishment by someone whose opinion you hold in high regard, your self-esteem goes up, along with your eagerness and enthusiasm to do even better on the job.

The final element of self-esteem involves rewards that are consistent with your accomplishments. You may work in a field where you receive financial bonuses, status symbols—larger offices, bigger cars—or even plaques and trophies for superior achievement. All of those symbols can have

an incredible impact on raising your self-esteem and causing you to feel terrific about yourself.

If, however, your existing situation does not offer the tangible or intangible rewards that are necessary for you to build and maintain your self-esteem, you must create rewards for yourself. One of the smartest things you can do is to design a system for giving yourself rewards for both small and large accomplishments as you move progressively toward your goals. For example, people who do telephone prospecting will often treat themselves to a cup of coffee after every 10 calls. After 25 calls, they will reward themselves with a walk around the building or the block. After 50 calls, they will go out to lunch. Each of those rewards serves as an incentive that motivates them to repeat the performance. The end result is success, enthusiasm, and high self-esteem.

Whether or not your current environment provides the six elements of self-esteem building—goals, standards, success experiences, comparison with others, recognition, and rewards—you need to establish your own structure and take full responsibility for building yourself up on a regular basis.

Of course, it is possible to like yourself in the abstract, to think of yourself as a valuable and worthwhile person, but this tends to be a very shaky form of self-esteem that is easily knocked down by a negative experience or a temporary disappointment. The only real way for you to absolutely know that you are a valuable and worthwhile person is for you to make the effort, overcome the obstacles and pay the price to bring these elements into your life. When you have that foundation, you will experience a form of mental fitness and unshakable optimism that will sustain you through failure and propel you to success.

About the Author

Brian Tracy is one of America's leading authorities on the development of human potential and personal effectiveness. He's a dynamic and entertaining speaker with a wonderful ability to inform and inspire audiences toward peak performance and high levels of achievement. His exciting talks and seminars on leadership, sales management and personal effectiveness bring about immediate changes and long-term results.

Cyclic Ebb and Flow

From A Treatise on White Magic (p.242-247)

By Alice A. Bailey

Let us consider now the words "the ebb and flow of the waters."

In the understanding of the law of cycles, we gain knowledge of the underlying laws of evolution and come to a realization of the rhythmic work of creation. Incidentally also we gain poise as we study our own life impulses, for they also have their ebb and flow, and alternate between periods of light and periods of darkness.

We have with us always that symbolic daily occurrence wherein the part of the world in which we live swings out into the clear light of the sun, and later returns into the healing dark of the night. Our very familiarity with the phenomenon causes us to lose sight of its symbolic significance and to forget that under the great law, periods of light and dark, of good and evil, of submergence and emergence, of progress into illumination and apparent betrayal into darkness, characterize the growth of all forms, distinguish the development of races and nations, and constitute the problem of the aspirant who has built for himself a picture of walking in a constant illumined condition and of leaving all dark places behind.

In these Instructions, it is not possible for me to deal with the ebb and flow of the divine life as it manifests in the various kingdoms in nature and through the evolutionary growth of humanity, through experience in races, nations and families. I seek, however, to elaborate somewhat the cyclic experience of a soul in incarnation, indicating the apparent ebb and flow of its unfoldment.

The outstanding cycle for every soul is that of its forth going into incarnation and its return or flowing back into the centre from whence it came. According to the point of view will be the understanding of this ebb and flow. Souls might esoterically be regarded as those "seeking the light of experience" and therefore turned towards physical expression, and those "seeking the light of understanding", and therefore retreating from the realm of human undertaking to forge their way inward into the soul consciousness, and so become "dwellers in the light eternal". Without appreciating the significance of the terms, the psychologists have sensed these cycles and call certain types, extraverts, and others, introverts. These mark an ebb and flow in individual experience and are the tiny life correspondences to the great soul cycles. This passing into, and passing out of, the web of incarnated existence are the major cycles of any individual soul, and a study of the types of pralaya dealt with in The Secret Doctrine and in A Treatise on Cosmic Fire would be found of real value by the student.

There is also an ebb and flow in soul experience on any one plane and this, in the early stages of development, will cover many lives. They are usually quite extreme in their expression. A study of the racial ebb and flow will make this clearer. In Lemurian days the "flow", or the outward going cycle, spent itself on the physical plane and the ebb carried the life aspect right back to the soul itself, and there was no secondary ebb and flow on the astral or mental planes.

Later, the tide broke on the shores of the astral plane, though including the physical in less degree. The flow directed its attention to the emotional life, and the drift back to the centre took no account of the mental life at all. This was at its height for humanity in Atlantean days and is true also of many today. Now the ebb and flow is increasingly inclusive, and the mental experience has its place so that all three aspects are swept by the life of the soul; all are included in the outgoing energy of the incarnating soul, and for many lives and series of lives this cyclic force spends itself. Within the aspirant there arises an understanding of what is going on and he awakens to the desire to control consciously this ebb and flow or (to put it in simple words) to turn the forces of the outgoing energy in any direction he chooses, or to withdraw to his centre at will. He seeks to arrest this process of

being swept out into incarnation without having any conscious purpose, and refuses to see the tide of his life beat out on emotional or mental spheres of existence, and then again see that life withdrawn without his conscious volition. He stands at the midway point and wants to control his own cycles, the "ebb and flow" as he himself may determine it. With conscious purpose he longs to walk in the dark places of incarnated existence and with equally conscious purpose he seeks to withdraw into his own centre. Hence he becomes an aspirant.

The life of the aspirant begins to repeat earlier cycles. He is assailed by a sudden stimulation of the physical nature and violently swept by ancient desires and lusts. This may be succeeded by a cycle wherein the physical body is conscious of the flowing away from it of vital energy and is devitalised, because not the subject of attention. This accounts for much of the sickness and lack of vitality of many of our most cherished servers. The same process can affect the emotional body, and periods of exaltation and of highest aspiration alternate with periods of the deepest depression and lack of interest. The flow may pass on to the mental body and produce a cycle of intense mental activity. Constant study, much thought, keen investigation and a steady intellectual urge will characterize the mind of the aspirant. To this may succeed a cycle wherein all study is distasteful, and the mind seems to lie entirely fallow and inert. It is an effort to think, and the futility of phases of thought assail the mind. The aspirant decides that to be is better far than to do. "Can these dry bones live?" he asks, and has no desire to see them revitalized.

All true seekers after truth are conscious of this unstable experience and frequently regard it as a sin or as a condition to be strenuously fought. Then is the time to appreciate that "the midway spot which is neither dry nor wet must provide the standing place whereon his feet are set."

This is a symbolic way of saying that he needs to realize two things:

1. That states of feeling are quite immaterial and are no indication of the state of the soul. The aspirant must centre himself in the soul consciousness, refuse to be influenced by the alternating conditions to which he seems subjected, and simply "stand in spiritual being" and then "having done all, stand."
2. That the achievement of equilibrium is only possible where alternation has been the rule, and that the cyclic ebb and flow will continue just as long as the soul's attention fluctuates between one or other aspect of the form and the true spiritual man.

The ideal is to achieve such a condition of conscious control that at will a man may be focused in his soul consciousness or focused in his form aspect, - each act of focused attention being brought about through a realized and specific objective, necessitating such a focusing.

Later when the words of the great Christian teacher have significance, he will be able to say "whether in the body or out of the body" is a matter of no moment. The act of service to be rendered will determine the point where the self is concentrated, but it will be the same self, whether freed temporarily from the form consciousness or immersed in the form in order to function in different aspects of the divine whole. The spiritual man seeks for the furthering of the plan and to identify himself with the divine mind in nature. Withdrawing to the midway spot, he endeavours to realize his divinity and then, having done so, he focuses himself in his mental form which puts him en rapport with the Universal Mind. He endures limitation so that thereby he may know and serve. He seeks to reach the hearts of men and to carry to them "inspiration" from the depths of the heart of spiritual being. Again he asserts the fact of his divinity and then, through a temporary identification with his body of sensory perception, of feeling, and of emotion, he finds himself at-one with the sensitive apparatus of divine manifestation which carries the love of God to all forms on the physical plane.

Again he seeks to aid in the materializing of the divine plan on the physical plane. He knows that all forms are the product of energy rightly used and directed. With full knowledge of his divine Sonship and a potent mind realization of all that that term conveys, he focuses his forces in the vital body and becomes a focal point for the transmission of divine energy and hence a builder in union with the building energies of the Cosmos. He carries the energy of illumined thought and sanctified desire down into the body of ether, and so works with intelligent devotion.

Three Ways We Make Decisions

By Helene Rothschild

Are you satisfied with how you make decisions? Do you use your logical mind, your feelings, or your intuition? Would you like to make conscious, appropriate and more successful choices?

Especially now in this modern age, we often have many choices. Sometimes, all of our options become overwhelming. Also, because things are changing so fast, many individuals often find themselves in situations where new decisions are necessary.

The questions go on and on. Where do I want to live? Who do I want to socialize with? What job or career should I pursue? Where can I go on vacation? How should I deal with my money? Should I get involved in a relationship? What can I do to be a more successful parent? How can I balance my life better?

In the course of counselling many clients as a Marriage, Family Therapist, I noticed that there are basically three ways people often decide things. The first one I will refer to as the logical choice. This is very appropriate in many but not all situations. It is good to listen to your logical mind (left part of our brain) when you are dealing with logical issues.

Some examples are: balancing a check book, business problems and planning a budget. The logical mind offers rational, linear thinking that can help you see things in reality, in black and white. It also contributes to your common sense which is very helpful in many situations.

A second way to make decisions is with your feelings (the right part of your brain) even though the choice may not be logical and may appear irrational. For example, you may have an opportunity for a certain job or relationship that logically looks right. However, you may decline either one or both because your "heart is not in it." If you want to be happy, your feelings need to definitely be considered.

For example, Jane, a thirty-six year old wife and mother loved her husband and children and had a very high paying job in the computer industry. But Jane was miserable. Logically, she had everything most people desire, including a beautiful home and two cars. But Jane was depressed because she hated her career. Obviously, her feelings and her logic were in conflict. This caused her confusion and guilt feelings. During the counseling sessions, Jane admitted to herself that she wanted to quit her job, even though the family would have less income, and pursue an acting career.

Fortunately, her husband who loved her in a healthy way (he wanted her to be happy) supported his wife to explore her dreams. It was such a joy to see Jane glowing on the stage in her first comedy play.

An example of the third way people take actions based on their intuition is with the case of Stephen, a fifty year old salesman. He had a gut feeling not to take the plane he had previously scheduled for a business trip. Trusting his intuition, Stephen called ahead and made arrangements to take a later flight. The first plane had problems, and Stephen avoided being stranded out in a small city where the airplane had to make a forced landing. He followed his sixth sense which is a very wise part of us.

I am one of many people who learned the hard way how valuable my intuitive messages can be. I was once speaking to a woman, Marion, who was starting a wonderful organization. She asked me to help her create it and be one of the speakers. What Marion said sounded great, logical and exciting to be part of.

However, my intuition had doubts that she was healthy enough to succeed. Ignoring my sixth sense, I invested money, time and energy into the project only to find out that Marion had many personal problems that prevented her from fulfilling her goal. I learned my lesson and now I always check in on what wise information my intuition whispers to me.

As far as relationships are concerned, clients often admitted that their intuition told them the relationship would not work (love is not enough) and they could have avoided a lot of pain if they had listened.

In conclusion, I have discovered that most of the time the best way to make decisions is to check in on your logical mind, your feelings, and your intuitive messages. Since each of the three parts of you has a different perspective, you have a good chance of seeing all the pieces and then making the right decision at that time.

If you find yourself weak in certain areas, then you can find someone that you trust to offer you the other viewpoints before you make your decision. When you have eliminated your blind spots and considered all the information the three parts can offer, you are likely to make more successful choices and experience more fun, satisfaction and happiness in every area of your life. Copyright 2006

About the Author

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Gifts of Depression

From A guide for cultivating depth and sacredness in everyday life.

By Thomas Moore (p137-142)

The soul presents itself in a variety of colours, including all the shades of grey, blue and black. To care for the soul, we must observe the full range of its colourings, and resist the temptation to approve only of white, red, and orange the brilliant colours. The "bright" idea of colorizing old black and white movies is consistent with our culture's general rejection of the dark and the grey. In a society that is defended against the tragic sense of life, depression will appear as an enemy, unredeemable malady; yet in such a society, devoted to light, depression, in compensation, will be unusually strong.

Care of the soul requires our appreciation of these ways it presents itself. Faced with depression, we might ask ourselves, "What is it doing here? Does it have some necessary role to play?" Especially in dealing with depression, a mood close to our feelings of morality, we must guard against the denial of death that is so easy to slip into. Even further, we may have to develop a taste for the depressed mood, a positive respect for its place in the soul's cycles.

Some feelings and thoughts seem to emerge only in a dark mood. Suppress the mood, and you will suppress those ideas and reflections. Depression may be as important a channel for valuable "negative" feelings, as expressions of affection are for the emotions of love. Feelings of love give birth naturally to gestures of attachment. In the same way, the void and the greyness of depression evoke an awareness and articulation of thoughts otherwise hidden behind the screen of lighter moods. Sometimes a person will come to a therapy session in a dark mood. "I shouldn't have come today," he will say. "I'll feel better next week, and we can get on with it." But I am happy that he came, because together we will hear thoughts and feel his soul in a way not possible in his cheerful moods. Melancholy gives the soul an opportunity to express a side of its nature that is as valid as any other, but is hidden out of distaste for its darkness and bitterness.

Saturn's Child

Today we seem to prefer the word depression over sadness and melancholy. Perhaps its Latin form sounds more clinical and serious. But there was a time, five or six hundred years ago, when melancholy was identified with the Roman god Saturn. To be depressed was to be "in Saturn," and a person chronically disposed to melancholy was known as a "child of Saturn." Since depression was identified with the God and the planet named for him, it was associated with other qualities of Saturn. For example, he was known as the "old man," who presided over the golden age. Whenever we talk about the "golden years" or the "good old days," we are calling up this God, who is the patron of the past. The depressed person sometimes thinks that the good times are all past, that there is nothing left for the present or the future. These melancholic thoughts are deeply rooted in Saturn's preference for days gone by, for memory and the sense that time is passing. These thoughts and feelings, sad as they are, favour the soul's desire to be both in time and in eternity, and so in a strange way they can be pleasing.

Sometimes we associate depression with literal aging, but it is more precisely a matter of the soul's aging. Saturn not only brings an affection for the "good old days," he also raises the more substantive idea that life is moving on: we're getting old, experienced, and maybe ever wise. A person even in his middle or late thirties will be in conversation and offhandedly recall something that happened twenty years ago. He will stop, shocked. "I've never said that before! Twenty years ago. I'm getting old." This is Saturn's gift of age and experience. Having been identified with youth, the soul now takes on important qualities of age that are positive and helpful. If age is denied, soul becomes lost in an inappropriate clinging to youth.

Depression grants the gift of experience not as a literal fact but as an attitude toward yourself. You get a sense of having lived through something, of being older and wiser. You know that life is suffering, and that knowledge makes a difference. You can't enjoy the bouncy, carefree innocence of youth any longer, a realization that entails both sadness because of the loss, and pleasure in a new feeling of self-acceptance and self-knowledge. This awareness of age has a halo of melancholy around it, but it also enjoys a measure of nobility.

Naturally, there is resistance to this incursion of Saturn that we call depression. It's difficult to let go of youth, because that release requires an acknowledgment of death. I suspect that those of us who opt for eternal youth are setting ourselves up for heavy bouts of depression. We're inviting Saturn to make a house call when we try to delay our service to him. Then Saturn's depression will give its colour, depth, and substance to the soul that for one reason or another has dallied long with youth. Saturn weathers and ages a person naturally, the way temperature, winds, and time weather a barn. In Saturn, reflection deepens, thoughts embrace a larger sense of time, and the events of a long lifetime get distilled into a sense of one's essential nature.

In traditional texts, Saturn is characterized as cold and distant, but he has other attributes as well. Medical books called him the god of wisdom and philosophical reflection. In a letter to Giovanni Cavalcanti, a successful statesman and poet, Ficino refers to Saturn as a "unique and divine gift." In the late fifteen century, Ficino wrote a book warning scholars and studious people in particular to take care not to invite too much Saturn into their souls; because of their sedentary occupations, scholars can easily become severely depressed, he said, and have to find ways to counter their dark moods. But another book could be written about the dangers of living without study and speculation, and without reflecting on our lives. Saturn's moods may be dangerous because of their darkness, but his contribution to the economy of the soul are indispensable. If you allow his depression to visit, you will feel the change in your body, in your muscles, and on your face some relief from the burden of youthful enthusiasm and the "unbearable lightness of being."

Maybe we could appreciate the role of depression in the economy of the soul more if we could only take away the negative connotations of the word. What if "depression" were simply a state of being, neither good nor bad, something the soul does in its own good time and for its own good reasons? What if it were simply one of the planets that circle the sun? One advantage of using the traditional image of Saturn, in place of the clinical term depression, is that then we might see melancholy more as a vivid way of being rather than a problem that needs to be eradicated.

Aging brings out the flavours of a personality. The individual emerges over time, the way fruit matures and ripens. In the Renaissance view, depression, aging, and individuality all go together: the sadness of growing old is part of becoming an individual. Melancholy thoughts carve out an interior space where wisdom can take up residence.

Saturn was also traditionally identified with the metal lead, giving the soul weight and density, allowing the light, airy elements to coalesce. In this sense, depression is a process that fosters a valuable coagulation of thoughts and emotions. As we age, our ideas, formerly light, rambling, and unrelated to each other, become more densely gathered into values and a philosophy, giving our lives substance and firmness.

Because of its painful emptiness, it is often tempting to look for a way out of depression. But entering into its mood and thoughts can be deeply satisfying. Depression is sometimes described as a condition in which there are no ideas nothing to hang on to. But maybe we have to broaden our vision and see that feelings of emptiness, the loss of familiar understanding and the structures in life, and the vanishing of enthusiasm, even though they seem negative, are elements that can be

appropriated and used to give life fresh imagination.

When, as counsellors and friends, we are the observers of depression and are challenged to find a way to deal with it in others, we could abandon the monotheistic notion that life always has to be cheerful, and be instructed by melancholy. We could learn from its qualities and follow its lead, becoming more patient in its presence, lowering our excited expectations, taking a watchful attitude as this soul deals with its fate in utter seriousness and heaviness. In our friendship, we could offer it a place of acceptance and containment. Sometimes, of course, depression, like any emotion, can go beyond ordinary limits, becoming a completely debilitating illness. But in extreme cases, too, even in the midst of strong treatments, we can still look for Saturn at the core of depression and find ways to befriend it.

One great anxiety associated with depression is that it will never end, that life will never again be joyful and active. This is one of the feelings that is part of the pattern the sense of being trapped, forever to be held in the remote haunts of Saturn. In my practice, when I hear this fear I think of it as Saturn's style, as one of the ways he works the soul by making it feel constrained, with nowhere to go. Traditionally, there is a binding theme in saturnine moods. This anxiety seems to decrease when we stop fighting the saturnine elements that are in the depression, and turn instead toward learning from depression and taking on some of its dark qualities as aspects of personality.

How to Mastermind your Destiny through Self-Coaching

By ©Michaela Scherr

Reading how to books and self-coaching is an excellent way of getting to know yourself, quietly receiving answers you need, or resolving a secret issue you've been stuck on. Not only that, the only challenge will come from you and the only thing standing in the way of your personal development will be you!

I've had many 'aha' and self-congratulatory moments through coaching myself using self development workbooks. I refer to this as 'Self-Coaching'.

Self-Coaching yourself in this way is great if you're:

1. Shy;
2. Too busy for one-on-one coaching;
3. Someone who doesn't like to go out much;
4. Trying to keep limiting beliefs to yourself;
5. Not ready to be coached by anyone else; and
6. Working on your own personal development without anyone else knowing – that way no-one will be disappointed if you give it up or mess it up.

However to get the most out of this form of coaching you'll need to be:

1. Committed to creating the change you want;
2. Disciplined;
3. Willing to do whatever it takes to develop yourself, eg spiritual development courses, up-skilling, coaching etc;
4. Aware of when you need outside help.

Please Note:

From experience, self-coaching will not be enough if there are deeper issues needing to be resolved; and

5. The driver behind the wheel of change – it's your life; you're in charge of your destiny.

Self-coaching can help (depending on the severity of the issue) find strategies to apply to:

1. A relationship break-up or make-up;
2. Work related issues;
3. Indecision - something you've always dreamed of doing is forever being pushed aside and you need to make a decision;
4. House move – do I stay or do I leave?
5. Itchy feet and wanting to explore and experience a new lifestyle; and
6. Money problems.

A powerful step towards changing what you no longer want into something you really want is by remembering and experiencing what you'd like to change. Then, as you close the door of the past behind you, aim for and take action to making it happen.

Start by goal-setting the what, why, how of transformation, and when you want it to happen by.

A few more tips if you're coaching yourself are:

1. Keep a diary or journal and write in it every day of how you worked towards achieving inner change. You'll be able to look back and reflect upon your journey, how you did it, the frustrations, obstacles, and triumphs. It will also give you a sense of achievement, after all you did it.
2. Become aware of how you do things and ask yourself "if you could do this in a better way, how would you do it?"
3. As you coach yourself, at the end of every week summarise what you've written and determine what changes you can make easily for the following week.
4. Learn to meditate to give you inner peace as well as clarity not only whilst working with your situation but also to give yourself another self-help tool for your 'life skill toolkit'.
5. Take up a spiritual development course and increase your intuition. People use their intuition practically every day without realising it, increasing your intuition can help in all areas of your life.
6. Inform everyone who needs to know that you'll be offline for however long your self coaching sessions will be. Once you've organised your time, be ruthless and stick to your timetable. Failing to do this will result in a nasty thing called procrastination to hold you captive!
7. Make a special note of any limiting beliefs you discover about yourself. For example, maybe you have a hang up around earning an income, or maybe you're not as confident as you like to believe you are. In this case if you are unable to find solutions to these beliefs it's time to call upon the services of a transformational coach or other professional (this applies to anything you're unable to effectively work through).

The success of any 'Self-Coaching' program is dependent on two things:

1. Your level of commitment; and
2. The quality and content of the workbook itself. It must be designed and developed by someone with coaching experience, an understanding of adult learning principles and the ability to encapsulate it all in 'simple speak'.

Self-coaching has been an excellent 'self-help' tool for me over the years; however it doesn't replace one-on-one transformational coaching and nor should it.

An example of a well written and professionally constructed Self-Coaching e-workbook can be found at <http://www.michaelascherr.com/publications.htm>

About the Author:

Michaela is a Transformational Coach, certified practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), writer, and Metaphysician who is totally committed to helping others create positive and action oriented changes to their lives. Michaela is also the author of Coach Yourself – Mastermind Your Destiny and other publications at <http://www.michaelascherr.com>

DOING VS. BEING

By Bill Cottringer

In your life journey there are several crucial transitions (or passages/transformations) you will make—starting out doing things one way and then growing into the opposite way so that you can eventually migrate towards a position of in-between balance. The majority of these transitions involve the constant battle between your personality rooted in the material world and your soul of the spirit world.

One of the most powerful of these transitions you make as a part of the personality vs. soul struggle is the one from doing to being, so you can move from good success to great significance. Oddly, these transitions seem to gradually happen all at once—like taking ten years to become an overnight success.

Doing involves carrying out seemingly productive activities that your mind thinks you want to do in order to give you what you think will bring happiness and success; unfortunately the booby prize turns out to be empty, ephemeral, synthetic happiness. Eventually this empty negative feeling leads to frustration and a very uncomfortable yearning for something more substantial, positive and real. What we don't know at the time is that the object of this yearning is in an entirely different "world" we are about to encounter more and more of during the rest of our journeys.

When your discomfort becomes painful and annoying enough to want to do something about it, you begin to look for ways to stop doing so much and cross the bridge into being. The more aware you become in getting to this place, the more you are practicing virtuous behaviors such as love, courage, wisdom and service that lead to what Martin Seligman calls "authentic happiness" and what Aristotle much earlier termed "the good life." (All this is what the major world religions refer to as spiritual growth and healing. They all have their own virtual prescriptions of helping the process along, and they have more significant commonalities than insignificant differences).

Then of course you have to come back to the bridge so you can share your wisdom in the real world—both being and doing. You have then become the Native American deer totem, being able to communicate from the spirit world to the material one, in becoming single-minded and understanding things better and being more effective in changing the few things that actually need a gentle push or shove now and then.

One shouldn't get too cocky having achieved this major transformation, as it will continue to reoccur over and over again in different ways. In other words you are never finished growing, but there are resting plateaus along the way where similar voyagers need to share their secrets and suspicions for mutual validation and refreshment.

Today, time is viewed as either one of our most precious resources to manage well, or an enemy to attack, depending upon which side of the doing-being bridge you are at. Doing eats up the clock and there is never enough time to get everything done in life and work; being dissolves the clock and expands time in a truly "eternal" sense. This is because doing is future oriented—thinking about getting done what you are now doing so you can move on to doing the next thing and so on, ad nauseum; whereas being is present oriented—allowing your self to be fully present and totally focused in the now moment.

Doing is driven by thinking and personality; being is fueled from the heart and soul. The longest journey in the universe, according to Blackhawk, is the one from your head to your soul. It also may be the most satisfying and life-changing. It is an opportunity to literally explode into your infinite potential. The more being you do, the more you realize the vast scope of this marvelous

opportunity. It is a sacred gift to acknowledge and enjoy.

You have a few serious choices in life. One of them involves either going with the flow of life or resisting it. You can either let go and give into being or resist it. It is almost funny, but the undeniable reality is the rule of “change or be changed.” Either way you are going to be whether we want to or not, because the more effort you make to resist the natural flow of life in anything, the more aware you become of your discomfort and disorder from being out of sync, and then the more motivated you are to cross the bridge. In many cases, you are already headed in that direction without knowing it (if you want to know where you are, look at where your footsteps are leading and feet are pointed).

Sometimes the mind needs a little rational ammunition to talk you into going on a journey from your head to your soul, or going from doing to being. Here are a few known benefits from doing more being:

1. Being gives you more time than doing. Being totally focused and present now allows you to see more things you can do to be more effective and successful in living and working. It also helps reduce your do-list with only real priorities rising to the top.
2. Being is easier than doing. To begin being, all you have to do is allow yourself to be that way. You don't have to do anything, just relax and let go of something nonsensical that isn't worth holding onto. In this sense, you are not really learning anything new, but just remembering what is old and retold (and what you already know).
3. Being makes you more likable than doing. There is wisdom in the saying that people don't really care what you know until they know you care. Sharing secrets and suspicions from the heart builds relationships; intellectual gibberish stalls them. And, likability is a very subtle but powerful door to success.
4. Being requires less memory than doing. Half the battle of doing is remembering everything you need to do. When you are being, you are already doing everything you need to do and don't have to remember much of anything.
5. Being is more fun. Doing is actually boring because you are missing out on the things that bring real joy and meaning to your heart. The nice surprise is that the more miserable you are from doing, the more content you can be in being.

Let go of something that really isn't working and give into the wonderful world of being and enjoy all the benefits so you can teach others. You won't ever get bored, because there is probably another great passage awaiting you—like seeing all this clearer, making more sense out of it and being more effective in communicating it to others. This may be the single purpose of life for us all; it may be the “what” of life that we get to put our unique signature on by deciding “how” to do it.

About the Author

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Notes On Detachment

From The Science of Becoming Oneself

By Torkom Saraydarian

We may think that to detach ourselves means to hate, to ignore, to divide, to separate, to stand aloof or to be cold and rough toward a given object. These are not signs of true detachment. True detachment is a Soul attitude, a function carried out on the Soul plane rather than on the physical, emotional or lower mental planes. Actually, you are not detaching your true Self from anyone or anything. You are detaching your real Self from the inertia of the body, from the glamour of your emotional world and from the glamour's of your mental realm. You are also detaching your real Self from objects with which you were identified through inertia, glamour's and illusions.

With detachment you are dis-identifying yourself, but not separating. You are releasing yourself from the control of identification. When you have achieved detachment, you are no longer conditioned and controlled by the inertia, glamour and illusions of objects. You are free. Detachment means freedom. It means a truly self-determined attitude.

In true detachment your spiritual identification deepens and widens on the spiritual side of an object. At the same time you identify less and less with phenomena, until eventually you are able to see the object as it is, free from your personal, mechanical reactions and free from your imposing, forcing will of the lower self, expressed in many ways. According to your degree of success in detaching from any object, your soul love increases, and your joy deeper. Attachment makes you smaller; detachment makes you greater.

When you are truly detached, the personality factor of the object does not disturb or control you. The inner reality, the core of his being, becomes the important factor to you, and you help to release that beauty by detaching yourself from personality reactions, inertia, glamour's and illusions. In detachment you are not ignoring the Real man; you are ignoring the illusion, the appearance, and you can see more clearly than before because you are not caught in the net of personality reactions. Detachment changes the nature of your relations with the object. Since your relationship is no longer based on your personality reactions nor on the other's personality reactions, you are not mechanical in your behaviour towards him; you are awake and conscious and your approach is a Soul approach.

Detachment eliminates personality conflicts and friction between objects. You recognize and can accept the freedom, the existence of the object. In detachment you cease to use others for your own selfish interests. You recognise each existence as important to the great Plan. In the process of detachment you become aware of the Law of Karma and you see clearly the way in which the Law works. You seek the highest good for the object; you learn not to interfere with the Karma of others. In so doing you help them to increase their inner light and you give them courage to live the best life possible for them.

Detachment lead you to Soul infusion. Eventually you find the path leading to your true Self, and you become one with that Self. Actually the process of detachment is the process of becoming Oneself. Gradually you detach yourself from all that is not the Self. When you reach the stage of becoming your true Self, you are one with creation itself, but without the limitations of its inertia, glamour and illusion. Thus, detachment is the process of at-one-ment. In detachment man leads himself from the transient to the unchangeable, from the unreal to the Real.

When you have learned the process of detachment, you become magnetic. Truly magnetic people are those who are really detached persons. They have not become personality magnetic, but Soul Magnetic. A truly detached person has achieved the ability to do the right thing at the right time and

in the right proportion.

The existence in which you live is a part of you. All is one. The process of detachment is the process of realization of this unity. Only on such a high level of awareness can you free yourself from:

1. Separation
2. The concept of property
3. The illusion of "mine and "yours"
4. Your anxieties and worries

Thus your sense of responsibility grows deeper and higher. Detachment helps you to understand the purpose of the Great Being "in whom we live and move and have our being".

Impersonality is another term for being detached. A detached man is an impersonal man. Impersonality is a state of consciousness which is above the physical, emotional and lower mental levels, and which function upon the Soul levels. A detached man is man who is in the process of becoming himself. Detachment is not a level, but a continuous negation of imprisonment and an urge towards spiritualization or liberation.

The Dual Life of Discipleship

By John R. Haberman

The facts of daily life often seem at variance with the principles of spiritual living. This is the disciple's great problem - how to live as a soul in the world of form, how to practise positive harmlessness.

All those who aspire to tread the path of discipleship in the world today are faced with the problem of duality, with the difficulty of adjusting their achieved subjective understanding of the inner reality of the soul to the harsh, materialistic, so-called realities of physical plane living in a society largely dedicated to the pursuit of the things of the world for the satisfaction of selfish personal desire. That the materialistic focus of modern society is undergoing change, and consequent turmoil in the process, is abundantly true; but such change, while becoming clearly manifest on a world-wide scale, may not seem nearly so apparent to the individual aspirant in reference to his own near environment, immersed as he often is in a veritable whirlpool of conflict between the truth as inwardly recognizes it and the denial practiced by his daily associates. For it is not likely that many of the average aspirant's or disciple's business acquaintances have any large grasp of spiritual truth as it manifests in world affairs.

Indeed, it may often seem that the disciple's immediate environing conditions are going in exactly in the opposite direction to those idealised in the plan for humanity. Nevertheless, these close environing conditions present the disciple with his chief problem. He must learn to overcome them in the light of his own soul, and it is this problem of objective environment which entails that dual focus of attention involved in that particular pattern of activity which is called the dual life of discipleship.

The dual life of discipleship results from the conflict between the inner subjective reality and the outer glamour and illusion, between that which is and that which seems to be, between the truth of the spiritual life and the falsehood of materiality. It has to do with the resolution of the final pair of opposites before the portal of initiation - the Angel of the Presence and the Dweller on the Threshold.

The problem of the disciple is summed up in the words of Christ: 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon'. But then again he indicated that certain adjustments must be made with the world, for the Kingdom of God is not yet manifest on the physical plane: 'Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves'.

Dual Principles

In the latter statement is found one of the great occult dual principles of skill in action, the combination of the serpent wisdom, as it has been called from ancient times, with the harmlessness of that immemorial symbol of peace, the dove. All too often organized religion seems to have emphasized the meekness and harmlessness of the dove but has failed to teach the power of the deeper spiritual wisdom which makes of harmlessness a positive force rather than a negative one. On the other hand, the legions of materialism employ to the fullest extent the serpent of evil knowledge (it can hardly be called wisdom) and scoff at the supreme principle of harmlessness.

The individual disciple, therefore, must continually make the necessary daily adjustments, practising wisdom yet with the motive and effect of utter harmlessness, and seek ever to adapt the soul energy of which he is increasingly becoming a channel to the requirements of daily living. In short, he must live as a soul in the world of form. The seemingly duality and the resultant conflict

with which he must contend is actually a manifestation of spiritual progress, although to the aspirant it seems that the reverse is true. There is duality because he sees the great difference between the perfect world of the divine soul and the imperfect world of form, and for a long time he is faced with apparently irreconcilable pairs of opposites.

'Hence,' says the Tibetan, 'the frequent reaction of the disciple to the fact that for him, as yet, there is no point of peace. Peace was the objective of the Atlantean aspirant. Realisation is that the Aryan disciple. He can never be static; he can never rest; he is constantly adjusting himself to new conditions; constantly learning to function therein, and then subsequently finding them pass away to give place, in their turn, to new. This goes on until the consciousness is stabilised in the Self, in the One. Then the initiate knows himself to be the on looking Unity, watching the phenomenal phantasmagoria of life in form.

'He passes from one sense of unity to a sense of duality, and from thence again into a higher unity . . . This dualistic stage is that of the aspirant and of the disciple, up to the time of his training for the third initiation. He begins with the knowledge that he is a spiritual entity confined in a form. His consciousness for a long period of time remains predominantly that of the form . . . Then the point of balance changes, and the soul appears to dominate from the standpoint of influence, and the entire consciousness aspect begins to shift into the higher of the two aspects. Duality, however, still persists for the man is sometimes identified with the soul and sometimes with his form nature; this is the stage wherein so many earnest disciples are at this time to be found. Little by little, however, he becomes "absorbed" in the soul in all forms until the day dawns when he realises that there is nothing but soul and then the higher state of unity supervenes.'

- A Treatise on White Magic by Alice A. Bailey.

The key to the resolution of the apparent duality which continually surrounds us is found in the statement given above, 'There is nothing but soul'. It is an esoteric truth that one cannot register any vibration from without unless there is a correspondence within himself to that particular type of vibration.

An inner conflict is caused therefore when the aspirant registers within himself the vibrations of the lower desires, of selfish grasping and materiality from the environment with which he is surrounded. He is disturbed by these impulses and is apt to attribute them to his own lack of spiritual development, while the truth is that it is spiritual development which is pulling him away from the 'husks of the world' with which he was once completely at home. Yet the memory of these things remains and causes a correspondence to be set up in the personality vehicles to the impulses, mostly astral, which emanate from the environment.

A Positive Harmlessness

Much of the distress caused by the registration of astral vibration from environing associates could be eliminated if the aspirant would follow the simple but difficult procedure of raising his consciousness to the soul whenever necessary and focusing his attention upon the higher mental plane, where the lower vibrations cannot reach. Such an activity, however, if one is to follow the occult law, must be accompanied by the practice of a positive harmlessness, a mental attitude which seeks to transmit practical love or goodwill to others and thus not to resist evil but to overcome evil with good.

There is of course no easy formula for practising discipleship in the world today. It is all much easier said than done, as any sincere esoteric worker can testify. Yet the goal of discipleship is set before us, and all disciples must learn to overcome and to the necessary extent control environing

conditions in order to carry forward effectively the work for which they have assumed responsibility.

One may live in an environment where racial prejudice is predominant, yet he must keep himself free from such prejudice, at whatever cost to himself may be found necessary in the circumstances. Likewise, most of us live in an environment where the making of money appears to be the supreme objective and everything else is subordinated to that one materialistic goal, while the inner spiritual realities are subordinated to that one materialistic goal, while the inner spiritual realities are disregarded. Here again the work of flesh and blood alone will surely fail, and the disciple must, like the proverbial Daniel in the lion's den, stand alone on his own spiritual footing, realizing that money is but the concretisation of substance and that in the last analysis, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein'.

It is said that in the aspirant's personal attitude towards money is found the test for his fitness to tread the path of discipleship. Every disciple is called upon to assume personal responsibility for the proper handling of the money which comes into his hands and to co-operate with his group in attracting the vast sums which are needed if the Hierarchical Plan is to be carried on to completion, if the Kingdom of God is to manifest on the earth and the reappearance of the Christ become an actuality.

Besides those mentioned above, the disciple will detect other undesirable influences in his surroundings. If he is honest, he will recognise all of them as influences by which he himself was once dominated and which he is even now still in the process of overcoming hence the duality and the struggle. And then at length the aspirant or disciple finds that in overcoming the inertia and resistance of his environment he is in effect overcoming his own past, consisting of the present life and the lives which have gone before, according to the laws of rebirth and of karma.

In this inner subjective life, could the disciple but realize it fully, there is really no duality. He, the personal self, and the soul, are essentially one, constituting 'a son of God in manifestation whose nature is light'. But to achieve that point of light in consciousness which knows no duality or separation, the disciple must first overcome the triple pull of the three worlds, the maya of the physical, the glamour, and the illusion of the mental, the three of which combined comprise the Dweller on the Threshold.

For the encouragement of those who so strive towards the light, it is written in the Book of Revelation:

'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.'

Dreams....some interesting facts

Dream interpretations dates back to 3000-4000 B.C. were they were documented in clay tablets. It is said that people in primal societies were unable to distinguish between the dream world and reality.

They not only saw the dream world as an extension of reality, but the dream realm was a more powerful world.

Back in the Greek and Roman era, dream interpreters accompanied military leaders into battle. Dreams were extremely significant and often seen as messages from the gods. They were seen in a religious context and in Egypt, priests also acted as dream interpreters. The Egyptians recorded their dreams in hieroglyphics.

People with particular vivid and significant dreams were believed to be blessed and were considered special.

People who had the power to interpret dreams were looked up to and seen as divinely gifted. In the bible, there are over seven hundred mentions of dreams. Tracing back to these ancient cultures, people had always had an inclination to interpret dreams. Dreams were also seen as prophetic. People often looked to their dreams for signs of warning and advice.

It was an oracle or omen from outside spirits, whether it was a message from a deity, from the dead or even the works of a demon. Dreams often dictated the actions of political and military leaders and aided in diagnosis for the medicine men.

Dreams was a vital clue for healers in what was wrong with the dreamer and used them to make a diagnosis. People in ancient Greece and ancient China looked to their dreams for their next course of action. Dreaming can be seen as an actual place that your spirit and soul leaves every night to go and visit. The Chinese believed that the soul leaves the body to go into this world. However, if they should be suddenly awakened, their soul may fail to return to the body. For this reason, some Chinese today, are wary of alarm clocks. Some Native American tribes and Mexican civilizations share this same notion of a distinct dream dimension. They believed that their ancestors lived in their dreams and take on non-human forms like plants. They see that dreams as a way of visiting and having contact with their ancestors.

Dreams also helped to point their mission or role in life. In the early 19th century, dreams were dismissed as stemming from anxiety, a household noise or even indigestion. Hence there was really no meaning to it. Later on in the 19th century, Sigmund Freud revived the importance of dreams and its significance and need for interpretation. He revolutionized the study of dreams.

Daydream

Studies show that we all have the tendency to daydream an average of 70-120 minutes a day. Day dreaming is classified as a level of consciousness between sleep and wakefulness. It occurs during our waking hours when we let our imagination carry us away. As our minds begin to wander and our level of awareness decreases, we lose ourselves in our imagined scenario and fantasy. Click here for a more in depth look at daydreams.

Lucid Dream

Lucid dreams occurs when you realize you are dreaming in the middle of your dream. "Wait a second. This is only a dream!" Most dreamers wake themselves up once they realize that they are only dreaming. Other dreamers have cultivated the skill to remain in the lucid state of dreaming. They become an active participant in their dream, make decisions in their dreams and influence the

dream's outcome without awakening.

Nightmare

A nightmare is a disturbing dream that causes the dreamer to wake up feeling anxious and frightened. Nightmares may be a response to real life trauma and situations. These type of nightmares fall under a special category called Post-traumatic stress nightmare (PSN). Nightmares may also occur because we have ignored or refused to accept a particular life situation. Research shows that most people who have regular nightmares have had a family history of psychiatric problems, bad drug experiences, people who have contemplated suicide, and/or rocky relationships. Nightmares are an indication of a fear that needs to be acknowledged and confronted. It is a way for our subconscious to make up take notice. "Pay attention!"

Recurring Dreams

Recurring dreams repeat themselves with little variation in story or theme. These dreams may be positive, but most often they are nightmares. Dreams may recur because a conflict depicted in the dream remains unresolved and ignored. Once you have found a resolution to the problem, your recurring dreams may cease.

Healing Dreams

Healing dreams serve as messages for the dreamer in regards to their health. Dreams of this nature may be telling the dreamer that he/she needs to go to the dentist or doctor.

Prophetic Dreams

Prophetic dreams, also referred to as precognitive dreams, are dreams that seemingly foretells the future. One rational theory to explain this phenomenon is that our dreaming mind is able to piece together bits of information and observation that we normally overlook or that we do not seriously consider. In other words, our unconscious mind knows what is coming before we consciously piece together the same information.

Epic Dreams

Epic dreams are so huge, so compelling, and so vivid that you cannot ignore them. The details of such dreams remain with you for years, as if your dreamt it last night. These dreams possess much beauty and contain many archetypal symbology.

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1. One third of our lives is spent sleeping.
2. In your lifetime, you would've spent about 6 years of it dreaming. That is more than 2,100 days spent in a different world.
3. Dreams have been here as long as mankind. Back in the Roman Era, striking and significant dreams were submitted to the Senate for analysis and interpretation.
4. Everybody dreams. EVERYBODY! Simply because you do not remember your dream does not mean that you did not dream.
5. Dreams are indispensable. A lack of dream activity can mean protein deficiency or a personality disorder.
6. We dream on average of one or two hours every night. And we often even have 4-7 dreams in one night.
7. Blind people do dream. Whether visual images will appear in their dream depends on whether they were blind at birth or became blind later in life. But vision is not the only sense that constitutes a dream. Sounds, tactility, and smell become hypersensitive for the blind and their dreams are based on these senses.
8. Five minutes after the end of the dream, half the content is forgotten. After ten minutes, 90% is

lost.

9. The word dream stems from the Middle English word, dreame which means "joy" and "music".

10. Men tend to dream more about other men, while women dream equally about men and women.

11. Studies have shown that our brain waves are more active when we are dreaming than when we are awake.

12. Dreamers who are awakened right after REM sleep, are able to recall their dreams more vividly than those who slept through the night until morning.

13. People who are giving up smoking have longer and more intense dreams.

14. Toddlers do not dream about themselves. They do not appear in their own dreams until the age of 3 or 4.

15. If you are snoring, then you cannot be dreaming.

16. Nightmares are common in children, typically beginning at around age 3 and occurring up to age 7-8.

Eastern Methods and Western Bodies.

From Sane Occultism and Practical Occultism in Daily Life

By Dion Fortune

Many people think that the East is the only home of occultism, but this is far from being the case. Every race has had, and still has, its traditional, guarded wisdom, revealed to the few and concealed from the many. Our own Western tradition traces its origin to Egypt, with tributaries from Chaldea, Greece, and the fierce Norse tradition. It comes down to us through the Qabalists and Alchemists, and it is alive and active at the present day.

Strange as it may appear, it is the Eastern tradition, its methods and terminology that are most generally known among us, and for two reasons. Firstly, because the Western Tradition has always been, and still is, very guarded and secretive in its methods; whether rightly or wrongly is a matter of opinion. There is much to be said both for and against secrecy in occultism. And secondly, the Theosophical Society, whose methods and contacts are Eastern, has for over fifty years of active propaganda work to its credit.

It may not unreasonably be asked why it was, if there were an active esoteric tradition in Europe, that Mme Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, did not take her initiation in its schools instead of having to seek her Master in the East. The explanation is a simple ethnological one. The Russians, according to the old saying, are not the most Easterly of the Westerns, but the most Westerly of the Easterns. One has only to look at the portraits of Mme Blavatsky to see the Tartar blood to realize that her affiliates would be with the Light of Asia. The principles taught in all the great racial traditions are the same, but the different traditions have brought different aspects of esoteric science to a high degree of development according to the natural inclination of racial temperament. The pagan faiths of the West developed the nature contacts. Modern Western occultism rising from this basis, seems to be taking for its field the little-known powers of the mind. The Eastern tradition has a very highly developed metaphysics. We do well to study these different aspects where we find them in their highest degree of development. The Sacred Books of the East and the popular expositions there of are invaluable to the Western occultist. Nevertheless, when it comes to practical application of these principles and especially the process of occult training and initiation, it is best for a man to follow the line of his own racial evolution. It is very seldom that a European, living in Europe, is successfully trained by Eastern methods. If a man or a woman is able to go to the East and completely sink themselves in the Eastern group-soul it is possible for them to go a certain way in the Eastern tradition, but we have no record of any Europeans reaching the higher degrees.

The reason for the inadvisability of an alien initiation does not lie in racial antagonism, nor in any failure to appreciate the beauty and profundity of the Eastern systems, but for the same reason that Eastern methods of agriculture are inapplicable in the West—because conditions are different.

As has already been said, different schools develop different aspects of occult science. These aspects are developed not according to racial temperament, but also according to racial Darma, or duty. When a nation has a particular task to fulfil, the initiates of that nation give a lead along the destined lines. The esoteric discipline which enabled the Hindu race to develop the higher mind would not only have been inapplicable to the Anglo-Saxon race whose task it was to develop the concrete mind, but would actually have prevented that development from taking place because it is necessary to close down the higher consciousness if the lower consciousness is to be operated. The two methods would be mutually antagonistic and destructive, and yet they were right for those to whom they belong; nevertheless, each of the each races, different as is their destiny, can profit by the achievements of the other, for qualities and faculties once brought through into manifestation on this earth belong to humanity as a whole and from part of the common heritage to which each race

in turn brings its gift Beauty from Greece, Order from Rome, Spiritual Philosophy from India.

There will always be individuals in every race who feel that their spiritual home is elsewhere, but they are exceptional. There will never be many Richard Burtons or Sundar Singhs in a race. For the most part they will be Smiths and McGregors and Murpheys. But although there will always be individual exceptions, no one seeking the Ancient Wisdom should be encouraged to follow an alien tradition unless he has a very definite bias in that direction, for even when there is a definite spiritual affinity with the East, the problem of training a Western body by Eastern methods presents many difficulties. The study of such books as those of the Swami Vivekananda, in which the Yogi methods are very plainly set forth, reveals the fact that the opening of the higher centres of consciousness according to the Eastern methods depends on the redirecting of the etheric currents in the physical body, and the concentrating of them upon centres known as charkas.

If we study the anatomy of the subject, we shall see that these charkas correspond with the endocrine glands, and that the changes in the consciousness are brought about by producing changes in the chemical composition of the blood by checking or stimulating the different ductless glands. Western physiology is beginning to wake up to the intimate connection between the ductless glands and the mind, and is studying them in connection with those changes of consciousness known as insanity, and there is no doubt at all as to the intimate connection between the endocrines (or charkas) and the mind. The ancient Eastern Tradition is confirmed in its doctrine by Western experimental science.

But here comes the rub from the point of view of the seeker after initiation. The endocrine balance in different races differs profoundly. It is this difference which produced the different racial types; this is proved by the fact that if we get a disturbance of the endocrine balance in childhood, we shall get a Mongolian, or even a Negroid appearance in a child of pure European stock. Stuck a child, however, will be a diseased and sub-normal individual, because the other endocrine secretions have not been modified proportionately, as they are in the case of the normal Chinese or Negro, whose endocrines are balanced according to type. It is quite true that other branches of the Aryan stock are nearer akin to us than these other root-races, but the pigmentation of the skin, and the structure of the skeleton reveal fundamental variations. We have only to realize the difference in resistance to shock between the Hindu, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Negro, to realize that different initiatory methods would have to be used with them. The Hindu dies readily from shock, pure and simple. The Anglo-Saxon will be upset by it, but he is exceedingly unlikely to die of it. As for the Negro, he is practically immune. It follows therefore that the methods to which the sensitive Hindu will respond will, under normal conditions, have as little effect on the other two as water on a duck's back, and the methods which suit the Negro would shatter the white man.

In order to become a suitable subject for Eastern methods, an Anglo Saxon has to undergo a long period of sensitisation. At the end of that period he may be fitted for an Eastern initiation, but he is quite unfitted for a Western life. In very few cases is a successful issue arrived at. The Western initiatory method consists in strengthening not sensitising the candidate, and then concentrating the subtle forces by means of a ritual. A man thus trained, far from being unfitted for the struggle for existence in the rush and drive of modern life, has acquired stamina quite out of the ordinary, and is distinguished by his powers of endurance and ability to control the reactions of his body, resisting cold hunger, and pain in a remarkable degree. This, of course, is equally true of the Eastern Adept; he also has dominion over the elements in his own nature. There are many well-authenticated accounts of the feats of endurance of those trained in the Ancient Wisdom of the East. There is nothing in the occult discipline, rightly applied, which is going to make invalids or nervous wrecks of its students; it is, apparently, the application of methods designed for one type of physique, social organization and climate, to individuals of another racial and social order which gives such unsatisfactory results and produces the weedy-looking neurotics so common in esoteric

circles.

Whatever argument may be adduced concerning the brotherhood of man, experience proves that the spiritual methods of one racial type seldom suit another. If the ethnological map of Europe be compared with the map showing the distribution of the different religious systems, it will immediately become apparent that the boundary lines are identical. Catholic Christianity coincides with the geographical distribution of the Latin races; protestant Christianity coincides with the Nordic populations. In neither Asia nor Africa is the missionary's convert considered a desirable employee. 'A native converted is a native spoiled,' is a proverb in two different continents.

Such observations as these confirm the tradition that the Great White Lodge gives to each race the religion suited to its needs. It is the esoteric and mystical side of each religion which forms the initiatory school of its race. Unless a man has had the elementary training of a tradition he is unlikely to profit by its advanced work. To grow up under the discipline of exoteric Christianity and then suddenly go on to a school of esoteric Buddhism without first being received into the Buddhist faith is like working for the intermediate B.A. and then wanting to proceed to the final B.Sc. Still more do such considerations apply to the Hindu esoteric tradition, wherein the greatest importance is attached to physical considerations, such as heredity, diet, and contacts. To take up Yogi systems while disregarding these things is mere occult amateurism; no Asiatic would take such a person seriously.

The Eastern guru is especially at a disadvantage in dealing with Western woman because the Eastern and Western attitudes towards woman differ so widely. Equally is he at a disadvantage in counselling his male pupils concerning such matters as marriage and their relations with women in general. The management of the sex forces is an exceedingly important thing in occultism, and attitudes towards sex in the East and in the West are poles asunder. The Eastern teacher may be able to instruct his pupils in philosophy, but he can give little practical help in matters of ethics, for the subtler aspects of the inner life of a race are a closed book to an alien.

Equally do these considerations apply to Western occult systems transplanted to America. They never strike their roots there, but remain superficial and academic. There is a certain aspect of occult work which has to make use of the magnetism of the land itself. Native systems of magic are built up on the basis and have a technique, and therefore fail to complete their operations; or, alternatively, should they succeed in contacting the elemental forces of the land, experience much difficulty in keeping them under control and returning them to their proper place when the operation is finished.

American occultism will never come into its own until it ceases to import its systems from Europe and India, but goes back along the line of its own tradition, picking up the aboriginal contacts, and daring to bend them to its own evolutionary purposes. It must seek the contacts of the Sun temple of Atlantis through the Maya tradition. Egypt has no message for the United States. American can learn esoteric philosophy and science from the Western tradition, just as Europeans can learn from the Eastern tradition, but the initiatory forces cannot be conveyed across the Atlantic or the Pacific. Some day there will come an American who will pick up the ancient Maya contacts, adapt them to modern needs, and express their forces in an initiatory ritual which shall be valid for the civilization to which he belongs.

Conflicts Between the Spiritual and Material Ego

By Robert Elias Najemy

These roles or personas, which develop subconsciously, create a variety of beliefs and subsequent needs and emotions. Most of our personas manage to cooperate enough so that we can function without serious inner turmoil, but there are times in our lives when we experience inner conflicts in which two or more parts of our being have conflicting needs.

Many of these conflicts have to do with the differing needs between our "spiritual" personas and our "material" personas. We place these words in quotation marks because all personas live in ignorance, and thus are all material. The so-called "spiritual" personas are trying to be spiritual, or in some cases, only to appear spiritual.

One part of ourselves wants to improve our character and lifestyle, and proceed spiritually, while the other might prefer to remain in the familiar, conditioned types of behavior and activities where it finds security, pleasure and affirmation. Let's call the first part the spiritual ego and the second the material ego. We want these two to meet, to open up to each other and become one.

We do not intend to imply that the spiritual ego is higher or more spiritual than the material ego. In some cases, the opposite may be true, as the spiritual ego might be simply seeking security, pleasure and affirmation in other ways. The spiritual ego may occasionally be even more afraid or attached to persons and situations than the material ego; however, this is not always the case.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL PERSONAS

The spiritual ego feels the conflict most intensely (if we didn't desire spiritual growth or self-improvement we would not have a conflict), and usually creates feelings of self rejection, failure and guilt when we are unable to satisfy its need to feel that it is "spiritual" and "worthy."

Also, when we do not feel worthy, we do not feel safe. This occurs because many of us are programmed to believe whoever is not "good" or worthy in God's eyes is not safe, as he does not "deserve" God's love and protection. Making matters worse is the fact that we might also be programmed to feel we deserve punishment.

These are obviously not the highest reasons to want to improve ourselves. They are, in fact, rather selfish motives. If we want to change to ensure our safety, or so others will accept us, we are simply replacing the material ego with the spiritual ego. Nothing has really changed. In some cases, our need to fulfill these spiritual "requirements" for our self-acceptance has to do with our need to feel we are more spiritual than others. Thus, we simply replace the need for affirmation and superiority on a material level with the same need on the spiritual level.

It is important to realize that our self-worth is permanent and divine. We cannot be worth more or less in God's eyes. We are divine consciousness itself in the process of evolving our ability to express our divinity on the material planes. Our inherent spiritual value is not changed by our actions or spiritual growth. What is changed is our ability to express those values mentally, emotionally and physically.

Trying to be a better person because we believe it will encourage God to love us more is also an insufficient motive for growth.

Desiring to become a clearer channel for divine energies of love, peace, harmony, justice and happiness is a much better motive. Seeking to purify ourselves so we can experience that Divine Consciousness in every being and event that we encounter, is a useful motive. Seeking to remove all

mental, emotional and physical obstacles so that we can cultivate pure love, simplicity and selflessness is also useful.

Such motives are free from the game of who is spiritual and who is not, or who is more spiritual, or who is good and who is bad, and whom God loves and whom God does not love. They are based on the presumption that God is a much higher type of consciousness, and thus is incapable of not loving anyone no matter what that person might ever do. This seems only logical since the Divine Being has asked us, mere humans, to love even our enemies and those who ignore and harm us. Is it possible then that It is incapable of doing so?

This type of thinking also removes us from the game of spiritual pride in which we feel that we are higher, more important, or more favored by God than others. It also frees us from feeling we are lower, less important or less favored by God than others.

The material ego, on the other hand, tends to react in such situations to the rejection and pressure it receives from the spiritual ego by rebelling and sabotaging its various efforts toward discipline, self-control and self-improvement. Thus, the more we pressure ourselves, the more our material ego reacts and rebels. In such cases, we experience instability in our spiritual or self-improvement efforts. In these cases, we usually play the roles of parent and child with our own selves. The parent in us rejects the child in us for not being a "good child," and the child then reacts so as to undermine the parents' effort toward control.

In order to move more effectively toward our goal of spiritual transformation, these inner conflicts must be dealt with in a more mature manner. Rather than communicating within ourselves as child and parent, it would be more useful to develop a mature adult to adult system of conversation or dialogue.

EFT offers us the opportunity to do so

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Ego Checking

By Bill Cottringer

A popular catch phrase today is "check your ego at the door."

Actually you really don't want to do that. Sometimes the only thing you have that holds you all together is your ego. What you do want to leave behind though, are the more subtle negative behaviors of your ego, that interfere with good interpersonal relations-especially effective communication. These are the things that keep you from going from good to great in learning how to be successful.

Personal growth is a process of finding out what good habits to cultivate and what bad ones to eliminate. Knowing what bad habits to get rid of is only the beginning. You have to figure out how to do this. Fortunately the mechanism is already in place. If you are motivated to learn and grow, you will gradually become more aware of your bad habits, as they happen. The more you witness these things happening, the more uncomfortable you become and the more you will think about why you don't really want to do these things. You eventually learn to replace them with something more positive.

There are seven positive behaviors of your ego that you want to cultivate and there are seven counter-parts you want to eliminate. These things all work together and the end result is the Golden Rule in action.

REVERENCE VS. RUDENESS

The truth of the matter is that we are all guests on this planet and we have an obligation to respect everything-especially our fellow human beings. Research reveals that the majority of people say politeness helps produce a perception of likability, which paves the way for positive influence. Unfortunately, national research reveals that politeness is on the decline. What a paradox.

The lesson is, if you want to be noticed and have a positive influence on others, be reverent and polite. On the other hand, rudeness is at the top of the list of what influences a perception of unlikability, which results in unfavorable outcomes with people. The choice should be easy.

EQUALITY VS. SUPERIORITY

We are all born equal, but somewhere along the line we get the notion that our achievements somehow make us superior. If you have worked hard to be successful you have a right to feel superior. But this feeling is something you have to keep to yourself, because other people aren't really interested in your achievements-especially if theirs are on the light side and they are feeling inferior.

When you make a concerted effort to communicate equality with others, they are more likely to listen to you; when the subtle hints of your superiority leak out in your talk and actions, people's ears turn elsewhere. Cultivate equality and eliminate superiority.

FREEDOM VS. CONTROL

We humans all have a common characteristic: We are natural rebels about being controlled. That is a condition we will fight against with our last breath. Hence any talk or behavior that insinuates forceful control will always be met with rebellion. One powerful ego is never quite adequate enough to dominate even the weakest one.

If you are in a position of being in control, this becomes somewhat tricky. You have to look for other ways to influence people in the direction you want them to move, other than by using the authority you have been given. And if you are in the undesirable position of having to impose a negative sanction, you may have to get creative and give a few options that allow for some perceived freedom.

ACCEPTANCE VS. JUDGEMENT

Most of us are already our own worst critics and the last thing we need is someone else piling on the bad news with more judgments against us. When we perceive that we are being judged negatively, it makes us feel misunderstood and even inferior. These sorts of feelings tend to make us retreat into a defensive posture-with a mixture of hurt and anger-where communication normally shuts down.

Another reason to try and eliminate your habit of judging others is that your judgments aren't always correct and they often turn out to be pre-mature once you get all the facts. Suspending your judgment and taking the time to find out exactly why somebody is doing something that might not meet with your approval can be enlightening.

TENTATIVENESS VS. CERTAINTY

What do any us really know with 100% certainty? Maybe a few useless details and a few useful principles. Most of life is tentative and evolving. Although some of us seem to want the certainty that provides security, we know that it is only temporary. Sometimes the brain deceives us by its drive to simplify. Critical thinking teaches us that things are rarely a clear yes or no, at least not without some qualifications

The only thing certain today is change and anyone who professes differently will be met with skepticism and even rejection. In the interest of learning and growing, you should be concerned about disproving your questionable beliefs, rather than gathering supportive evidence to perpetuate the artificial certainty of false ones.

INCLUSION VS. EXCLUSION

A strong human need is to be included. When someone else excludes us or rejects even part of our ideas, it doesn't make us feel good. Someone once said to me, "dismiss only that which offends your soul." You can go from good to great by looking for ways to include everything and anything that doesn't offend your soul.

Everyone has a piece of the puzzle to contribute, and we can all benefit greatly by looking for ways to include what others think and feel. An attitude of inclusion incorporates many of these other positive ego behaviors and can be a very powerful influence with others. At the very least you will be increasing useful knowledge.

EMPATHY VS. INSENSITIVITY

The more you do these other six behaviors, the more your power of empathy grows. Empathy allows you to understand other people's thoughts, feelings and perspectives and when you begin to communicate that understanding, you are making a friend for life. Such friendships encourage continued growth and lead to success.

By practicing these positive halves of your ego and eliminating their negative counter-parts, you

will increase your positive influence with others and be more successful.

About the Author

William Cottringer is a Success Coach, College Teacher and Writer from Collinsville, IL. He is also author of *You Can Have Your Cheese & Eat It Too*.

Learning To Recognize Your Ego

By Sonia Devine

Learning To Recognize Your Ego

Is your self image controlling your life? Do you often worry about what others think of you? Learn to recognize the ego, and find out the difference between who you think you are and who you REALLY are.

What is an ego?

Well, in case you didn't know it, we all have one. The ego is the logical rational part of your mind that allows you to separate yourself from other people. You use it each and every day to weigh up situations, people and circumstances in the process of making rational decisions. When I say "I am Sonia Devine", I am identifying with this part... MY ego.

Sometimes the Ego is associated with an inflated sense of pride or arrogance. As an example, when we talk about a person who is behaving arrogantly, people often say this person has a "huge Ego".

But it's a lot more than that. It has a definite purpose. It is responsible for organizing the different elements of the Self to create some wholeness and integration. All of us require this to function effectively as human beings.

So how does this fit in with your self esteem? When we focus too much on this part, we begin to become separated from the rest of humanity, and outside forces have more control over us.

For example, does the quality of your self image rely on any of the following?

- How much money you have - What you do for a living - Who you know - How you look - Where you live - What kind of car you drive

If you are defined by what you do for a living, then your self esteem is at the mercy of this factor. So if you lose your job, where does this leave you? Would you still like and respect yourself if you were broke?

It is within your nature to be conditioned to go after these superficial achievements, but I'll let you in on a secret; they have absolutely nothing to do with who you are! You're so much more than your physical body. Your soul is perfect just as it is, and it will continue to live on after you exit the Earth.

All of us are connected by collective consciousness. When you are able to see past the ego, you learn to cultivate true self-reliance. You accept yourself as the perfect being that you are AT THIS VERY MOMENT - not for who you will be once you have had your hair fixed or gotten in with the right crowd.

When you can get past the ego, you experience true self love - and this comes from your higher wisdom. Your knowledge, your compassion, your strength are perfect - and these things are permanent.

About the Author

Sonia Devine is a qualified professional hypnotherapist and success coach with a caring and

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Eight Steps to Taking Control of Every Situation in Your Life!

By Terry Rich Hartley, Ph.D.

Like it or not, we are all gladiators. We go to sleep and wake up in a social arena from which there is no escape. Challenge upon challenge confronts us, walls restrain us, and a mob of spectator's mocks, sneers, or cheers us. Each and every day brings new battles whether we want them or not and whether we're up to them or not. Life forces us to face one skirmish after another - no choice in the matter.

What we can choose, though, is which kind of gladiator to be, victor or victim. Being a victim in this social arena translates into having bad relationships. Most people are victims - victims of their own perceptions.

That's because people don't develop and listen to their own unique, authentic self. Rather they allow their mental spectators - those little tyrants rattling around in their heads - to tell them second by second how to fight their battles, what they can and cannot do. These tyrants applaud and they hiss, they encourage and they discourage.

These mental spectators are the memories of the judgments of real-life people. For example, it's the memory of your aunt saying, "I hope you marry someone rich, because you're not going far on brains." It's the echo of your father growling, "You've got a back problem - no spine."

And their influence over your relationships can't be overestimated.

Millions of people accept the judgments of their mental spectators as the truth and, therefore, the mediocre results that come from believing those judgments.

With so many people living this way, the question becomes, is this the way I have to live?

Fortunately, the answer is not unless you want to.

Once you identify your mental spectators - and your interactions with them - you can move beyond victim and assume the role of victor.

What it takes are eight steps for getting command, eight steps you can apply to most any situation you want altered. You can positively influence your relationships, your employment options, any aspect of your life.

Let's look at the steps.

1. Define What Ails You.

Ask, what's my problem? Am I a jealous weasel, troubled that others have what I want? Am I ticked off most of the time? Am I sad and whiney?

Anxiety ridden? Moody? All of the above? Without this step, you're doomed.

It will take personal courage, but you won't get results without identifying what ails you.

2. Discover the Effects.

Ask, how are my problems affecting my life? Am I a lousy parent, a friendless dork, a backstabber, a slut, a drunk, a junkie? Am I none of the above, but someone who is less than I could be? This step requires absolute self-honesty, but the truth will help set you free.

3. Seek the Source.

Ask, from where are my problems coming? Who are my real and my mental spectators? What do my mental spectators look like, say, and do? Exactly who or what is keeping me from taking command of my life? This could be one of the most incredible experiences of your life. You will look into the abyss and see who is looking back.

4. Identify Your Role.

Ask, how am I contributing to my problems? What is my responsibility in all this?

Did I decide to be a garbage disposal? Do I beat myself to death trying to please others? Do I expect things of myself that are unfair? Do I treat myself as a friend or an enemy? Do I allow my mental spectators to drive me to distraction, depression, anger, anxiety? Recognizing your role in your own problems is a positive - but scary - step toward knowing yourself and gaining personal command.

5. State Your Desires.

Ask, what do I specifically want to do about my problems? Do I want to be a doormat, a slut, a drunk, a friendless geek? Or do I want to rule my mental spectators? Do I want to stand up to a spectator, real or imagined, who puts me down? Do I want to take command of my education, my bank account, my relationships? Until you can actually list your desires in the order of their importance, you will be a victim. However, once you do this, you are on your way to being a victor.

6. Seek Options.

Ask, what are my options, and in what order should I place them? What is the first option I should concentrate on? The second one? The third? If you have a soul-sucking hangover most mornings, you might opt to give up your booze buddies for some real friends. Secondly, take the money you normally spend at bars and deposit it in a college fund for yourself or your kids. If, instead, you're a workaholic and you want to spend more time with your kids, then DO IT. Very few people on their deathbed have said, "If I could live life all over again, I'd spend more of it at work and less with people I love." Choices are involved here, but by weighing options and alternatives, and then making personal choices, you are taking command. Do this and you'll begin to gain real power.

7. Learn Winning Techniques.

Ask, how do I rule my real and my mental spectators? Must I collapse in a heap when they point thumbs down? How can I learn to take charge on every level and get a grip on my life? There is no "magic" involved, but you might feel as if there is. Unlike a vanquished gladiator falling at the whim of spectators, you decide your own course.

8. Master Your Relationships.

Ask, what more can I do to master my relationships by strengthening myself and my perceptions? How do I take command right now in developing my own identification and self-worth? Congratulations! You're working on the one person in the entire world you can work on - YOU! And any improvements in yourself can't help but enrich your relationships with other people and the world around you.

Although this is only a brief overview of each of the eight steps for jump-starting your relationships and taking control of your life, you'd be amazed at how significant the effects of a few minor adjustments in perception can be.

About the Submitter

Dr. Hartley is a social psychologist, a scientist, and the author of *Tyrants of Self-Concept: Ruling the Rulers*, a 122-page e-book that thoroughly describes the eight steps for improving your relationships, taking control of your life, and living the life you want to live. It includes easy-to-relate-to stories, examples, humour, and concrete, practical worksheets and exercises that get results fast. To learn more about how you can apply the steps, go to: www.rulingtherulers.com

The Elasticity of a Permanent Body

From Some Mystical Adventures

By G.R.S. Mead

Perhaps it may be thought that I propose, in this adventure, to treat of some recondite problem of physics; but that is not my intention. I propose briefly to consider the nature of the permanent element in a religious and international body.

Many confuse the idea of body with notions of shape and form, but I would venture to suggest that form is of the mind while body is of substance. There is a doctrine that man is possessed of a 'permanent body,' the substantial ground, as it were, from which proceed and to which return the births and deaths of his evolutionary becomings, and the storehouse of his diversified experiences.

It is not asserted that this 'body' is unconditionally everlasting, but rather that it is permanent in the sense of lasting as long as man desires himself to be a separate individual.

It is his last limit as man, his 'Ring Pass Not' until the Great Day 'Be one with Us,' when man transcends individuality, and wins his freedom from the dominion of the spheres of evolution, by making joyful surrender of himself, - that is, of every thought of possession in the substance of his so-thought individuality. All his powers of their own selves make joyful surrender of themselves to the Great Powers, and thus becoming these Powers, as Trismegistus says, he is in God.

But that is apotheosis, the transcending of the man-state of separate existence, and the entering into the Communion of Those-that-are; that is to say, the energising in the Everlasting Body of all things.

The 'permanent body,' then, is not the Everlasting Body, but the age-long substantial limit of the separated man-consciousness. How long this aeon of substantial limits lasts, depends on the nature of man's activities; nevertheless this 'body' must in any case be considered as permanent, when contrasted with the length of the days of the bodies of incarnation which a man uses in his many lives on earth, or in the 'three worlds.'

When, however, we come to consider the meaning of 'body' in this connection, we should be careful to keep our ideas concerning it as fluid as possible. We are here on the very borderline of individuality, and it depends entirely on the nature of the activities of the man whether, or not, the substance of this 'body' shall be so condensed and classified as to form 'sheaths' to veil and dim the consciousness of the Self, or so wisely enformed and woven into such fine textures that it can supply 'vestures' of glory and radiance for the manifestation of the greater mysteries.

The nature of this 'body' changes completely, according as the desire of the man is set to 'go forth,' or the will of the man is fixed to 'return.' We therefore find it described in the ancient books under quite contradictory epithets, such as ignorance and bliss; for it is on the borderland between the particular and the general, the individual and the cosmic.

It is indeed one of the most difficult concepts for us to understand; for if we understood it really, we should have solved the riddle of what is called in Indian philosophy maya (illusion)' and avidya (nescience), and karana, that is to say 'casual,' in the sense of its being the cause of our continuing to proceed forth into duality, and therefore the root of ignorance and the source of illusion. Nevertheless at the same time it is also the vehicle of our return to reality, and our means of contact with unity; as such it is the complement of knowledge, and the spouse of the Divine energising.

It is, therefore, evident that if we call it 'body,' we shall be doing less violence to the meaning of its

actual nature, by qualifying it with the contradictory epithet 'spiritual,' than by leaving it unqualified, to the danger of its being confused with notions of physical bodies. I should prefer to call it substance rather than matter, vehicle rather than body.

The legitimate lord of this living nature is Atman or Spirit, the Self; this pure substance is corrupted by the misdeeds of men.

When we consider these mysteries from the human point of view that is, as related to our individual selves - we have, it is true, some immediate feelings, intuitions and experiences to go upon; but when we proceed to argue, on analogy, with regard to 'bodies' other than our own, we run the risk of setting up our limited selves as a measure of the universe.

When, therefore, we come to consider a body of individuals, we must be very careful not to beg the question, by assuming that we are dealing with a problem of a like nature to that of an individual human being. We are here face to face with the idea of a group, and should rather seek analogies in whatever notions we may have, as to the nature of that far more difficult concept which is sometimes called the 'group-soul,' or 'group-spirit.'

This idea connotes something that is other than the individual. The term is generally applied to animals, and not infrequently, with out more ado, we conclude that the human individual is vastly superior, and in our conceit thank God that we have got beyond that stage. But this is a short-sighted view, based upon the comparison of a single man with a single animal. The group-soul idea, I would venture to think, is connected with far wider conceptions.

In the first place, it is connected with the tradition of the 'sacred animals,' which all but a few in the West have relegated to the limbo of exploded superstitions. The 'sacred animals' are said to be 'lords of types,' of whom the mass of animals of that type are, as it were, the corpuscles of their body. These 'corpuscles' are ever going coming and going, ever being born and dying; but so long as that 'type' is manifested, there is a permanent vehicle for it even on the physical plane. These 'lords of types,' it is said are great intelligences of the master-mind; they are truly 'sacred animals,' types of intelligence as well as orderers of modes of life.

Now what obtains among the animals, we may well believe, is not in principle confined to them alone; it is rather a showing forth, in modes and forms that man can distinguish plainly in the external world, of the mysteries of his own greater nature.

As there are forms and modes without, so there are forms and modes within; and within our own kingdom there is, I would venture to suggest, a precise analogy with the animal group-soul and the lords of its type.

Families, clans, and peoples, are all, accordingly to types, conditioned by super-human intelligences, and representative of the 'permanent bodies' of such greater beings. Here the bond is blood; and blood is, I venture to think, more potent than mind, using the term mind here as indicative of mind in individual man.

When, however, we come to consider a religious body, we are confronted with a still more difficult problem; and therefore, whatever suggestion one ventures to put forward, must be advance with all reserve.

I can well believe that the real work of such a body may be the evolution of a conscious instrument, or permanent ground, for the incarnation or manifestation of a Great soul; that is to say, that while at the same time it affords the conditions for its individual members to perfect themselves, it should

also have a common object that no individual in it can achieve by himself, and that this object should be the endeavour to realise consciously a corporate common life, by means of which the power, wisdom and love of a Great Soul may manifest itself to the world.

This, I believe is also a question of 'blood,' for 'the blood is the life.' But this blood will be the Blood of those who are 'of the race of Him.' There is much talk of a 'new race,' and some people are looking for a new type of race on the lines of the old separated nations and peoples but I would fain to believe that the 'new race' will, as it has ever been prophesied concerning it, be of every nation under heaven, as far as its physical bodies are concerned.

This has been attempted before; nations and communities of religionists have boasted themselves to be the people, are doing so to-day. This exclusiveness should be avoided, if we would live according to reality and grow in wisdom. Performance, and not the making of claims, should be our business, if we would attain to gnosis.

The Spirit that we desire to see incarnate is, I believe, not the spirit of individual, but a Spirit that subordinates individuality to the good of the whole.

Many are endeavouring after this ideal in manifold instinctive ways. Some, again, have the ambition consciously to set about this great work, and knowingly to be about this holy business; they long to come into conscious contact with a Great Soul of the order of Him who uses the whole body of humanity as His Body, and knows that all types of bodies and souls and minds are necessary for the purpose of the expression of His Life.

With such an enlightening belief, it is scarcely possible to think that any one particular type of religion will absorb the rest, any more than we can believe that one member or limb of a body can absorb the rest; for if it should be so, it would be along the lines of disease and not of health.

Therefore, if we would consciously realise the life of the whole, we are bound to accept as the condition of our common endeavour that we shall make no distinctions of creed, sex, class, or country. The bond of union is to go deeper than any of these distinctions; for the bond that binds us together as member of a natural family in our inner nature, must surely be of a spiritual order.

Now we are told by science that "a body is perfectly elastic when it has the property of resisting a given deformation equally," and we are further informed that "all bodies have different elasticities as different temperatures."

Temperature, in the case of living beings, applies especially to the blood; and temperature, when thought of in connection with a deeper meaning we have ventured to give to the idea of blood, in an organism bound together for a spiritual purpose, is rather temperament.

To be perfectly elastic, therefore (and their aim is surely eventual perfection), the members of such a body should have the property of resisting any given deformation equally. They should have the will to resist equally throughout the body that is to say, in every unit or corpuscle of which it is composed any temporary deformation from the type. Those who have not the power of resisting and remain deformed, necessarily cease for the time to realise that they form part of the permanent elastic body of the spiritual type.

The most apparent nature of this type seems to me to be very clearly set forth in the ethical teachings of all the great religions. The further marvels of its glorious nature are for the most part hidden from us, for they transcend the individual consciousness. But this much we can know, that, that it is this type or mould of being that develops in us, or impresses upon our substance, what we

very rightly call moral character.

The permanent element must therefore be sought in the power of resistance to all deformations from rectitude, - to any impressions but those of the Great Soul that are lords of truly human types, and who, we may believe, manifest their greater nature for men's consciousness through groups of like-willed human beings. Elasticity is further defined in the dictionaries as "possessing the power or quality of recovering from depression or exhaustion; able to resist a depressing or exhausting influence; capable of sustaining shocks without permanent injury: as elastic spirits."

Let us, then, whatever religious body we may belong to, strive to be ever more and more elastic. "Elastic spirits," an excellent combination! That is the business we should ever be about, the great work.

Re-formation, re-adjustment, re-storation and perpetual re-freshment must ever be more and more possible for spiritual cosmopolitans. Elasticity of body, soul and spirit is the aim, that so men may individually and collectively mirror forth the activities of some Great soul that shall vehicle the true Mind of Wisdom.

Embracing Inspirational Awareness: Five Perspective-Changing Benefits

By Melissa Wadsworth

Live Aware! Sounds simple enough. And yet, for many of us, living with true awareness takes practice and commitment. It requires that we nurture our sense of wonder, curiosity and genuine interest each day. It requires that we refresh our connections to the people and essential elements of the world around us. Only then can the "Aha" truth of awareness resonate with us: What you notice matters!

Living with awareness naturally opens our eyes to the gifts to be enjoyed in daily life. At the same time, conscious intention and imagination opens our hearts to the fantastic possibilities that exist for creating a more satisfying life. Need more persuasion? Consider the following inspirational benefits:

1. Awareness enhances your receptivity. We're each receptors of energy and information. Awareness improves your receptivity to signals and signposts that can help with daily decision-making. Awareness increases your receptivity to the sensory surprises and gifts that are present. As an open channel your life tends to become layered with enhanced visual richness. This inevitably switches on your other senses, which in turn naturally enhance your daily life experience.

Likewise, awareness helps you to be more aware of the particular energy and information that you send back out into the world. Thoughts and words like "no one will notice," and "it doesn't matter" should begin to fade from your vocabulary.

If you go through life half asleep or tied to limiting habits, you may be blocking all kinds of information from making it to your conscious mind. Living aware can help ensure that you are cognizant of all the resources available to you.

2. Enhanced awareness facilitates focus. We all get busy. And without an intention to stay aware we can move through our days on the surface. It's a little like giving a presentation and looking over everyone's heads. You're not making real contact.

Awareness fine-tunes your innate ability to focus on life components. As you first practice awareness you may take in a grander view of everything in "your sights," but then your awareness lands - like a butterfly coming to rest. It may land on something that adds beauty to your day, it may land on a conversation of useful information, it may land on a bus banner that points you to just the resource you've been seeking. Focus lets you know what's important to you at any given moment. Be aware of what catches your attention and why?

Focus also lets you know how you are feeling about your life and often signals when change needs to occur. For instance, a travel expert who used to be a stewardess said that she knew it was time to quit when she kept focusing on the one obnoxious traveller on each of her flights rather than all the other friendly and polite passengers. Recognizing what your focus tells you empowers your life.

3. Positive awareness generates appreciation. After all you can't appreciate what you don't notice. Taking the time to notice something new or to re-consider something you've taken for granted can refresh your sense of life appreciation. Photography is a great tool for building awareness and appreciation, since it naturally directs you to focus on objects of interest and beauty. You can also simply practicing seeing the world with the eye of a photographer. Look around and consider what is photo-worthy.

4. Active awareness stimulates life clarity. With your observational powers turned on high, the

brain seems to respond to mindfully presented stimuli with correlations, personal insights and revelations. Mindful awareness simultaneously quiets the mind and sharpens our mental processing so that helpful data can surface. So leave spaces in your day for quiet awareness and contemplation, even if it's for five minutes. Often we just work so very hard at trying to make it all work out right. Consider whether you need to provide more space and awareness so things can unfold. Consider whether you leave enough room in your days, or in your life perspective, for the easiest route to your goals to reveal itself.

5. Open-hearted awareness leads to connection. Awareness tends to tether you to your life experience with tiny treads of connection, acquired one at a time.

Being aware of how you are in the world may result in you feeling more connected to your unique qualities and talents. Being aware of opportunities to interact with others can help you feel more part of a community. When you really listen, which is a type of awareness, you can better hear what other people can offer you, or how you can help them. Such satisfying connections just make existence feel more successful.

Living aware leads to you being more receptive, to enhanced focus, to greater appreciation and more life clarity and connection. That's a pretty good return on your efforts. So practice awareness and just see what happens. Copyright 2006 Melissa Wadsworth

About the author

Melissa Wadsworth is a self-help author and speaker specializing in creative awareness and personal growth topics. Sign up for her free "Living Awareness" e-newsletter at: <http://www.melissawadsworth.com/> and receive a FREE copy of "Personal Insights: Seven Steps to Empowering Yourself."

Emotions – How To Understand, Identify and Release Your Emotions

By Mary Kurus

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<http://www.mkprojects.com/index.htm>

• Why Bother With Emotions:

Emotions control your thinking, behaviour and actions. Emotions create illness. Emotions affect your physical bodies as much as your body affects your feelings and thinking. People, who ignore, dismiss, repress or just ventilate their emotions, are setting themselves up for physical illness. Emotions that are not felt and released but buried within the body or in the aura can cause serious illness, including cancer, arthritis, and many types of chronic illnesses. Negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, negativity, frustration, depression cause chemical reactions in your body that are very different from the chemicals released when you feel positive emotions such as happy, content, loved, accepted. Repressed emotions lower your vibrations. It takes a lot of your vital energy to repress emotions and keep them repressed – and you wonder why you're so tired? This article deals with emotions, how to identify and release your emotions.

• What Are Emotions – Feelings?

Different people define emotions in different ways. Some make a distinction between emotions and feelings saying that a feeling is the response part of the emotion and that an emotion includes the situation or experience, the interpretation, the perception, and the response or feeling related to the experience of a particular situation. For the purposes of this article, I use the terms interchangeably. John D. (Jack) Mayer says, "Emotions operate on many levels. They have a physical aspect as well as a psychological aspect. Emotions bridge thought, feeling, and action – they operate in every part of a person, they affect many aspects of a person, and the person affects many aspects of the emotions." Dr. Maurice Elias says, "Emotions are human beings' warning systems as to what is really going on around them. Emotions are our most reliable indicators of how things are going on in our lives. Emotions help keep us on the right track by making sure that we are led by more than the mental/ intellectual faculties of thought, perception, reason, memory."

• Belief Systems

Underlying much of our behaviour is what is called a belief system. This system within us filters what we see and hear, affecting how we behave in our daily lives. There are many other elements that affect our lives, including past lives and the core issues we come into this life for resolution, but our belief systems in this life have a major effect on what we think and do. Your belief system affects your perceptions or how you interpret what you see, hear and feel. For example, a person raised by an angry man or woman will view people in the future with beliefs that anger is bad or that it is something to fear. Another example would be someone who is quite intelligent but who has never been encouraged or honoured for their intelligence, this person might believe they are stupid. Men raised in conservative societies might have the belief that women who work outside of the home are not as good as those who do not work outside of the home. It takes a lot of work to look at yourself and identify the beliefs that are affecting your life in a negative manner. However, knowing your beliefs will give you a sound basis for emotional freedom. I do believe that it's wise to deal with the belief systems before dealing with the identification and release of emotions. First things first!

• Other People, Places, and Things Cannot Change How You Feel

The only person who can change what you feel is you. A new relationship, a new house, a new car, a new job, these things can momentarily distract you from your feelings, but no other person, no material possession, no activity can remove, release, or change how you feel. How often do you hear people say things like “when I have enough money, I won’t be afraid anymore”, only to find there never seems to be enough money to stop being afraid. Or “when I’m in a secure relationship I won’t feel lonely any more”, and finding they are still lonely regardless of their relationship. We need to understand that we take our feelings with us wherever we go. A new dress, a new house, a new job, none of these things change how we feel. Our feelings remain within us until we release them.

- **Emotions Are Not the Only Cause of Illness**

Emotions are not the only cause of illness. Little babies and young children get ill, and not always because of their emotional issues. There are many causes of illness including emotions, but they are not the sole cause of illness. The causes of illness today are quite different from the issues causing illness 20 or 30 years ago. We are living in a world filled with chemical, metal, and atomic poisons, radiation, pollution, and pesticides in our food. We are bombarded with all types of electricity. These energies affect the physical, mental/ intellectual, energetic and emotional health of people. As we travel more, moving with ease from country to country, different types of infection causing elements are spreading around the world more easily. Infections of parasites, worms, viruses, and different types of infectious bacteria are many times greater than 20 years ago. Our water supplies are filled with chemicals and metals. The benefits of antibiotics have also brought with them the difficulty of the candida fungus overgrowth and other physical and emotional difficulties. The causes of illness today are different.

- **Two Basic Emotions In Life – Love and Fear**

There are only two basic emotions that we all experience, love and fear. All other emotions are variations of these two emotions. Thoughts and behaviour come from either a place of love, or a place of fear. Anxiety, anger, control, sadness, depression, inadequacy, confusion, hurt, lonely, guilt, shame, these are all fear-based emotions. Emotions such as joy, happiness, caring, trust, compassion, truth, contentment, satisfaction, these are love-based emotions. There are varying degrees of intensity of both types of emotions, some being mild, others moderate, and others strong in intensity. For example, anger in a mild form can be felt as disgust or dismay, at a moderate level can be felt as offended or exasperated, and at an intense level can be felt as rage or hate. And the emotion that always underpins anger is fear.

- **Physical Effects of Emotions**

Emotions have a direct effect on how our bodies work. Fear-based emotions stimulate the release of one set of chemicals while love-based emotions release a different set of chemicals. If the fear-based emotions are long-term or chronic they damage the chemical systems, the immune system, the endocrine system and every other system in your body. Our immune systems weaken and many serious illnesses set in. This relationship between emotions, thinking, and the body is being called Mind/Body Medicine today.

- **You Cannot Control Your Emotions**

You cannot change or control your emotions. You can learn how to be with them, living peacefully with them, transmuting them (which means releasing them), and you can manage them, but you cannot control them. Think of the people who go along day after day seeming to function normally, and all of a sudden they will explode in anger at something that seems relatively trivial and harmless. That is one sign of someone who is trying to control or repress their emotions but their

repressed emotions are leaking out. The more anyone tries to control their emotions the more they resist control, and the more frightened people eventually become at what is seen to be a “loss of emotional control”. It is a vicious circle. It’s important today to be politically correct. And that means not challenging or disagreeing with what the average person believes. It means not expressing negative emotions in public. Showing emotion in public in North American and European societies represents being “out of control” a great sign of weakness. People feel uncomfortable with those who express strong emotions. We are a society that is taught to hide our emotions, to be ashamed of them or to be afraid of them. Regardless, we are born with them and must live with them. This means learning how to know them, be with them, and release them.

- **The Difference Between Core Issues and Emotions**

We each come into this lifetime with at least one core issue to resolve. Different situations will continue to present themselves in different but repeat patterns until you have dealt with the core issues in your life. A few examples of core issue are abandonment / victimization, demanding justice in all matters, living spiritually rather than materially. These are overarching issues that affect emotions completely. Many people find out about their core issues by learning to deal with their emotions. It is a gentle pathway that leads you into a deeper knowing of your core issues.

- **Emotions and Emotional Abuse**

Emotional Abuse is a form of violence in relationships. Emotional abuse is just as violent and serious as physical abuse but is often ignored or minimized because physical violence is absent. Emotional Abuse can include any or all of the following elements. It can include rejection of the person or their value or worth. Degrading an individual in any way is emotionally abusive, involving ridiculing, humiliating and insulting behaviour. Terrorizing or isolating a person is deeply abusive and happens to children, adults, and often the elderly. Exploiting someone is abusive. Denying emotional responses to another is deeply abusive. The “silent treatment” is a cruel way of controlling people and situations. Where there is control there is no love, only fear. If you are living in a situation that is emotionally abusive please seek help from either a professional or one of the many helpful organizations present in most communities, to help you sort out your issues. Emotions stemming from emotional abuse are deep and complex, requiring ongoing help from those trained to deal with emotional abuse.

- **“Go South” – Feeling Your Feelings**

People spend much time talking about how they feel. They attend workshops, they visit therapists, and they tell others who did what to them and describe how they feel about it. They talk and talk about their feelings but they don’t feel their feelings. They intellectualise and analyse their feelings without feeling them. People are afraid to really feel their feelings, afraid of losing control, afraid of the pain involved in feeling their emotions, of feeling the sense of loss or failure or whatever the emotion brings with it. People are afraid to cry. So much of life is about what you feel rather than what you think. Being strongly connected to your emotional life is essential to living a life with high energy and a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. I was privileged to work with a professional many years ago when I was learning about my emotional self. I remember the day Fred told me that he knew what I thought about the situation, and then asked me “How did it feel?” I was smiling as long as I was providing a description of the situation. As soon as I looked for the feelings inside of me I began to cry. It did not feel very good. I was hurting. Fred used a term “Go South” to help me go to my feelings rather than an intellectual approach. He used to tell me to “Go South”. Many of our feelings reside in our midriff and navel area. Today I will often tell myself to “Go South” Mary, meaning, “How does it really feel Mary”?

• **How We Repress Emotions**

When we have an experience that we find painful or difficult, and are either unable to cope with the pain, or just afraid of it, we often dismiss this emotion and either get busy, exercise more, drink or eat a bit more, or just pretend it has not happened. When we do this we do not feel the emotion and this results in what is called repressed, suppressed or buried emotions. These feelings stay in our muscles, ligaments, stomach, midriff, auras. These emotions remain buried within us until we bring that emotion up and feel the emotion, thus releasing it. Emotions that are buried on the long-term are the emotions that normally cause physical illness.

The following are a few examples of the methods people use to avoid feeling their emotions.

- Ignoring your feelings
- Pretending something hasn't happened
- Overeating
- Eating foods loaded with sugar and fat
- Excessive drinking of alcohol
- Excessive use of recreational drugs
- Using prescription drugs such as tranquillisers or Prozac
- Exercising compulsively
- Any type of compulsive behaviour
- Excessive sex with or without a partner
- Always keeping busy so you can't feel
- Constant intellectualising and analysing
- Excessive reading or TV
- Working Excessively
- Keeping conversations superficial
- Burying angry emotions under the mask of peace and love

• **Symptoms of Repressed Emotions**

It takes a lot of energy to keep emotions repressed and buried. If you keep emotions buried for a long period of time, you lower your overall vibrations, and lower vibrations lead to illness and an accelerated ageing process. Buried emotions create fatigue and depression.

The following are some major symptoms of buried and repressed emotions.

Fatigue

Depression without an apparent cause

Speaking of issues/interests rather than personal matters and feelings

Pretending something doesn't matter when inside it does matter

Rarely talking about your feelings

Blowing up over minor incidents

Walking around with a knot in your stomach or tightness in your throat

Feeling your anger not at the time something happens but a few days later

In relationships, focusing discussions on children/ money rather than talking about yourselves

Difficulty talking about yourself

Troubled personal relationships with family, friends, acquaintances
A lack of ambition or motivation
Lethargic – who cares - attitude
Difficulty accepting yourself and others
Laughing on the outside while crying on the inside

- **Effects of Repressed or Buried Emotions**

Repressed or buried emotions can cause major difficulties in the physical body and energetic systems. They affect all your relationships, and they especially affect your ability to grow spiritually and shift your level of consciousness. Emotions repressed for the long-term can cause serious illness including cancer, arthritis, chronic fatigue, and many other major health problems. Since repressed emotions can rest either in your body or auras, they can cause holes in your auras, through which your energy leaks out and creating fatigue, a sense of vulnerability, and low self-confidence. When you have repressed emotions, your behaviour and reactions to events in the present moment are really reactions to past events as well as the present. This has a negative effect on all relationships in your life. You cannot be fully present with those you love in today until you have released your emotions from the past. You buried emotions because they were too painful and difficult to deal with when they occurred and your reactions to today's events are affected by this pain and hurt that remains buried in your body. It takes a lot of energy to bury emotions and to keep them buried. There isn't much energy left over for other activities when your energy is being used to keep stuffing these emotions back down. By nature, buried emotions want to come up so you can become aware of them, feel them and release them. You work very hard to keep them stuffed down. Our real purpose in being on Mother Earth is to keep increasing our level of consciousness and living a more spiritual or love-based life. The higher the consciousness someone has, the higher degree of spirituality in his or her life. The higher the spirituality the closer we are to being what we are meant to be, a fully integrated and loving human being. You cannot shift to higher levels of consciousness as long as you have major negative emotions buried within you.

- **Committing To Emotional Health**

People who make a deep commitment to themselves to become emotionally healthy are willing to go to great lengths to learn about their emotional selves and to do what is required to release buried emotions. This is often an uncomfortable and difficult journey when you begin, but I promise you great joy once you've gotten over the first few hurdles. Once you make this commitment your journey to identify your issues and release buried emotions will become much easier.

- **Methods To Identify Your Emotions**

Emotions are reliable indicators of what is really going on inside of us. There are many ways to identify emotions and you will have to choose the manner that is most suitable to your personality. Some people need to do this in solitude whereas others need to do this with others. Some will want to write while others will use a much more casual approach. Sometimes it's best to combine a number of approaches for a deeper identification of emotions. The following are a few methods you can use to identify what you are really feeling about a person, place, situation or thing. Identifying your emotions is the first step to a rich and healthy emotional life. Use a number or all of these methods. Find the ones that suit you and use them to help you in your journey towards emotional health.

Awareness is the first step of change!

Listen To Your Thoughts and Daydreams – We become so accustomed to thinking in certain patterns that we are no longer aware or conscious about our thoughts and daydreams. Catch those

daydreams, hold the thoughts, bring them up into your conscious mind. This will tell you a great deal about yourself, what you love and hate, and about your relationships. If you possibly can, keep a written diary of these for a month or two. Writing down your thoughts and daydreams will help you to organize, experience, and understand your thought patterns and bring them into a higher level of awareness within you. If you keep a written record for a period of time you will begin to see important patterns in your feeling and thinking.

Identify Your “Little and Unimportant Hurts” – More people walk around saying it’s not important or it doesn’t matter when it is very important and a big piece of hurting emotion is buried within them. They will describe this hurt and being small and unimportant. Men tend to do this rather frequently. Write down a detailed description of all the “little and unimportant hurts” that somehow don’t go away. Every little hurt that you keep remembering, that won’t go away, regardless of when it happened, must go on this list. Many people have many of these little hurts from childhood. These emotions are buried within creating difficulties with their health. Identifying these hurts will tell you a great deal about your buried and unexpressed emotions.

Record What Makes You Feel Strongly For Two Months:

Keep an ongoing record of strong emotions for 8 weeks. Regardless of the cause, if it’s the weather, the traffic, your husband, wife, children, politicians, the stock market, your fellow church members, whatever and whoever, add it to your list. Try to identify what really made you angry. Sadness is a mask for anger, and anger is a mask for fear. If you can identify your real fears, what you are afraid of losing or not having, you are well on your way to emotional health. Again, writing this down will help you see things much more clearly, increase your awareness, and help you to know your emotional self at a much deeper level.

Memories That Won’t Go Away:

If you keep remembering situations, hurts that happened some time ago, you are guaranteed to have repressed emotions around this person or situation. You will need to pull this situation out and re-feel the hurt around it. Try to document these carefully since these are more than likely causing you much physical distress. Forgiveness is something that occurs as a result of owning and releasing your emotions. We often reach for forgiveness without doing the work required to release emotions of hurt and anger. Forgiveness is a result of an emotional process. There are no short cuts.

Keep a Journal of the Emotions in Your Dreams: Keep paper and pencil by your bedside and jot down your dreams as soon as you begin to waken. Write down the emotions you are experiencing in your dreams. The activity in a dream can be secondary, the emotions being experienced there are essential. The emotions in your dreams are the very emotions that you are repressing and burying within. Dreams can give you a deep insight into your emotional self.

Be Specific About The Emotions You Are Experiencing:

Confusion occurs when people are trying to get to know their emotions because they speak in general terms rather than specific emotions. A good example of this is depression. You may be experiencing loneliness for people, loneliness for God (spiritual loneliness), boredom, and a lack of creativity in your life. You may be feeling abandoned because of a death or divorce. If you just say you are depressed you will have great difficulty releasing the emotion or finding a solution to the situation causing the emotion. A good example of this is the difference between jealousy and envy. Jealousy relates to being resentful of a person’s advantages be they in social standing, education, profession, or it can relate to resentment of a rival in love or affection. Envy is a discontentment or resentment aroused by another’s good fortune or success.

Are You Using Sex To Release Your Emotions?

Sex is a normal and healthy part of life. However today many people engage in sexual acts, with

others, alone, or using pornography on the Internet, to release emotions buried within them that they have been unable to feel and release. These individuals tend to have a very high sex drive since this is their primary way of releasing emotions that are pent up within. These are people who enjoy sex more than once a day. They tend to be very cerebral or intellectual, highly emotional, but very much out of touch with their emotions. If you identify with this description, keep a record of the thoughts/ experiences/ fears that you are having prior to engaging in this types of sex. Sex can be used to stuff down feelings so you won't feel them and identifying these feelings and releasing them will help you move into a much healthier and enjoyable sexual life.

Eating, Drinking, Exercising, or Any Type of Compulsive or Excessive Behavior:

We often go for weeks, even years acting in a manner that is normal for us – and what is normal for you may not be normal for another person. Then we will find ourselves overeating, working excessively, drinking daily, engaging in compulsive sex, working long hours, and many other types of compulsive behaviour. We stuff down our feelings through excessive behaviour, ensuring we do not feel them at that moment. We do this because the feelings are too painful or we are just too afraid of these feelings and where they might lead us in our thinking and actions.

Try to identify the times when your excessive behaviour was triggered and, as soon as you can, identify the emotion that is causing this behaviour. It can be stress or fear related to a new job, the death of a friend or partner, difficulties with lovers or children. Document these emotions as best as you can. We never do anything without getting something from it. There is a reason why you are engaged in excessive or compulsive behaviour.

When What You Say and Do Is Not In Sync With What You Feel:

Men and women go through many situations telling themselves that “it doesn't really matter” or “it's not important enough to argue about”, basically buying peace by agreeing to something that deep down they do not agree with. They find themselves feeling unhappy, disgruntled, and angry with the individual involved. This type of situation creates tensions and unhappiness in relationships. Buying peace at any price creates negative feelings within you. Identify those situations where you have created depressing feelings within yourself by agreeing to something that makes you don't really agree with. Write them down. This will be difficult for people who have difficulty saying no, or who are too anxious to please others. But the feelings generated by these situations are very important when dealing with your emotional life. Many times we need to excuse things and just overlook them. That's normal in life. But we apply this to situations that affect us deeply. It's these situations we need to identify.

Positive Emotions:

It is crucial that you identify your positive emotions during these exercises. You are probably very loving, caring, compassionate, trusting, forgiving, generous, many times in each day. Be certain to include the wonderful and good things about yourself as you identify your emotional self. This provides a realistic picture. If your record only negative emotions, your picture of yourself will be quite distorted and lacking in reality. Each one of us is born with all emotions and each emotion needs to be seen in its full and loving energy.

The Gentle Whispers of Your Soul:

Find a quiet place and time and listen to that inner voice of intuition within you. Each person has it. And listen with your heart rather than your head. Your heart will hear different things from your head. There is a very special time just as you are waking up in the morning but before you are fully awake. This is the time zone when you can often hear your sub-conscious speaking to you. Listen to your thoughts at this time carefully and you will pick up important messages, messages that can help you to identify your emotions, even your core issues.

Using Your Guides/ Angels/ The Divine Universal Energy:

Ask your guides, angels, or whoever you call on from the Divine Universal Energy, to help you to see not just your emotions, but to see the core issues that you have come to deal with in this lifetime. Our Guides and Angels need to be asked, they are so respectful. They do not intervene unless asked. You will be amazed to see the Divine assistance come into your healing journey once you seek their assistance. Pray, meditate, ask them to help you see, understand and release your buried emotions. Believe in their help, it's guaranteed to come.

Crying About Your Experience:

Crying is a normal releasing function for each human being. We are born with this ability because through crying we release pain, hurt, and associated stress. Please begin to cry about whatever hurts you. Crying or writing and crying about what has happened to you can help you sort out your experience and understand it. And understanding is crucial for many people. If you have had a very painful experience, write one sentence and sit with this sentence and cry. Then write another sentence and sit and cry. In time this process will relieve some of the sensitive pain around your experience and eventually make it endurable. With time, the pain around the situation will lessen, as long as you allow yourself to feel it.

Writing About Your Emotions:

We can play all sorts of games with our minds, denying reality is something we all do. However, it's much harder to do that when we write things down. You don't have to show your list to anyone, but for complete emotional health you have to fully accept your emotions. This acceptance will be accelerated if you write your list and share this list of emotions with one other human being. But be very careful and choose someone who will guarantee you confidentiality. I highly recommend a counsellor, minister, priest, and psychiatrist, someone trained in this type of work and who guarantees confidentiality. A professional can often help you put a healthy perspective on these emotions. Writing this list is important.

Friends/ Counsellor/ Minister/ Therapist:

You might want to consider seeking the assistance of a counsellor, therapist, or minister. They can help you to see things in a more balanced fashion, and help you understand more fully what you are observing in yourself. It can be difficult at times to be objective about yourself.

We need friends who love us and care about us, especially when we are hurting. And usually this is not the time when you could say we are at our best. Tell your friends about what hurts you. Feel their comfort and love. Make sure they understand you may not want advice on how to resolve your issues. What we all need is a loving ear to listen to us with their heart. We need loving friends in our lives. Many people pay for a therapist to listen to them because they cannot tell their friends about their experiences. Take the risk and share these happenings and your feelings with close friends whom you can trust.

• How To Release Emotions

Don't be afraid of your emotions. Don't fight them, run away from them, and block them out. Welcome them, be with them, regardless of what they are. We were born with all emotions. They are neither good or bad, they just are. Emotions dissipate and slowly disappear if you feel them, and are present with them. Just close your eyes and feel them as deeply as you can.

Deciding How To Respond To Your Emotions:

Once you have identified a certain emotion you will at times need to decide how to proceed in dealing with it. There are many options that need to be considered carefully. Certain approaches can have very serious effects. You could lose your job, or you could lose your marriage. It's very important to consider your options carefully before saying or doing something that cannot be taken

back.

The following are a few questions you can ask yourself when deciding what response would suit a particular situation best – and each emotion, each situation is different. *Am I reacting to this situation or is this reaction partially a reaction to a past situation as well? *Am I able to discuss the issues with the person without venting anger? *Will I be able to talk about how I feel to the person? *Is a direct approach the best way to proceed? *What are the consequences of dealing directly with the person/ situation? *What do I expect from this discussion? *Are my expectations realistic? *Should I discuss this with someone before doing anything?

By asking these questions you will be deciding whether a direct approach is the best approach, and if so if you are ready do this at the present time. If your anger is at a “rage” stage, you need to release some of this anger before proceeding to discuss this with anyone.

The Physical Part of Releasing Your Emotions:

There are a number of ways you can begin to release your emotions, especially those relating to anger and hurt. 1) Go into an empty room, or go for a drive alone, and scream, scream as loudly as you can. Scream the words “I hate”. So many people have never screamed out their hurt, their rage. Continue to do this as long as it feels right inside. Cry, allow yourself to cry your feeling. 2) If you cannot scream aloud, imagine you are screaming your rage, hurt, and pain. Imagine it and imagine it. See it, and hear it, and especially, feel it as deeply as you can. 3) If you are a physical person, take a pillow and keep hitting a chair, your bed, something, feeling your hurt every time you hit that object with the pillow. Every time you hit that pillow say the words “I hate”; 4) Get yourself a punching bag and hang it in your basement. Then take time to keep hitting that punching bag, releasing your rage. 5) Take your fists and keep pounding a table saying, “I hate” and just keep doing it. 6) If you like to write, write about your anger; write about your hate; write about how hurt you are; write about how afraid you really are. Journal about what happened and how it is affecting you today. Write about what you have lost, or what you have never had that has hurt you so deeply.

Feel the feeling! Don’t be afraid of it!

Under all the anger, rage, hate, and hurt is one emotion – FEAR!

It’s essential to whatever method you choose to realize that you are hating, that you are full of rage and anger, and that this is a safe way to begin to accept your anger, your hate, and to own your anger and hate as your own. So often we are too afraid to lose control or just afraid of the intensity of our rage, that we run away from it and ignore it. The more you ignore it, the bigger it gets. One of the most important things about releasing an emotion is to concentrate on the emotion rather than on what caused the emotion. Forget who did what that caused the emotion, forget about the person who did something to you, concentrate on the “I hate” or “I am angry” or “I am so hurt”. It’s the emotion you need to release. Don’t be afraid to feel your feelings. Feeling them means owning them.

Speaking Your Truth – To release emotions you need to tell one human being one time only about the situation that caused the feeling buried within you. You need to explain in detail what happened, your feelings around this experience, and how this experience is affecting your life today. So often we hide situations and life’s happenings because we are ashamed and somehow feel things happen to us because we are “bad people”. It’s important to tell your complete story in detail to one person. This will help you to gain a healthier perspective on the situation. However, if you keep repeating the story to different people, talking about it repeatedly, thinking about it over and over again, this becomes a resentment (a recurring negative thought). The resentment then becomes another problem rather than part of the solution. Secrets are shame-based and incidents kept secret or feelings hidden from others will make these feelings deeper and longer lasting. Emotional secrets lead to emotional and mental illness.

Transmuting Emotions:

Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes, put your head back, and relax as best you can. Do the following exercise for 10 deep breaths. Concentrating on your breathing, inhale on the count of six, hold this breath to the count of six, exhale to the count of six, and rest to the count of six, then begin again. If the count of six is too difficult try the count of four or five. Concentrate fully on your process of breathing only. Keep doing this exercise until you feel more relaxed and your head noises have gone away.

Then slowly look for the emotion, find where it is buried in your body. All repressed emotions rest in your body and at times in the aura as well. Anger rests around your belly button area but it can also be seen as a black thread-like substance all through the body. Sadness sits in the midriff area. Emotions can rest anywhere in your body including the muscles, ligaments, in bone joints. Take your time, find your emotion.

Then take time to really see what this emotion looks like. I had a huge amount of sadness and when I finally found it I saw that it was the shape of a large mass of clouds, clouds so dense and thick that you couldn't begin to even dent them. These clouds were a very dark grey colour.

Once you have found your emotion, and described it to yourself, stay with it, hold it, be with it. Do not try to do anything to it – VERY IMPORTANT - just be with it. By being with it you begin to integrate this emotion into your very consciousness and this is the next step in releasing your emotion. As you go back to visit your buried emotion week after week you will find the shape getting smaller and smaller, until eventually it just disappears. It takes many months to transmute an emotion in this way, but it is a powerful manner to release emotions. This is what is meant by "transmuting emotions".

Releasing Resentments:

A resentment is a recurring anger where, on a recurring basis, we keep thinking about something someone has done to us, reliving all the particulars around this situation, with ongoing anger, hate, hurt, or whatever the emotion might be. Pray for the person you are resenting. Wish for this person every wonderful thing you would want to have in your most perfect life. Wish them blessing and good fortune in all things. In time, this type of a prayer will release you from your resentment. This is difficult. You can also write about this person. Write all the negative qualities you see in this person. Then write about all the positive qualities you see in this person. Eventually, by writing about the different qualities, a shift will occur within you, bringing you peace of mind. You can write about the situation, what the person did to you and how it affected you, how it made you feel. Write about how you reacted to this situation, what you said and what you did. When we accept responsibility for our own behaviour, the resentment often disappears.

The Power of Prayer:

Certain emotions just hang on, regardless what you do. When human effort fails to produce the desired change, then it's time to hand this over to the God of your understanding or the Divine Spirit of the Universe. Ask in prayer, that the emotion be lifted from you. My own personal experience has proved to me that this works, when all human effort has failed.

There is one thing that I have included in my prayers for many years, asking for a grateful heart. In my late 20s, I was in deep emotional pain and did not believe life was worth living. I was taught to look for things in my life that I could be grateful for, regardless of the difficulty. It was hard to do this when I was in such emotional pain, but it was essential to my healing. This prayer for a grateful heart has stayed with me for the past 30 years. And today I do have a grateful heart. Being very human, it disappears at times, but it returns when my energy goes there.

A Meditation With the Heart of the Universe:

Close your eyes, sitting in a relaxed and comfortable position with both feet on the ground, your hands sitting gently on your thighs. Begin to breathe deeply, inhaling and exhaling slowly and gently, concentrating on your breathing. Do this deep breathing at least 10 – 15 times, concentrating on only your breathing. This will help you relax at all levels and clear the noises from your mind. You will have to practice this relaxation a number of times before proceeding with the full meditation.

Once you have relaxed, feel your heart, be with your heart. Then go out into the Universe, and visit the stars and the spaces between the stars, until you find that sacred place, the Heart of the Universe. Approach it slowly, respectfully and with humility. Then ask that the love of the Universal Heart be more deeply connected with your heart, and that your heart be filled with the love of the Universe. Stay with this for as long as you can. Feel the love of this Universal Heart. Once you feel your heart has received the love it needs at this time, thank the Universal Heart for sharing its love with you and slowly open your eyes and come back into the present moment.

We need to ask!

Over time, this meditation will expand your ability to love more deeply, shifting out the negative emotions. It's a powerful meditation.

Shifting Your Perspective:

Life brings injustice, abuse, bad luck, and emotions of hurt, anger, self-pity, and depression. It's quite easy to look at what others have done that you consider to be wrong, and these wrongs are very real. It's not as easy to look at your response to the real wrong or injustice done to you. Someone might have demeaned you and degraded you. Did you punish them in some manner for their behaviour? Was your response to the situation a healthy and loving response? Emotions around injustice of any kind are complex. Once we accept personal responsibility for our responses, the emotions around a given situation tend to lose their hold over us. It's important to honour that an injustice has occurred. But it's equally important to be ready to release that from your life, which involves looking at your own behaviour, and accepting responsibility for your own actions.

Detach Yourself:

When your emotions are running high and you are having difficulty reducing the intensity, try to detach yourself from the situation and the emotion. Try to imagine the same situation happening to someone else. Try to see if the behaviour would be the same if someone else were in your situation. If the answer is yes then you can begin to see that the experience is not necessarily being focused at you. The other person is probably acting unconsciously, and you just happen to be the individual "in their way". Detaching yourself in this manner can help you move through very difficult situations without taking the abuse personally. You might need to terminate the situation causing the emotions, but your detachment allows you to look at things more rationally and quietly.

Knowing Your Fears:

What are the fears underlying your emotions? You will need to know and understand your fears. To do this you will have to swallow some pride and admit and accept that you have many fears that are affecting what you do each day. These fears are often not at the conscious level. Are you afraid of being alone; abandonment; the unknown; adventure; losing face; ridicule; not having enough money; loneliness; death; suffering; losing prestige; not being honoured for your work and effort; losing your wife or husband – the list is endless?

Fears are tricky things. There are some that you need to ignore and just act as if you were not afraid. For example, if you're afraid to say no, your fear will leave as you begin to say no when you need to say no. At times it's like exercising a muscle. The more you use it the easier it gets. Other fears are a healthy warning that something is very wrong. For example, a person might be

afraid of another person. This fear might be the signal to avoid that person, to leave the relationship.

As you become aware of your fears and own them to be truly yours, a day will come when you will notice that one of them has somehow disappeared. That's the way it is with fear. As you live a life in tune with your emotions, a life focused on coming from that place of love, you will find that many of your fears will just disappear.

Accepting Responsibility For Your Emotions:

Taking care of ourselves is the greatest way we can love ourselves in a wholesome and healthy manner. And this means accepting responsibility for our emotions. Remember, emotions are not good or bad. They just are. But be careful and don't punish yourself or be too hard on yourself. Balance is the key work. Each human being is very human, and that means each one of us is born with a full range of emotions.

Conclusion

- **Living In Peace:** Once you have completed the looking, the understanding, the releasing of your buried emotions, you may find you have become accustomed to being in a more intense emotional state. The exercises above will heighten your overall emotionality. If you are relatively certain you have done what can be done, make a decision to live in peace, at peace with yourself, and at peace with others. You can decide this. Avoid those situations that you know will create conflict and upsets. You cannot change others, you can only change yourself. There are times where it's important to stand and fight. It takes a lot of wisdom to "accept the things you cannot change, and change the things you can". Wisdom to know the difference brings peace of mind.

10 Tolerations we can get rid of using our emotional intelligence.

By Susan Dunn, M.A

Here are 10 top tolerations we all tend to have that we can get rid of by using our emotional intelligence.

1. Drifting.

Most of us start out the day with Intentionality, i.e., we're full of things we want to accomplish. And chances are we immediately start chasing rabbits, i.e., we start responding to the requests and demands of others that pull us off track, and subtly the pressure begins to build. Sticking with our Intentionality is the key.

2. Hating to say "no" or being unable to say "no."

Granted there are times when we wish there were more of us to go around, but there isn't. Most of us like to say "yes," but we need to learn to say "no." And we need to learn to say it without apologies and explanations. When we apologize, we're giving ourselves mixed messages.

3. Being inflexible about our needs.

Learn to operate from "preferences," rather than "needs," i.e., be flexible. There's really very little you can't get along without, if you think about it. You might prefer if it were sunny and you were sitting on a beach in the Bahamas, but it isn't, and you're not, and you're doing just fine. There are all sorts of emotional conditions you think you "need" that fit in the same category.

4. Having a dysfunctional social network.

Negative and demanding people sap our energy. If you have an excessive need to be needed in order to feel good about yourself, and therefore tolerate people who are sucking you dry, change this. Stop meeting their needs and unreasonable demands, and stop letting them into your life. Building a strong and supportive social network is an emotional intelligence competency.

5. Running on empty.

Emotional intelligence means living your life in such a way that you have reserves. It means taking care of yourself first. These can be reserves of energy, love, money, or time, or any other sort of resource. Put your own oxygen mask on first.

6. Being fragmented.

Not operating from an Integrated Self results in lying to ourselves and others--staying in a marriage that doesn't work, or staying in a job we hate, or tolerating people around us we don't like. It means exaggerating our skills and attributes to others and presenting a false life from a false sense of self. Worst of all, it keeps us from knowing ourselves, and self-awareness is the keystone of emotional intelligence.

7. Agonizing over decisions and thinking too much.

Most important decisions need to be based on our feelings. Learning to use your Intuition is a much more effective way to make decisions than to get stuck in "analysis paralysis."

8. Judging.

Being judgmental is a tremendous waste of energy. It will pull you off task, alienate people, and damage you as well, because when we judge others, we put judgment into the equation, and must therefore judge ourselves. Forgive others, and be relentlessly and adamantly self-forgiving.

9. Devastating ourselves with anger.

Emotions are our guides and we need to let them flow through us, experiencing them but not getting

stuck. When we're angry--don't express, don't suppress, process and confess! Expressing anger only makes it worse and is very damaging to your emotional and physical health. You can continue to be angry and do battle, but remember--to the victor goes the heart bypass!

10. Giving up, feeling defeated.

Building our resilience muscles helps us bounce back from setbacks, failures and losses. It helps us bounce back faster and higher. Having an optimistic attitude is the facilitator of all the other emotional intelligence competencies.

About the Author

Susan Dunn, M.A., is a personal life coach who likes to help her clients succeed by increasing their emotional intelligence, understanding their strengths better, and doing the inner work.

You can visit her on the web at <http://www.susandunn.cc>

Empathic Body Signals

By Avalon De Witt

Empathy is the ability to feel other people's feelings. But besides this emotional experience, there is another aspect of empathy that few people consider, and that is the physical.

You may have heard stories of dogs that know when a person is about to have an epileptic seizure. We are all connected - to one another, and to the earth. If you are empathic, it's likely that you are receiving psychic signals in your body.

If a certain physical sensation gets your attention, or seems particularly annoying, it could be that your body is "trying to tell you something." The body has its wisdom.

You may experience one or more of the following:

- * A heaviness in the pit of your stomach
- * Chills or tingling
- * A lump in your throat
- * Trouble sleeping
- * Twitches or tics
- * Ringing in the ears
- * Positive sensations, like a warmth or a vibration
- * Unexplained pain

Many people who chart their empathic body signals find that they have patterns. They often discover that a certain twitch or a ringing in the ears is consistently followed by some particular personal or global event.

You can chart your own empathic body signals too. Just follow these simple steps:

1. Purchase a calendar with enough space on each day to write at least a paragraph or two. If you can't find a calendar with enough space, you can make one in a notebook.
2. Record your sensations. Every time your body gets your attention with some sensation, any sensation at all that forces you to take notice, write it down on your calendar.
3. Ask inside, "What is this feeling trying to tell me? What does this mean?" If you get any impression at all about what the sensation might be connected to, write it down.
4. Watch for events and happenings that might be related to the impressions you've written down. Make a note on your calendar about anything that seems significant to you.
5. Review your calendar every 30 days and look for patterns. Any time a sensation is recorded more than once, take note of the events that took place on and around those days.

Of course, not every pain and twitch is going to be an empathic signal. If a symptom persists or is troublesome, you should seek the advice of a doctor. But if doctors can find no explanation for your symptoms, try charting them.

If you pay close attention, you'll begin see and understand the relationships between your bodily sensations and the happenings in the world around you.

About the Author

Avalon De Witt has practiced as a professional psychic and spiritual counsellor for over 12 years and has studied the Tarot and other forms of divination for over 22 years. She has worked successfully with thousands of clients world-wide. Avalon believes that the Light of Divinity resides in us all, and she is devoted to revealing that Light in your life. Her focus is to show you how to tap into that source of unlimited power and knowledge within YOU.

www.AskAvalon.com

10 STEPS to BECOMING PERSONALLY EMPOWERED

By Shale Paul

Contrary to common belief, the most effective control over one's life can be gained in an almost effortless manner. The truly empowered person "has it together", exudes a glowing poise that is apparent to others. Here are ten steps whereby you can begin experience empowerment in your own life.

1. Start from where you are and take one step at a time.

When you think about it, that's the only place you CAN start, i.e., where you are at this moment. Begin with your present perceptions, understandings, and strengths and move forward, one step at a time. In this world of objectives, goals and big plans, we often focus too much on the future with the result that our ability to concentrate fully on the present is severely compromised. Yet, it is only in the present that we can make a difference.

2. Examine your resistance points--the things that irritate you, limit you, or cause you to react. We often resist what we most need to learn. The next time you find yourself resisting new information, a particular situation, or something someone else is saying, ask yourself: What is it that is really bothering me about this? Is there something that I need to learn?

3. Recognize that whatever you are experiencing at this very moment is appropriate to your need to grow. Implicit in this "rule of appropriateness" is the concept that there is a larger plan of which you are an integral part. Until you're willing to acknowledge the possibility that such a plan exists, you will never be able to see it!

4. Stop worrying about whether others are getting theirs! It's easy to become preoccupied about what the other person is doing, getting, achieving, etc. This kind of worrying is useless and wastes time and energies that are better spent on yourself.

5. Realize that it doesn't matter what happened to you or who did it to you; the only thing that matters is what you do about it. What happened and who did it to you are in the past. You can't change the past, you can only change your perception of it. The ONLY thing that counts is what you do NOW in order to move forward.

6. Learn to refrain from having judgment.

To refrain from judgment is to accept what is. How often in conversation do you find yourself mentally correcting, criticizing, or re-phrasing? when you do, you risk hearing the real message which may not be in the words themselves. Rather than saying to yourself, "that's inaccurate" or "he/she is incorrect", try accepting the statement as simply a representation of the way that person thinks, feels or what he/she intends to convey. This simple technique can open up a whole realm of hidden meaning, AND it enables you to respond more objectively and dispassionately.

7. Learn to operate holistically by opening up to the other possibilities that are always there. There is always more than one way to solve a problem. You're most likely to get "stuck" when you foreclose your options by setting up conditions, disturbances, expectations, fears, positions and prejudices.

8. Finish your unfinished business.

Most of us have "unfinished business"--failures, a relationship gone sour, or a good deed left undone. Getting beyond (fully resolving) is not always easy, but there's a three-step process that, if followed, can do wonders for your psyche. It's this: (1) Acknowledge the wrong, mistake, screw-up,

etc. to yourself, (2) Admit it to one other person, preferably the person you've wronged and, in the latter case, apologize and ask simply: "What can I do to make this right with you?" (Sometimes there really isn't much you can do, but the simple act of asking is healing in itself), and (3) Move ON. You've admitted your mistake, taken whatever corrective action you could, and now it's time to go forward. This third step takes discipline, but it works.

9. When faced with an apparently hopeless situation, take action, any action. There's something called the "logjam" theory that applies here: when logs in a stream become all jammed up, moving ANY ONE log frees the others to move, because the act of moving a single piece creates space which in turn allows the other pieces to move. It's important to recognize that you're not trying to reach a final solution in a single move; you're simply taking "one step at a time" (Step#1)

10. Consider the wisdom of doing absolutely nothing!
As with the rule of appropriateness (above), there's a hidden assumption here, namely, that we each possess an inner wisdom that is always available if we know how to tap into it. Call it intuition, spiritual sense, whatever, the fact is that this "still small voice" is audible only when we are very quiet. It's a bit like a point in which you can see the bottom only when the surface is calm and the water un-muddied. Doing nothing means exactly that: nothing physically, nothing mentally, nothing at all! The Japanese call it, "kokoro-no-mizu", literally, a "mind as water"--smooth, flowing and undisturbed. Try it. It works, and it's fun!
Questions: email topten@coachville.com

Energy - The River Of Life

By Dr. Rita Louise

We are each filled with universal life force energy. It is the essence of our being, our consciousness, our soul. As the flow of life force energy moves through the physical, emotional, and spiritual bodies, it can become imbalanced, stagnant, or blocked. We experience what is called dis-ease. Disease, as the term suggests, is lack of ease. It is the inability of one's life force energy to flow freely.

Disease is the reaction to imbalanced life force energy in the physical, emotional, or spiritual body. This imbalanced energy can manifest as physical problems, as well as life patterns and cycles that keep us from growing. Disease can manifest in the physical body in the form of headaches, back pain, arthritis, or cancer. It can manifest in the emotional body in the form of anger, rage, phobias, depression, and hate. It can also manifest in the spiritual body, appearing as narrow-mindedness, disrespect for life and nature, or materialism.

Lets look at the concept of disease from another perspective. Visualize your life force energy as a fast moving stream. It will flow in the path of least resistance. If a large stone is placed in the center of the stream, the water must yield and deviate to go around the stone blocking its path. The flow of the stream has deviated from its natural path and become imbalanced.

If, the very first time you felt invalidated, a large stone was placed in the stream, the effect to the flow of energy may not be very great. However, if you are invalidated again, the blockage can get bigger as yet another stone is added to the stream. Your life force energy must yield and deviate even more to get around the even larger blockage. These blockages can grow instance by instance, cycle by cycle, stone after stone, lifetime after lifetime, until the body starts to manifest these issues as dis-ease.

Fear is the largest cause for our life force energy to become imbalanced, stagnant, or blocked. When we are afraid to let go of energies such as abuse, physical, mental, or emotional trauma, invalidation, or the denial of self, our life force energy becomes imbalanced. If left for a long time, it can become stagnant or completely blocked.

For some, these imbalances have been present since early childhood or a past life. Changing these imbalances would mean changing the very basis of the world around them, their perceived self. For others, there is a level of denial in which they know there is something wrong, but it does not belong to them. There are yet others that can see these imbalances in their physical, emotional, and spiritual bodies, yet they are unsure how, or are having difficulty in releasing the stagnant energy which will allow them to bring in the life changes desired.

Each of us has the ability to heal ourselves of disease. The easiest to say, but the most difficult to do, is just to let go. Allow the body, mind, and spirit to release all of the energy that it is holding on to. It can then return to its natural place of balance and harmony. This, however, is not easy for us to do.

There are many techniques one can use to release energy that is not in harmony with our highest good. Amusement is the easiest way to get stagnant energy flowing again. Look at what is going on around you and find some amusement in it. Enjoy the release you will experience with a good laugh. If that doesn't work, techniques including meditation, any kind of physical exertion, creative expression such as art, and tasks as simple as washing dishes or raking leaves are excellent tools one can employ to release energy.

In addition, there are many techniques in which one can be assisted in releasing stagnant energy. These include Reiki, aura/chakra clearing, and psychic surgery. Each of these techniques affect the physical, emotional, and spiritual bodies; however, one technique may work better on one specific body than another.

Massage, in its many forms, is the physical manipulation of the muscles within the physical body. Today, many people are familiar with the relief experienced during and after a massage. Massage is an excellent tool for breaking up blockages that accumulate in the muscles, tendons, and joints. These blockages are commonly referred to as "knots". As the healer works to break up the energy accumulated within a knot, the stagnant energy can dissipate, and one's life force energy can start to flow again.

Another way of removing blocks is through the use of Reiki. Reiki is a form of hands-on-healing. "Reiki" means "universal life force energy." During a Reiki treatment, healing energy brought in from the universe is run through the healer's hands and is transmitted to the person to be healed. The healer begins at the top of the head, moving their hands in a number of positions over the receiver's head. Each position is maintained for three to five minutes, or until the healer feels that the area which he/she is working on is cleared. The healer then continues working on the rest of the body in the same manner, clearing stagnant energy. Reiki is an excellent tool to use, especially when dealing with physical problems, in that it heals down to the cellular level.

An aura/chakra clearing is another way of getting one's life force energy flowing. An aura/chakra clearing is a form of clairvoyant healing. The chakras, or energy centers within the body, are a common place where one's life force energy can become imbalanced. Chakras are like the apertures of a camera in that they open and close. In physiological terms, chakras are located where groups of nerves meet to form nerve centers. They are also related to the endocrine gland system, which includes the adrenal glands, thyroid, and the pituitary.

The aura is the electromagnetic field around the body. It is the "personal space" or "personal bubble" that each of us have around our bodies. There are seven major chakras within the body, as well as seven layers to the aura. Each vibrates at a different frequency and color, and process different types of information such as survival, sexuality, willpower, love, communication, visualizations, and knowingness.

In a healthy body, each layer of the aura is brightly colored, vibrant, full of energy, and flowing. When one's energy becomes imbalanced, stagnant, or blocked, the aura can have the appearance of being discolored, ripped, torn, or dented. The chakras in a healthy body should also appear clear, vibrant, and full of energy. They should be round in appearance and rotating in a clockwise direction. When afflicted, the chakras can appear cracked, deformed, or out of alignment with each other. If there is an imbalance in one of the layers of the aura or one of the chakras, it can have a direct effect of the information processed.

During a session, the healer will look directly at the aura and chakras. He/she will utilize visualizations such as feather dusters, squeegees, or brooms to clear out blockages found in the different layers of the aura. The healer may also sew rips and tears in the aura and get the aura flowing again. In addition, deformed chakras should be reshaped and cracks filled. Chakras that are not moving should be set into motion.

While clearing the aura and chakras, the healer may also describe the types of energy they are looking at. This energy may appear as a color, a feeling, or a picture. By communicating this information, the person to be healed now has a conscious understanding of what energy they are holding on to. This new information can allow the person to release the stagnant energy and give

them permission to make positive changes in their life.

Psychic surgery, as the name suggests, is another form of clairvoyant healing. During this type of healing session, the healer may look at things such as muscular and skeletal health, the organs and glands, and the level of toxins in the body, as well as other specific health issues. The healer can also look at emotional issues, life patterns, and physical injuries sustained in past lives.

There are many things a psychic surgeon can address during a healing session. These include (but are not limited to) clearing energy from the aura and chakras, organs, and glands. A skilled psychic surgeon can also assist in the healing after surgery or an accident; assist in reducing pain such as that experienced with a headache; and assist in deprogramming reoccurring emotional issues such as abuse, fear, and control. This can also include physical, mental, or emotional traumas that were experienced in a past life which are recreating issues (karma) in the present.

As with all healing techniques including massage, Reiki, aura/chakra clearings, or psychic surgery, the healer can only assist in restoring balance to our life force energy. We must be willing to release stagnant energy in order to experience its affects on physical, emotional, or spiritual levels. It is this release of energy that allows the healing process to begin.

About the Author

Dr. Rita Louise, PhD, ND is a Naturopathic Physician and a 20-year veteran in the Human Potential Field, but it is her unique gift as a medical intuitive and clairvoyant that illuminates and enlivens her work. Author of the books *Avoiding The Cosmic 2X4* and *The Power Within*. Dr. Louise currently trains students in medical intuition, intuitive counseling and energy medicine. In addition, she runs a private practice and is a professor of Alternative Health Studies at Westbrook University. She is the Chairman of the Board for the International Association of Medical Intuitives, has served on the Board of Directors for the Holistic Chamber of Commerce, and is a member of the Naturopathic Medical Association. For more info visit her website: <http://www.soulhealer.com>

Masculine Energy verses Female Energy

By Skye Thomas © 2004

I have been reading a lot lately about the concepts of masculine and feminine energy. It all sort of goes along with the yin and yang definitions of masculine and feminine. I do not think I need to define the differences for you. The ideas I feel called to address today have more to do with the finger pointing and blame going on in the spiritual communities. Some religions believe in a masculine god and others in a feminine goddess. There is this snobbish assumption that only one is correct and that the other belief is foolish and misguided. Each believes that if everyone would subscribe to their particular vision of power, then all would be right with the world.

There is a lot of talk among the new age communities about a return to feminine energy and a return to feminine leadership. Somehow, it is believed that with women in charge we will somehow clean up all of the world's problems and magically bring civilization back to a place of beauty and harmony living off the land in a peaceful nurturing way. I even read an article recently written by a new age man asking where we women were and when would we be coming back to fix the mess that he feels the men have made of our planet. Wow! What a big responsibility!

My first response to reading this man's well written essay about how men had really screwed things up with their greed and testosterone filled war like natures, was to say "It's not my job to fix your mess! Where do you get off making a mess and then asking when someone else is going to clean up? Why not ask the men when they're going to clean up after themselves?"

Once I calmed down though, I got to thinking about the feminine energy and how it works. I rethought my answers and thought that I should say, "Feminine energy by definition is gentle and nurturing, healing and loving. You won't see us come charging in like warriors gone to battle. Our effects will be subtle and beautiful like the breeze blowing the leaves of a tree."

Having stewed over the topic for a few more weeks, I have some more enlightened thoughts to share. Why is it even referred to as masculine or feminine? Have you never seen a female fight to the death to protect her family? Have you never seen a man cry for the magic of seeing his child born? Do you think that women aren't capable of being greedy and selfish? Do you really believe that men aren't capable of being healers? Whatever happened to the belief that both energies lie within all of us?

Men didn't create these problems anymore than women did. It takes one to agree to be victimized. If women truly wanted to take power, we are smart enough to overcome the physical strength differences. The truth is, we agreed to a philosophical view that men were smarter, stronger, and closer to god than we are. We chose to subscribe to that just like they did.

Perhaps the deity in charge is better than us and is a perfect blend of all energies, masculine and feminine. Perhaps it does not require an immature split of energies and a need to blame the other for the state of things. Perhaps 'god' is more grown up than that and understands that we all have free will to screw things up or fix them however we choose. Perhaps the 'goddess' is waiting for us all to figure out how to play nice together.

If we are completely honest, we have no proof whatsoever that there is a male god or a female goddess. We have no proof that there is a husband and wife team either. And atheists have no proof that there is no higher power in charge either. None of us can prove anything other than the history of our belief systems and even that we screw up and argue over. All we have are millions of miracles that have happened in the name of every deity ever known to mankind and we have a lot of stories passed down through the generations. Other than that, we don't know squat about who or what god is. It's beyond us and probably ought to stay that way.

I suspect the answers to god and the heavens is hidden in the answers to who we are and why we are here. Until we know for sure that we are absolutely positively right, we have no business fighting. I believe that when we do find out for sure what is going on, that we won't need to fight over all of the 'what if?'s anymore.

I, for one, refuse to blame the men for where we are at this point in history. For every story of a rape, there is a story of a woman taking a man's children from him. For every story of a man treating a woman like she is stupid, there's a gold digger proving that women are just as vicious and deceitful. For every Dali Lama, there is a Mother Theresa. For every Gandhi, there is a Joan of Arc. Gender does not make you more or less spiritual. You make yourself spiritual.

There is nothing holy about a holy war and there is nothing spiritual about blaming one gender over another for the problems we face. It takes both genders to create life and it takes both genders to make it holy and sacred. The solution is in taking a 'we' and 'us' type of an approach. We screwed our planet up. We created this dynamic and we have to fix it. All of us need to work together, regardless of gender and regardless of whichever form of godlike energy we have chosen to favor. The root of every religion is that god is love.

So, love one another.

About the Author

Skye Thomas is the CEO of Tomorrow's Edge, an Internet leader in inspiring leaps of faith. She became a writer in 1999 after twenty years of studying personal growth, motivation, soulmates, self-esteem, parenting, spirituality, metaphysics, family dynamic, dating, and astrology. Her books, articles, and astrological forecasts have inspired people of all ages and faiths to recommit themselves to the pursuit of happiness. To read more of her articles, free previews of her books, and her astrology forecasts, go to www.TomorrowsEdge.net. To read more about Skye and to sign up to receive her free weekly newsletter, go to www.SkyeThomas.com

The Nature of Thought Energy

By Dr. Jeffrey R. Palmer Ph.D.

Your thoughts are the currencies with which you exchange energy with the universe

Do you believe that your thoughts have energy? Do you believe that a place or an object can retain the energy of the people that have come into contact with it? If you have ever entered an old home and sensed the presence of its previous occupants, or held an antique item in your hands and felt the history of it, then you know the answers.

Scientists are just beginning to accept the truth about thought energy, and have begun to study what many have known for centuries. In fact some of today's leading scientists in areas of physics, biology, psychology and many other fields are starting to recognize the importance of thought energy.

Positive thought energy in the form of collective meditation has been scientifically proven to reduce violent crime!

In 1993 a study encouraged by one of the world's leading physicists was undertaken in Washington D.C to determine if focused meditation could have an effect on that city's crime rate. The results were astonishing. During the weeks that several volunteers meditated, crime rates fell dramatically by 25 percent! This was no accident. This was scientifically validated and proven to be an effective means of countering the criminal inclinations of a very large group of people...an entire city in fact.

All life is energy.

Thoughts have energy. Negative thoughts create negative events. Positive thoughts create positive results. The energy of thought is either stored in physical structures or is transmitted into the universe, it never dies. Consider what this means. Think about the ramifications.

Where did the clothes you are wearing come from, who made them? Were they manufactured by depressed and impoverished people working in appalling conditions for weeks to make the same amount of money that you spend on a cup of coffee in the morning?

Who built the car that you drive? Was it built by disgruntled and tired factory workers? Where were some of those workers alcoholics? Did some of them leave work, go home, beat their wives and children and build your car the next morning?

Who built the house that you live in?

Who came into contact with the food that you ate today?

Starting to get the picture? Everything we come into contact with can hold the thought energy of other people. Even the air that we breathe carries the thought energy of those it surrounds.

What were the thoughts that have been injected into every part of your life? How much has the thought energy of others affected you?

Every thought interacts with the energy of the universe. Negative thought looks for other negative thought energies to bind with. Eventually a matrix of negative thought energy is created and forms a thought wave. These powerful negative thought waves manifest themselves in our lives in the form of poverty, crime, war, plagues and natural disasters. Negative energy creates a vacuum, it detracts

from the life giving nature of the universe Negative thought waves come in many sizes and have been known by many names, bad luck, misfortune, disaster, evil, curses, etc. Call them what you will, the source of their energy is the same. The source is us.

Positive thought energy also seeks out other positive energies. If you are a source of positive thought energy, positive and beneficial energy will return to you in many wonderful and unexpected ways. Positive thought energy creates a surplus; it is the surplus of positive thought energy that allows for the creation of life.

You are the source and creator of all things. Everything that happens in your life has a direct connection with the type of energy that you are charging the universe with. You alone are responsible for the type of energy created by your life.

Becoming aware of the power of your own thoughts is the most important step in understanding how to handle the adverse influence of the negative thought of others. Knowing the value of positive thought energy allows us to become sensitive to negative energy. We begin to notice it in our own speech, we see it in our relationships, and we notice it in others.

Being aware is the key. Once we are aware of the negative thought energy in our lives we can take measures to eliminate it and replace it with beneficial, healing energy. It is as simple as noticing it and dismissing it with our minds. A thought enters our mind that we recognize as negative, we simply dismiss it. By dismissing negativity we take away its power by not allowing it to manifest further negativity in our lives.

There are of course many other techniques available to combat negative thought energy and create positive abundance in our lives; including focused meditation among others. The critical first step however is simply being aware of the existence and effects of these energies. Hopefully this brief article has helped you to allow that first step to be taken.

About the Author

Dr. Jeffry R. Palmer Ph.D. is the author of "Judo for the Soul - The Art of Psychic Self Defence", as well as numerous articles and papers relating to metaphysics and the study of paranormal phenomena. Further information about Dr. Palmer and his books can be found at <http://the-psychic-detective.com>

The Enlightened man

From The Hidden Glory of the Inner Man

By Torkom Saraydarian

Let us mention some of the virtues of an enlightened man:

An enlightened man is an optimist. This is not the result of his emotional and mental reactions to his experiences, but a consequence of his insight into the future. The curious thing is that his optimism does not prevent him from seeing the defects and dangers of the moment. He recognises the wrong motives, or distorted intensions of others. He handles these with love, but keeps them harmless. This may be compared to the training of a tiger. The trainers love their tigers; they know the dangers involved, but are able to handle both their love and their knowledge of the dangers.

An enlightened man is courageous, daring and fearless, but he is not a fool. He is courage, daring and fearless are the result of his clear vision and understanding of reality. He risks his life only if he is sure that in losing it he will save a greater number of lives, or bring greater unfoldment to humanity.

He can move quickly. He forgives, but is vigilant and watchful of your next move. He trusts you, but does not initiate you into a labour for which you are not ready. He recognises the defects in your work, but keeps you at this work so long as you do not get out of control, thereby giving you a chance to discover your hidden weaknesses and remove them.

An enlightened man has neither friends, favourites, or enemies, only co-workers. For him the important goal is the Plan, and whoever is capable of forwarding the working out of the Plan is his co-worker.

An enlightened man is an idealist, but he is also a very practical man; he is down-to-earth, but soars to great heights. An enlightened man has no fear of death, as he already lives in the eternal, but this does not mean that he is careless of his health and the sanitary conditions of his environment. He is a balanced being with balanced activities and a balanced form of expression. He saves a penny and spends millions. He takes long rests and vacations but labours hard and continuously. He knows how to command and how to obey. He is both a teacher and a student. He knows when to speak and when to keep silent.

An enlightened man radiates love, magnetism, blessings, serenity, healing powers.

The presence of an enlightened man is a great blessing. He inspires courage, labour, observation, daring and sacrifice. He enables you to meet yourself. He lets you see not only your vanities, but also your eternal star of the future. Above all, he inspires the spirit of striving, endurance, trust, patience and gratitude.

The story of enlightenment or illumination is the story of the expansion of the consciousness and awareness. An enlightened man has a broader understanding of matter, energy, space and time, more intensified control over them, and a greater sense of responsibility in his handling of them.

In Sanskrit we find the word "Budhi", meaning discernment of the good from evil, or discrimination between right and wrong. It refers also to divine conscience, to pure love and to straight knowledge. In the West we use the word "intuition" as a synonym for the word "Budhi". We also have the word Buddha, the Enlightened One, the One who entered into the light of Budhi Intuition. The word "Buddha comes from the root Budh" which means to see, to perceive, to know, to wake, to recover consciousness. Thus each Buddha is an enlightened being awakened to the realities of great life, one who has much knowledge and love to give to the cause of the liberation of humanity. A Buddha

is the embodiment of pure wisdom.

As each life increases its own light, it increases the light of others.

Evolve Yourself

By Rich Rahn

Our lifetimes are spent searching for the center of the maze -- the center of ourselves. Much of that time we spend running frantically around the periphery of self, not realizing that the hedges we can't see over and that keep us hemmed in, are self made. They are constructs of the mind. We're not aware that if we want to get to the center, we have to sometimes question the way the arrows are pointing.

Unfortunately, a lot of what we've been taught by well-meaning parents, teachers and clergy, is not conducive to self-realization. We've been taught how to fit in, get by and do what we're told. That's fine for children. But there comes a time in everyone's life when you have to start thinking for yourself.

The inner journey is the only authentic journey precisely because it's yours. All real growth happens on the inside. Each person carries within themselves meaning and purpose. It's only from inner explorations that you uncover meaning and purpose and can fulfill your potential.

The maze of your life is self-constructed. You don't have to solve the maze, rather, it dissolves in the basic realization of who you are. When you pay attention to the essentials in life and not the superficialities, then you can find your true center and begin to live from it. And, I guarantee, you'll be happier and more fulfilled.

Consciousness is the uniquely human gift that allows us to get up on the observation deck and see the big picture of our lives. It's from this vantage point that we can clearly see how dynamic and creative our lives can be.

By thinking about our thinking, we can see through the illusions and evolve to know the world and ourselves better. Remember, the universe is a growing, changing and evolving place. Our understanding of it is mirrored in everything we do, whether we know it or not. That means, we are growing and changing and, most importantly, evolving.

We're evolving just like everything else on earth. People, families, societies, institutions, politics -- everything evolves following the same undeniable and irreversible pattern. Including human consciousness. The difference, however, is that human consciousness -- your consciousness -- is self-directed. In other words, you have to evolve yourself.

By accepting, cooperating with and putting your belief in what's real, you can make an evolutionary consciousness leap and get to the heart of the human experience. As much as we would sometimes like to, we can never return to what was.

To paraphrase JFK, we'd like to live as we used to, but history won't let us. The only answer is forward and through.

If you take anything away from this, let it be that evolution equals growth, development and transcendence. Its trajectory -- its direction -- is always toward higher and higher levels. Apply this undeniable principle to everything in your life, especially your consciousness.

Seek the information you need to evolve, to expand your awareness and to grow and develop your consciousness. The self-development experienced through searching for this knowledge allows you to make sense of the universe and your own life and gives you the expansion of meaning and purpose that you're looking for. It doesn't get any better than that!

It's never too late. You can re-choose your approach to living. A shift in consciousness is all it takes.

But, nobody can do it for you.

The beautiful truth is, you evolve yourself. Duh!

About The Author

Rich Rahn's personal search for meaning has taken him to Spain, Florida, Cape Hatteras, California, a thousand miles off the coast of Mexico on a tuna boat, through hundreds of books, and eventually home to Michigan. But his real journey was his inner search.

Fear & Fearlessness

By Chögyam Trungpa

Acknowledging fear is not a cause for depression or discouragement. Because we possess such fear, we also are potentially entitled to experience fearlessness. True fearlessness is not the reduction of fear; but going beyond fear.

In order to experience fearlessness, it is necessary to experience fear. The essence of cowardice is not acknowledging the reality of fear. Fear can take many forms. Logically, we know we can't live forever. We know that we are going to die, so we are afraid. We are petrified of our death. On another level, we are afraid that we can't handle the demands of the world.

This fear expresses itself as a feeling of inadequacy. We feel that our own lives are overwhelming, and confronting the rest of the world is more overwhelming.

Then there is abrupt fear, or panic, that arises when new situations occur suddenly in our lives. When we feel that we can't handle them, we jump or twitch. Sometimes fear manifests in the form of restlessness: doodles on a note pad, playing with our fingers, or fidgeting in our chairs. We feel that we have to keep ourselves moving all the time, like an engine running in a motorcar. The pistons go up and down, up and down. As long as the pistons keep moving, we feel safe. Otherwise, we are afraid we might die on the spot.

There are innumerable strategies that we use to take our minds off of fear. Some people take tranquilizers. Some people do yoga. Some people watch television, or read a magazine, or go to a bar to have a beer. From the coward's point of view, boredom should be avoided, because when we are bored we begin to feel anxious. We are getting closer to our fear. Entertainment should be promoted and any thought of death should be avoided. So cowardice is trying to live our lives as though death were unknown.

There have been periods in history in which many people searched for a potion of longevity. If there were such a thing, most people would find it quite horrific. If they had to live in this world for a thousand years without dying, long before they got to their thousandth birthday, they would probably commit suicide. Even if you could live forever, you would be unable to avoid the reality of death and suffering around you.

Acknowledging Fear

Fear has to be acknowledged. We have to realize our fear and reconcile ourselves with fear. We should look at how we move, how we talk, how we conduct ourselves, how we chew our nails, how we sometimes put our hands in our pockets uselessly. Then we will find something out about how fear is expressed in the form of restlessness.

We must face the fact that fear is lurking in our lives, always, in everything we do.

On the other hand, acknowledging fear is not a cause for depression or discouragement. Because we possess such fear, we also are potentially entitled to experience fearlessness. True fearlessness is not the reduction of fear, but going beyond fear. Unfortunately, in the English language, we don't have one word that means that. Fearlessness is the closest term, but by fearless we don't mean "less fear", but "beyond fear".

Going beyond fear begins when we examine our fear: our anxiety, nervousness, concern, and restlessness. If we look into our fear, if we look beneath its veneer, the first thing we find is sadness, beneath the nervousness. Nervousness is cranking up, vibrating, all the time. When we slow down, when we relax with our fear, we find sadness, which is calm and gentle. Sadness hits you in your heart, and your body produces a tear. Before you cry, there is a feeling in your chest and then, after

that, you produce tears in your eyes. You are about to produce rain or a waterfall in your eyes and you feel sad and lonely, and perhaps romantic at the same time. That is the first tip of fearlessness, and the first sign of real warriorship.

You might think that, when you experience fearlessness, you will hear the opening to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony or see a great explosion in the sky, but it doesn't happen that way. In the Shambhala tradition, discovering fearlessness comes from working with the softness of the human heart.

The birth of the warrior is like the first growth of a reindeer's horns. At first, the horns are very soft and almost rubbery, and they have little hairs growing on them. They are not yet horns, as such: they are just sloppy growths with blood inside. Then, as the reindeer ages, the horns grow stronger, developing four points or ten points or even forty points.

Fearlessness, at the beginning, is like those rubbery horns. They look like horns, but you can't quite fight with them. When a reindeer first grows its horns, it doesn't know what to use them for. It must feel very awkward to have those soft, lumpy growths on your head. But then the reindeer begins to realize that it should have horns: that horns are a natural part of being a reindeer.

In the same way, when a human being first gives birth to the tender heart of warriorship he or she may feel extremely awkward or uncertain about how to relate to this kind of fearlessness. But then, as you experience this sadness more and more, you realize that human beings should be tender and open. So you no longer need to feel shy or embarrassed about being gentle. In fact, your softness begins to become passionate. You would like to extend yourself to others and communicate with them. When tenderness evolves in that direction, then you can truly appreciate the world around you. Sense perceptions become very interesting things. You are so tender and open already that you cannot help opening yourself to what takes place all around you. When you see red or green or yellow or black, you respond to them from the bottom of your heart. When you see someone else crying or laughing or being afraid, you respond to them as well. At that point, your beginning level of fearlessness is developing further into warriorship.

When you begin to feel comfortable being a gentle and decent person, your reindeer horns no longer have little hairs growing on them -- they are becoming real horns. Situations become very real, quite real, and on the other hand, quite ordinary. Fear evolves into fearlessness naturally, very simply, and quite straightforwardly.

The ideal of warriorship is that the warrior should be sad and tender, and because of that, the warrior can be very brave as well. Without that heartfelt sadness, bravery is brittle, like a china cup. If you drop it, it will break or chip. But the bravery of the warrior is like a lacquer cup, which has a wooden base covered with layers of lacquer. If the cup drops, it will bounce rather than break. It is soft and hard at the same time.

This article was excerpted from the book : Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior, by Chögyam Trungpa. About The Author: Chögyam Trungpa, meditation master, scholar, and artist, founded the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado; Shambhala Training; and Shambhala International, an association of meditation centres. His other books include Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation, and Meditation in Action. For more information about the author and Shambhala meditation centres, visit <http://www.shambhala.org>

The Fear of Feeling

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

We desire to find the path to peace, joy and freedom. We strive to feel lovable, worthy and secure. We know that if we do our inner work and open to our connection with Spirit, we will feel all of that. Yet we don't. We put it off for days or weeks. We stay stuck in our misery or numbness. Why? What are we so afraid of if we open to learning about loving?

I have searched for many years for the answer to this question. Over and over I would find myself out of grace and joy and into anxiety and stress. Each time it was because I failed to take care of myself in some way.

The problem is that all feelings are in the same box. Pain is in the same box as joy. We cannot be putting a lid on pain without putting a lid on joy as well.

What is the pain we are striving so hard to avoid feeling? Most people feel a lot of pain. We feel anxious, frightened, depressed, hurt. Since we are often in pain, it doesn't seem to make sense that we are, at the same time as we are feeling all this pain, also avoiding pain. Yet that is exactly what we are doing.

As unhappy as we may be feeling, we are avoiding pain that we believe is even greater than the pain we are feeling.

I have discovered that there are three feelings which most people want to avoid at all cost: aloneness, loneliness and helplessness.

Aloneness is what we feel inside when we are disconnected from God. Loneliness is what we feel when we cannot connect with another, either because our heart is closed, their heart is closed, or both of our hearts are closed. Helplessness is what we would feel if, when we want to connect with another and his or her heart is closed, we accept that there is nothing we can do to make them open their heart. Helplessness is what we feel when we accept our lack of control over others.

When we were babies and small children, we couldn't allow ourselves to feel these feelings. We could not have handled them and may have died of despair. So we learned many protections to avoid feeling these feelings.

The problem is that we still think we will die if we feel these feelings, so we are still avoiding them. We avoid connecting with God for fear God will not be there and we will feel alone. We get angry, withdraw, eat, drink, take drugs, watch TV, get busy, overwork and so on to avoid feeling the pain of our loneliness and helplessness.

Yet loneliness in our society is unavoidable. There are so many people who spend their lives with their hearts closed to avoid their pain that it is impossible not to be around people whose hearts are closed some of the time. If we choose to avoid feeling our loneliness and helplessness, then we too will close our heart. However, when we close our heart we close down the joy too. Then we are stuck with the anxiety, fear, depression and hurt that is endemic in our society.

You will not die if you open to feeling your loneliness and helplessness. It is even quite tolerable if you hold your lonely Inner Child (your feeling self) while bringing through love from Spirit, for then you are not alone in your loneliness. The willingness to feel the pain of loneliness and helplessness opens the door to joy, peace, and freedom. The more you open to spiritual help in your loneliness, the more you are able to embrace the privilege of this sacred journey of evolving your

soul. There is great joy in the journey, even when there is loneliness!

About the Author

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?", "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By My Kids?", "Healing Your Aloneness", "Inner Bonding", and "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By God?" Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course: <http://www.innerbonding.com> or margaret@innerbonding.com

The Hidden Power In Your Fears

By Avalon De Witt

Who wants to be afraid? In every moment, each of us is given the choice to love or to fear. A simple choice, one might think. But in this world, with violence, terrorism, war and disease becoming every day life for so many, is there anyone who hasn't struggled with fear?

Whenever we're about to make a major leap forward in our spiritual development, fear always steps into our path. It's the antagonist in all our personal stories. It's true that we attract what we fear. The more we fear a thing, the more likely it is to happen. And if left unchecked, fear can take control of our lives. Yet, everything has a purpose and fear is no exception.

There is good reason to be afraid of some things. Fear is a messenger that warns us there may be danger ahead. Its purpose is to guide us toward actions that will protect us as well as our loved ones. It is natural and healthy to feel fear. But like other natural tendencies we have, we're here to master our fear.

We all wish that life could be stable. We imagine that we would feel safe and comfortable if we could make life remain static, or secure. But without dangers in our lives we cannot live to our highest potential, and we never fulfill that potential without learning from our fear.

Of course, you don't want to take it too far. You don't want to be so engrossed in your fear that you become consumed by it. But there is a balance to be achieved between that extreme and its opposite - avoiding, denying, trying to be unafraid. Avoidance of fear is our greatest barrier to spiritual growth and happiness.

When we try to avoid or deny our fear in the hope that we can just be rid of it, it usually gets worse. Shutting out fear invariably shuts out the choices and blessings that could take us to the next level of our soul's development.

Fear is very much like quicksand. The more you fight it, the deeper you sink. Embracing your fear is akin to relaxing in quicksand so you can stop sinking. Until we face our fear head-on, and embrace it, it will dominate us.

Carl Jung said, "The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside as fate." Fear that is ignored takes up residence in our souls, and draws experiences to us in which it can exercise itself. We then find ourselves face to face with the same fear-inducing experiences again and again.

The result of this is that our ability to exercise our free will becomes hampered more and more every time we let fear take over. This can create extremely stubborn blocks in our spiritual progress, and can harm us physically, mentally and emotionally.

Avoiding fear blocks us from the joy we could be experiencing and blinds us to the Divine Light in our soul. But when we begin the journey toward embracing our fear, we begin a healing process that leads us inevitably to our true Selves, the Self that is Divine. The whole point of life is to come to know ourselves as a part of that Divinity and to reunite with that Truth within.

When we are afraid, we are being blessed with an opportunity to learn, to grow, to see and hear the world more clearly. Fear shows us the ways we hold ourselves back. It also provides us with an energy which we can transmute into power within ourselves.

Don't be afraid of fear. Do not reject it or push it away. Instead, reach out to it. Love it. When you show compassion and tenderness toward your fear, you transform it into a strength, a courage that eventually becomes the seat of peace in your soul. This is what gives spiritual masters their peace. Nothing can sway them from their centre because they have transformed their fear.

Fear is the seed of courage. Even Jesus Christ experienced fear. It's what we do in response to our fear that makes the difference. That's where love comes in.

Love is fear's perfect polarity. And love is ever-present throughout all eternity. Compassion for your delicate, fearful self always leads to freedom from fear. Love transforms fear. There is a magic that is sparked when we give love and tenderness to our fear.

When you focus on love, its ability to touch you grows. When you send out love, it always comes back to you larger than it was when you sent it. And when you love in fear's presence, fear vanishes. Just like when you shine a light into a dark room. It pervades that darkness, fills it up and turns it to light.

So let your fear come to the surface. Whatever fear you may have, whether it be large or small. Don't fight it; just sit with it and get to know it. Ask it what it is trying to tell you and listen to what it may be asking you for. Let yourself be moved by your fear's needs. Let your heart break for your fear.

Ask God for a deeper understanding of your fear and for a deeper understanding of the truth of love. Let compassion and tenderness flow through you, replacing any previous judgments you may have had about your fear. Assure your fear that you hear it, that you will take care of it and its needs will be met. See yourself wrapping your arms around your fear in a loving embrace. Feel your fear dissolving into your inner light.

Once you are in contact with your fear, and have found understanding of why it has come to you, you can take right action. This is the way to own your fear and take personal responsibility for finding your own inner peace, no matter what your circumstances. This is not an easy path, but it is easier than the loss of Self that you would experience otherwise.

Remember that life is a gift. Life will bring its ups and downs, but peace is something you can experience even in the midst of chaos.

About the Author

Avalon De Witt has practiced as a professional psychic and spiritual counsellor for over 12 years and has studied the Tarot and other forms of divination for over 22 years. She has worked successfully with thousands of clients world-wide. Avalon believes that the Light of Divinity resides in us all, and she is devoted to revealing that Light in your life. Her focus is to show you how to tap into that source of unlimited power and knowledge within YOU.

www.AskAvalon.com

What do you Fear? - Overcoming Fear Part I of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

"We Have Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself"

Franklin Theodore Roosevelt

Indeed fear is our greatest obstacle to happiness, peace and fulfillment on a personal, social and international level.

All anger, hatred, prejudice, aggression, violence, and war can be ultimately attributed to fear.

Fear is the Mother of All Negative Emotions

From the moment we relinquished the security of our mother's womb and had our umbilical cord cut, we experienced separation, isolation, insecurity and fear.

We fear for our bodies and personalities because we know they are vulnerable and mortal. Out of fear, we seek to create some sense of security by ensuring that we have sufficient people, money, and objects, as well as a professional and social position, etc. in our lives.

Then we experience a second level of fear: the fear that we might not be able to hold onto everything we have acquired. We might lose them to death, decay or change.

We fear not having what we need in order to feel secure and happy.

We fear losing these things when we do have them.

We fear others who might take these things from us.

We fear change that might make them disappear.

We fear death, which means losing all this.

Some Types of Fears

There are literally thousands of various manifestations of fear. We can fear just about anything our imagination allows. Let us list just a few, while remembering that they all stem from the basic fear of pain, rejection or extinction of the ego or its various attachments.

*Some of us are afraid of animals, insects, spiders, cockroaches, centipedes, snakes, birds and other wild animals.

* We fear each other and the opposite sex.

* The poor fear the rich and the rich the poor.

Movies, television and newspapers do much to increase our feelings of mistrust, vulnerability and fear, by concentrating on violence, both real and imaginary. We have learned to perceive our fellow beings as a threat to our safety and happiness.

* Those of one race tend to fear those of another.

* Some nations create nationalistic feelings by generating fear of other countries.

* Those, whose religious beliefs are weak, tend to mutate into fanatics out of fear of being wrong.

The idea is that the more people you can get to believe what you believe, the more right you must be.

* We may fear heights, confined spaces, open spaces, the ocean, fire, airplanes, trains, cars, elevators, or machines in general. * Some fear lightning, thunder, storms, earthquakes or even strong wind.

? We also might fear exams, making mistakes, classrooms or failing in general

? Or perhaps letting go, expressing our real feelings or beliefs.

? Many of us are afraid of telling the truth.

? We fear rejection and criticism, or not being loved or accepted.

- ? Some of us are afraid of falling "in love" or creating a love relationship because of the pain it may bring.
- ? Most fear speaking in front of large groups of people.
- ? We fear not being loved if people really know us.
- ? We fear growing old and getting ill.
- ? We fear losing someone's love.
- ? We might subconsciously fear not having enough to eat.
- ? We have learned to fear God, nature, and the elements.
- ? Most fear cemeteries and spirits of the dead.

Finally, there is the fear of all fears-- the fear of darkness.

For many of us darkness offers a festive occasion for fear to play with our imagination. A dark, unfamiliar room (or even a familiar one after seeing one of those horror films) becomes quite threatening. Darkness is the unknown and therefore is associated with danger and death. The mind can imagine anything hiding in the darkness. We are ignorant of what lies in darkness and thus identify it with danger and death.

Of all these fears the most common are of:

1. Rejection
2. Failure
3. Death of a loved one
4. Our own death
5. Illness and weakness
6. Physical and / or emotional pain
7. People and animals

A List of Fears

Take a look at the following list to see which stimuli or thoughts might sometimes cause you to feel uncomfortable. Basic fears can be expressed in an infinite number of ways according to each person's specific mental mechanisms.

The various expressions of fear have different names, such as insecurity, anxiety, concern, weakness, worry, inability, confusion, fear itself, depression, denial, shock, hysteria, panic, paralysis, anger, hate, rage, aggressiveness, violence, jealousy, etc.

Remember that sometimes fears can be subconscious, thus, although our basic emotion is fear, we might react with anger or crying. Even when we may not consciously fear, our inner child or subconscious may.

Check on this list whatever makes you feel uncomfortable and add anything else you discover.

1. Your own death
2. Sudden death by accident
3. Death of a loved one
4. Illness
5. Being paralyzed
6. Growing old
7. War
8. Earthquakes
9. Snakes, rats, mice, cockroaches
10. Dogs, cats

11. Failure at work
12. Failure in relationships
13. Failure at school,
14. Failure in life
15. Rejection from others
16. Being laughed at by others
17. Criticism
18. Loneliness
19. Financial insecurity
20. Others' aggressiveness
21. The dark
22. The unknown
23. God or his punishment
24. Losing your freedom
25. Losing your self-worth
26. Conflicts with others
27. The sea, heights, fires
28. Cars, planes, boats
29. Elevators, confined spaces
30. Large gatherings of people
31. Travelling by your self
32. Losing your sanity
33. Being rejected in a love relationship
34. The opposite sex
35. Microbes and dirt
36. Others _____

Now keep in mind what you fear as you continue reading

The next sections of this series will offer us effective means of freeing ourselves from fear.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

The Results of Fear - Overcoming Fear - Part 2

By Robert Elias Najemy

1. Fear and insecurity are synonymous. When we feel insecure, we naturally become concerned and spend great portions of time, energy, thought and money toward establishing external security. We focus on acquiring and protecting our sources of persons, food, shelter, sex, money, possessions, prestige or any other external factors which will help us feel secure.

2. This type of thinking and living is often, by necessity, ego-centered and maintained at the expense of others. We do not feel secure enough to love and give, but need to take. When such a psychology permeates our social and national psyche, it can lead to conflict and war.

3. When we feel insecure, we seldom feel the confidence to try something new; we tend to stick to old habits and familiar ways. We fear the new and the unknown. Our lives become stale, boring, habitual, meaningless and without growth.

This boring, habitual kind of life leads to inertia; a waking sleep, a living death. Much time and energy are spent on satisfying our security addictions and there is little or no energy left for emotional, mental or spiritual growth.

4. Fear is also the cause and result of a feeling of vulnerability and mistrust. When we feel insecure, we feel threatened by unfamiliar situations or people, thus explaining the development of racial hatred, religious intolerance, and international tensions and war. We mistrust each other and act in defensive and often offensive ways in order to protect ourselves from the imagined danger.

5. When we fear, our reason is nullified and our imagination runs wild, creating the worst possible scenarios, which are usually far from the actual reality.

6. Perception is distorted and we misinterpret others' intentions and actions. When our reason is sufficiently overcome by a panicking imagination, we are moved to prejudice, narrow-mindedness, anger, hate, and in extreme cases aggression, violence, cruelty and war. Even in cases where we do not get carried to such extremes, our relationships usually suffer. It is not possible to be open and loving when we are insecure and fearful.

7. Such irrational behavior reaches its climax in the mob mentality. When many human beings gather into in a large group, their mentality often tends to be reduced to that of the lowest of the group's members. This can be likened to a chain, which is as strong as its weakest link. Large groups of people are not much different in their instinctual reactions from herds of animals and flocks of birds. If one panics in fear, all follow. We often hear of hundreds of persons injured and even trampled to death at soccer matches, demonstrations, and other large gatherings.

8. Living in fear means living with a constant underlying tension. There will be frequent secretions by the adrenal glands as unfamiliar persons and events will cause alarm and elicit the "fight or flight" response. This is exhausting for the nervous, immune and endocrine systems. The pituitary gland and hypothalamus are thrown out of balance, and the immune system becomes run down, setting the stage for a variety of physical and mental illnesses. Health and happiness flee from fear.

9. Perhaps the most unfortunate result of fear is that it acts like a magnet, literally attracting to us to the very things that we fear the most. Fearful thoughts are like magnetic waves which subconsciously interact with the world around us, attracting to us those exact situations and experiences that cause us to be frightened. If we fear thieves, we increase the possibility of encountering them. The same would be true of dogs, cockroaches, spiders, etc.

We do not, however, create the death of a loved one by fearing that. We do not create the others' reality.

Attracting what we fear is actually very useful for our growth process because it forces us to face and become familiar with the things that we fear, which is the first step towards overcoming them. Many of us have discovered by experience that our fear of an event had been out of proportion to the problem actually created by that feared event, and that our fear was entirely unnecessary.

10. Fear is also our greatest obstacle to moving forward in our lives. Every fear is like a closed door that prevents us from researching, growing and developing in many aspects of our lives.

We will investigate the causes and solutions to fear in the remaining sections of this series.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. [At http://www.HolisticHarmony.com](http://www.HolisticHarmony.com)

The Causes of Fear - Overcoming Fear – Part 3

By Robert Elias Najemy

The prime and basic cause of all fear is our ignorance of our true nature. If we experienced or were convinced of our invulnerable eternal soul-nature, we would never feel any fear whatsoever. Because we do not, or cannot, believe this truth, we feel vulnerable, separate, isolated and susceptible to extinction or insignificance.

Because of this, we identify with the body and the complex of personality traits, which we call "I". All fears, no matter how specific they may appear to be, can be traced back to the basic fear of rejection of pain to or extinction of the "I", and the loss of any of its security attachments.

Some subordinate factors also contribute to fear:

1. A feeling of separateness increases our fear. When we feel close to people and nature we cannot easily fear them. Fear results from a feeling of alienation, which manifests a general feeling of suspicion of all and everything.
2. Unfamiliarity with people and things also causes suspicion and fear. When we come in contact with someone who dresses or behaves differently from what we are accustomed, our security base is undermined and we often react with caution and perhaps defensive or offensive behavior.
3. Attachment to people and objects related to our security cause to fear and play power games in order to protect our possessions, relationships or self-image when we suspect we are in danger of losing them.
4. Imagination can create images of doom and suffering far beyond any physical reality or likelihood. Imagination in itself is not negative. It is misused by the fear complex of: alienation, unfamiliarity, vulnerability, mistrust and attachment.
5. Emotionally charged memory of previous negative experiences, where we have either witnessed or suffered harm, loss or death provokes fear. Our subconscious mind stores memories of such unpleasant experiences from the past.

We also carry within us instinctual fear complexes resulting from our evolution through the animal kingdom. Thus, we project onto the present and future what we have experienced in the past, generating a distorted perception of reality.

Also our memory is not quantitative but qualitative. It does not assign the same power to each memory. For example, we may have driven a car 3000 times without any problem, and then have one accident and fear driving after that. Thus we are allowing one experience weight more than 3000.

In the same way, we might have had hundreds of loving contacts with a person and then let one negative one cause us not to talk to this person and perceive him or her as evil.

This illustrates that each thought has a certain energy field associated with it, which creates our emotional reactions when we come into contact with that thought. This is the basis of the newly discovered Energy Based Psychology systems of Thought Field Therapy (Dr. Roger Callahan) and Emotional Freedom Techniques (Gary Craig) which offer easy and quick freedom from fear and other negative emotions. We will discuss these in later sections of this series.

The Purpose of Fear

Fear has its purpose in the animal kingdom, where the animal's low state of consciousness leaves little recourse but to fight or flee.

As humans with higher consciousness, however, we have alternative methods for dealing with potential dangers. Clearer examination of the many situations which we feared as dangerous will reveal that they simply were not so.

How many times have we been stricken with fear upon experiencing a sudden sound or sight, only to eventually realize we were completely wrong in our interpretation?

How many times have we worried intensely about a future event, imagining the worst, only to have everything work out fine? And even if we could not, at first, accept how things worked out, everything was dissolved and forgotten in the ceaselessly flowing river of time.

Very few of our fears are based on our present reality, but rather are founded on a remembered but nonexistent past or an imagined future.

Our fears seldom concern an immediate danger, such as a tiger attacking us or a bomb falling on our heads.

Even in the case that we are actually in danger at the present moment, fear will only cause us to become stiff in body and unclear in mind. We could deal with danger much more efficiently if we perceived and acted with clarity, self-confidence and courage.

We will investigate the causes and solutions to fear in the remaining sections of this series.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. [At http://www.HolisticHarmony.com](http://www.HolisticHarmony.com)

Facing our Fears - Overcoming Fear – Part 4

By Robert Elias Najemy

As human beings in the process of evolution, it is imperative that we overcome the bondage of fear so we may experience the security, peace, love, courage, faith, wisdom, understanding and fulfillment which we desire, deserve and which is our destiny. Fear binds us to a lower level of consciousness with less love and happiness.

Actual Contact

One way to overcome a fear is to gradually approach that being, object or situation in gradual but increasing doses. We will, in this way, by experience, learn that in reality it is harmless to us. Fear of the sea could be gradually overcome by immersing our bodies, allowing the water to come up to our ankles, knees and so on over a period of time. Fear of heights can be eventually conquered through exposure to gradually increasing heights.

This technique can be used with the fear of any real object or situation. The important factor to remember is to make the right dosage of contact. We should start slowly and bring ourselves just to the threshold of fear, just where fear begins and where we can still observe and work with the fear through breathing and relaxation.

Later, the experience can be repeated, this time increasing contact with that which is feared, playing with our limits, and learning to relax while in contact. We can relax by breathing slowly and deeply while reminding ourselves of the truth that we are not actually in danger, but that our mind is being controlled by some false conditioning, probably from some past experience.

At the moment we begin to feel fear, we can begin to breathe more slowly and deeply, while concentrating on relaxing the body and mind. We will notice that certain muscles begin to tense up. We can relax these muscles with the help of the breath and mental messages of relaxation.

We may remember thoughts that help us to feel more secure or bring to mind any frame of reference that allows us to feel security and protection, such as God, or various spiritual or logical truths. We can remind ourselves that our imagination is being exploited by our unfounded fears and that the danger we feel is not real.

Mental Contact

Contact with the feared can also be made through the subconscious mind and the imagination. Through methods of relaxation, self-hypnosis, mind control, and positive projection techniques, we can imagine having contact with the feared.

When we imagine ourselves in contact with the feared object or situation, we might find that we experience the same types of emotional and physical reactions as we do when actually in contact. We can then visualize alternative ways of feeling and reacting to that previously feared situation.

If we have feared certain animals, insects, or even certain types of people, we can imagine ourselves as feeling safe, secure and peaceful while in contact with them. We can imagine ourselves feeling safe, self-confident and courageous.

Such reprogramming of the subconscious mind will eventually alter our reactive mechanisms to life. Those who are already experienced in such techniques can do such reprogramming sessions alone, but some will need guidance in getting started.

Those, who choose to, can even imagine accepting (not desiring, but accepting) death. We can eventually reprogram ourselves to believe in our indestructible soul nature, thus removing all fear at the root.

There are three approaches here.

- a. Some prefer to project that nothing unpleasant will ever happen to them. This is useful and will, to a large extent, send out positive energies to our environment, creating a positive reality. Of course, we will all eventually die and all lose our loved ones at some point. No amount of projection will prevent this.
- b. Others choose to imagine all in God's light and leave the specifics of what will happen to some higher and wiser power, such as God.

The first technique is an active projection of what we want to happen and the second is a passive acceptance of whatever is best.

- c. A third possibility would be to project what we prefer in each situation and then offer it to God, placing it in light and completing our "prayer" with the thought, "May the Highest Good for all occur in this situation."

"Energy Meridian Based Psychology" = EMDR – TFT - EFT

These initials stand for the latest techniques for freeing ourselves from unwanted emotions. These will be explained in greater detail in future articles. Let it suffice to say that:

1. EMDR Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (Francine Shapiro) needs to be applied by an experienced EMDR practitioner who will enable us to come into contact with the traumatic event which is causing our fear, pain, guilt, self-rejection or other negative emotion. After doing so, the memory will be discharged and then reinterpreted as we introduce the logic or truth we chose into this previously traumatic memory, thus healing us of this problem.
2. TFT or Thought Field Therapy (Dr. Roger Callahan) deals with the specific energy field which is generated by each thought and allows us to heal this energy field, thus removing the cause of that specific emotion. Thus we focus on what we fear and then tap on specific acupuncture points in order to redistribute that energy field and thus collapsing the energy disruption (identified with that thought) which was creating the emotion. This, too, often requires an experienced practitioner
3. EFT or Emotional Freedom Therapy (Gary Craig) is a simplified version of TFT, which we can employ on ourselves. We bring to mind whatever causes our negative emotion (such as fear or anxiety) and then tap on specific points in order to correct that disruption in the energy field, which creates the emotion. The thought creates the energy field and the energy field creates the emotion. If we correct the energy field the emotion disappears.

In my 35 years of counseling, I have found no techniques more effective than these. You can change your life through them.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. [At http://www.HolisticHarmony.com](http://www.HolisticHarmony.com)

Healing our Fears - Overcoming Fear – Part 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

Regression Techniques

Memory regression techniques can be used to expose to the conscious mind the hidden sources of fear locked in the subconscious mind. Individuals, who have been severely paralyzed by unreasonable fears, have been cured upon the release into the conscious mind of those hidden traumatic memories. Many case histories are available concerning those who had been affected by experiences from the past.

Through hypnotic regression and other techniques, memories of the past and birth experiences have been uncovered in hundreds of thousands of people. Such techniques are being used today by psychologists and other mental health professionals seeking to help liberate those suffering from inexplicable fears or guilt. Bringing these previously suppressed subconscious images into the light of the conscious mind helps to dissolve the problem.

Employing power psychology techniques such as EMDR, TFT or EFT can greatly expedite this process. (See previous section)

Relaxation and Rejuvenation of the Body and Mind

Through systematic practice of proper eating, physical exercise, breathing techniques and relaxation techniques or meditation, we can release traumas, stresses and fears lodged in the body and mind.

As our whole being becomes more relaxed, tension and fear naturally subside, and inner peace and feelings of inner security develop.

Relaxation brings greater peace, and greater peace allows us to react with less fear and tension, thus allowing for more relaxation. The opposite is also true. Fear brings tension, in turn creating more fear.

When our energy level is higher and more harmonious, we are better equipped to deal with stress, challenges and difficulties. We feel stronger and more powerful, less fearful.

Knowledge

A study of ourselves and the world, will demonstrate that many beings, situations and events that we feared because of our unfamiliarity and ignorance are not actually harmful at all.

We tend to fear many types of animals, when the truth is that the animals have much more reason to fear us. We have caused harm to and killed many more of them than they have of us.

Often we fear others because we project our own intentions onto them. An aggressive person who wishes harm to others will also imagine the same intentions in the others. A simple peace loving person will have fewer fears.

A deeper study of our true nature will eventually guide us to the realization that our existence is not limited to our body and personality, which we are desperately trying to protect.

Eventually, we will begin to perceive ourselves as eternal souls.

The more we understand, the less we perceive as unfamiliar, unknown and threatening. As our

wisdom increases, we realize that we really have nothing to fear in this world.

Sharing with and Being Supported by Others

Growth groups in which people come together to share honestly and openly for the purpose of self-improvement and self-understanding can be very helpful for those of us wanting to overcome fears and other negative emotions and habits.

- a. We become aware of the fact that others share many of our fears, needs and feelings.
- b. Talking about a fear makes it more objective and helps us to relate to it as something separate from ourselves the next time it arises.
- c. A group gives us emotional support, and we can think of the group the next time we are faced with the fear-creating situation. In this way, we help each other grow more mentally and emotionally mature.
- d. In addition, we get the benefit of feeling less isolated, less alienated, and more loved and understood.

We suggest that you read the previous and upcoming article of this series.
May you be well

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. [At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>](http://www.HolisticHarmony.com)

Feelings and Attitudes

By Skye Thomas

Are feelings and attitudes the same thing or different? Does one cause the other to happen? Which one has more power over how we respond? Does the person experiencing them have any choice in the matter? What if they are in conflict?

Feelings are what they are. We can't force them. The phrase I can't help how I feel keeps rattling around in my head as I write this. There is no magical way to change how we feel. They aren't right or wrong, they just exist. Feelings are very powerful and definitely have a control over how we make choices and how we move through life. We will do almost anything to avoid feeling bad. Think about the money, time, and focus we put into trying to feel good and avoiding feeling bad. That's not a bad thing, it's the nature of feelings. It goes against human nature to want to feel bad. Feelings are based in emotions. Emotions come from the heart. Therefore, I don't think we can change them from within our logical minds. If your favorite pet dies, then you feel sad. You cannot be expected to simply stop feeling sad. You will feel some level of sadness until you have finished feeling sad. It is possible to distract yourself for awhile, but the feelings will just lay dormant until you allow them time to fully run their course. There's nothing wrong with wanting to distract yourself from the bad feelings of missing your pet, but it will slow down the process. There are constructive things you can do to aid the processing of your feelings. Regardless of how you handle your feelings, you're going to feel what you feel until it works its way through your heart. You might always miss that pet and feel a slight tug at your heart when you think back, but the overwhelming sadness will eventually pass. It always does. That's why they say time heals all wounds. You can't maintain any one feeling indefinitely. Emotions by nature are shifting and uncontrollable. They simply are what they are.

What about our attitudes? An entire multi-million dollar industry has been built around the power of a positive attitude. The industry wouldn't have survived and thrived as it has if it wasn't a valid and real concept. Our attitudes are rooted in our belief systems. Our belief systems are chosen by our logical minds. Therefore, it is possible to make a conscious decision to change it. Our minds have complete and total control over what we believe. I don't think I need to bore you with another longwinded speech about the powers of a positive attitude. If you've ever tried it, then you have proven for yourself that it is possible to make an internal adjustment regarding your attitude.

So, which is stronger? Which has more influence over our choices and behaviors? Does one overpower the other? Let's say that you find yourself falling madly head over heels in love with someone. That's a feeling, an emotion. It comes from your heart. However, at the same time, you are entertaining a very pessimistic attitude towards love and relationships in general. The attitude comes from your mind. Which will win out, the feelings of falling in love or the dark attitude? It's hard to say. If you change your attitude, then the feelings of being in love can grow and perhaps become a wonderful source of joy for you. If you hold on tightly to your attitude, then eventually it will wear on the loving feelings and you will eventually stop loving that other person. What if the feelings of love were so amazingly powerful, that they caused the attitude to change and your core belief system about love and relationships changed too? Your feelings can definitely have an effect on your attitude, but your attitude wins out more often.

Your attitude is not more powerful because it's more important than your feelings. It's more powerful because it's more stubborn than your feelings. Let's look again at our example where the feelings are positive and the attitude is negative. We've seen people fall madly in love with someone who loved them in return. These same people had bad attitudes about love and relationships in general. Their feelings were not able to overpower their attitude. They believe it's never going to work out anyway and create a self-fulfilling prophecy. By not believing in love, they destroy their good relationship

and then feel hurt by the failed relationship. Their minds take that as evidence to further continue with the negative attitude regarding love. The same dynamic holds true regardless of topic. The reason the attitude wins the battle more often than our feelings is because feelings are ever-changing and flexible while attitudes are often locked into place and become an unmovable force.

What if the feelings were bad and the attitude was good? If you felt afraid that you might fail at your goals, but you had a positive attitude and deep down you believed in yourself, then you could choose to keep moving forward despite your feelings of fear. Your attitude would win out over your feelings once again.

If your feelings and attitudes match, then you have an inner balance and harmony within yourself. Isn't this the age-old battle between heart and head? Attitude comes from your head and feelings come from your heart. When the two agree you are able to focus and move forward with confidence. When the two are at war you have to decide which is right the heart's feelings or the head's attitude? Perhaps in sitting quietly and looking inward at our feelings and attitudes from a detached perspective, we can evaluate and choose for ourselves on a case-by-case basis which one should lead us, our feelings or our attitudes.

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About the Author

Skye Thomas is the CEO of Tomorrow's Edge, an Internet leader in inspiring leaps of faith. She became a writer in 1999 after twenty years of studying personal growth, motivation, soulmates, self-esteem, parenting, spirituality, metaphysics, family dynamic, dating, and astrology. Her books, articles, and astrological forecasts have inspired people of all ages and faiths to recommit themselves to the pursuit of happiness. To read more of her articles, free previews of her books, and her astrology forecasts, go to www.TomorrowsEdge.net. To read more about Skye and to sign up to receive her free weekly newsletter, go to www.SkyeThomas.com

10 Steps to Forgiveness

By Diana Robinson

For many people forgiveness is one of the hardest steps of all in our progress toward freedom of spirit. Yet it is essential. For as long as we are unable to forgive, we keep ourselves chained to the unforgiven. We give them rent-free space in our minds, emotional shackles on our hearts, and the right to torment us in the small hours of the night. When it is time to move on, but still too hard, try some or all of these steps. (Note that these steps are appropriate for events resulting from an ongoing relationship with anyone. They may not all be appropriate for the random act of violence from a stranger.)

1. Understand that forgiving does not mean giving permission for the behaviour to be repeated. It does not mean saying that what was done was acceptable. Forgiveness is needed for behaviours that were not acceptable and that you should not allow to be repeated.
2. Recognize who is being hurt by your non-forgiveness. Does the other person burn with your anger, feel the knot in your stomach, experience the cycling and recycling of your thoughts as you re-experience the events in your mind? Do they stay awake as you rehearse in your mind what you would like to say or do to 'punish' them? No, the pain is all yours.
3. Do not demand to know 'why' as a prerequisite to forgiveness. Knowing why the behaviour happened is unlikely to lessen the pain, because the pain came at a time when you did not know why. Occasionally there are times when knowing why makes forgiveness unnecessary, but they are rare. Don't count on it and don't count on even the perpetrator knowing why.
4. Make a list of what you need to forgive. What was actually done that caused your pain? Not what you felt, what was done.
5. Acknowledge your part. Were you honest about your hurt or did you hide the fact that the behaviour hurt you? Did you seek peace by reassuring the perpetrator that it was all right? Did you stay when you could or should have left? If so, then you, too, have some responsibility. (Here you start to move away from being a victim.)
6. Make a list of what you gained from the relationship, whatever form of relationship it was. Looking back you may be focusing on the negatives, the hurts. Yet if they were repeated, you must have stayed to allow the repetition. You did not remove yourself. Why? There must have been some positives if you chose to stay around. What were they?
7. Write a letter to the person (no need to mail it). Acknowledge what you gained from the relationship, and express forgiveness for the hurts. Allow yourself to express all your feelings fully. Do not focus only on the hurts.
8. Create a ceremony in which you get rid of your lists and the letter, so symbolizing the ending of the link between you. You may choose to visualize placing them on a raft and watching it drift gently away down a river. You may prefer to burn them and scatter the ashes. You may invent some other form of ritualized separation.
9. Visualize the person you are forgiving being blessed by your forgiveness and, as a result, being freed from continuing the behaviour that hurt you.
10. Now that you have freed yourself from the painful links and released the pain, feel yourself growing lighter and more joyous. Now you are free to move on with your life without that burden

of bitterness. Do not look back in anger.

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Forces of Reconstruction

By M.E. Haselhurst

So Many "impossibilities have become actualities over recent years that miracles have become almost commonplace. And the pace of these transformations is accelerating. Men send the imagination soaring, then fling the mind in its wake, seeking the laws and principle that must be harnessed to make their dreaming factual.

In such a world there is no reason for esotericists to be shy of proclaiming what they conceive to be the true nature of man and the universe, no matter how mind-shaking these concepts may be. Neither need they be chary of attempting to relate esoteric knowledge to the problems of mankind, even though in the process they may appear to stretch credulity to its utmost limits. With man-made satellites becoming so common that one scarcely bothers to look skyward to note their passing; with man-made instruments shovelling earth on the moon, men cannot afford to ignore or scorn any propositions that may lead to the Utopia of which all dream, but none seem able to establish.

Available teaching on the forces of reconstruction represents one esoteric approach which is of direct and immediate importance to humanity as it searches for a way to overcome increasing problems, whether these be of relationships, of sustenance, or of education. Because these forces may conceivably demonstrate, at least in the early stages, through the negative aspect of destruction, there is urgent need for research into their nature, objectives, and modes of operation.

Minds trained in meditation and study, and accustomed to the levels of will-motivated action, could well lend themselves to this endeavour, seeking to reveal existent trends in world affairs, which indicate the operation of these forces. There is need also for effort to facilitate their creative operation by removing obstacles which obstruct their free flow, and by providing new channels through which they can flow.

Some direct information is available concerning the forces of reconstruction. The focus of the work of these forces is on the physical plane, and they affect the masses of men by means of the work of the men and women of good will. The forces of reconstruction gather up, fuse and complement the work of the forces of restoration and the forces of enlightenment, which manifest subjectively on the emotional and mental planes, producing psychological health and an awareness of the Plan of Hierarchy.

It is evident that reconstruction, used in this esoteric sense, implies a great deal more than the rebuilding of forms of any kind, whether such forms be of actual buildings, cities, or of the many formalised methods: government, education, finance, social planning and the like, by means of which men live together in ever larger, yet more closely integrated groups.

The Tibetan has stressed that in releasing information concerning these associated forces, he was presenting a picture of the possibility of humanity's resurgence from its unhappy past to a future rooted in tranquillity and growing to splendour without limit.

It is pertinent to enquire what the esotericists of world are doing to translate this possibility into factual achievement. Determined efforts need to be made to relate the chaos of our age to the blueprints provided by esoteric teaching.

Mankind is caught up in a vast cycle of change. National alignments are altering, spheres of influence are in constant flux. Men are learning to live with new energies, and are stabling new values in the process. There is a corresponding loosening of old ties; a moving away from long established standards. Are these signs that the forces of reconstruction are indeed active? That the

spiritual yeast is working? Do the cataclysms and catastrophes that afflict the world merely out picture the occult axiom that all is energy, that all energies have a definite effect upon the lives in all forms in all kingdoms in nature?

It is a matter of accepted fact to the esotericist that nothing can escape these magnetic and radiatory influences. The Tibetan underlines the point when he says that "the goal of evolution for humanity is to become consciously and increasingly aware of the nature of these energies, and to begin to know them and to use them."

The world is changing dramatically, largely because researchers, the curious and the sceptical are working in many fields to the limit of the mind's capacity, and then plunging that one step further that results in pulling through, from the unseen realms, "new" ideas that will seed the thinking of men, and eventually carry humanity forward on its eternal journey of unfoldment. But because new ideas frequently conflict with those that are already established, there is urgent need for the production of a climate of goodwill, a body of public opinion that will nurture the emergent thought patterns, integrating them with that which is worth preserving in past achievement, whilst strengthening them for growth into grand new forms of living

One of the factors inhibiting the effective activity of the forces of reconstruction is the inertia of individuals, their sense of impotence in the face of tremendous world forces, and their apathy, stemming from ignorance as to how they can make an effective contribution to the solving of mankind's problems. Yet we are told that the Hierarchy, seeking to implement the divine Plan on earth, but working always within the limitations imposed by man's free-will, is dependent upon individuals, the workers within humanity, for the success of their work. How then, can any individual consider himself useless, when he is, whether he knows it or not, a link in an unending chain of divine redemptive activity?

The great philosopher, scientist and humanitarian, Albert Schweitzer, said "the final decision as to what the future of a society shall be, depends, not on how near its organisation is to perfection, but on the degree of worthiness in its individual members". Moreover, he pointed clearly to the contribution that individuals can make to the common good when he spoke of the power of the public opinion: "The existing one is maintained by the press, by propaganda, by organisation, and by financial and other influences which are at its disposal. This unnatural way of spreading ideas must be opposed by the natural one which goes from man to man, and relies solely on the truth of the thoughts and the hearer's receptiveness for the truth."

Here is again indication as to how men can assist each in his own place, to create the thought atmosphere capable of nurturing the seeds of the future growth, and capable of protecting the new concepts until they are sufficiently strong enough to defy established orthodoxies. The forces of reconstruction need channels into human life. They operate through the minds of men, but need to divine rhythms, and strong enough to work creatively in seemingly restricted areas.

World problems increase in complexity day by day, as nations become more closely related, more interdependent, and at the same time more mistrustful one of the other. It is consequently important that men ground their physical-plane knowledge, which is rapidly making them masters of everything except themselves and their relationships with each other, into the ageless wisdom, which will lead them to new values, new perspectives, new criteria of judgment, so facilitating the establishment of right relationships between the individual part, human and national, and the evolving whole.

This is quite a colossal task. It implies that men in their private lives and public offices must use all tact, diplomacy and strategy, all love to silence the voices of suspicion, and to overcome greed, hate

and fear. This means steady effort to expand the best human qualities into universal frames of reference, and to imbue the impersonal world organisations, now a necessary component of humanity's life, with the love of God.

Such objectives demand of the esotericists of the world one-pointed devotion to spiritual research, and dedicated effort to lift the level of their own conscious awareness, in addition to expanding the consciousness of mankind. Functioning a step ahead of the race, these people must function as a world group of spiritual pioneers, seeking always new ways by which human thought may lift itself into super-human knowing and new techniques whereby this super-human knowledge may be put to work for the good of man.

The forces of reconstruction are destined to effect the basic changes in consciousness which will mark the Aquarian Age. In facing the implications of this cosmic movement towards reconstruction, it is necessary to bear in mind that matter and substance, and their fusion into living forms, are aspects of divinity. It has been the prostitution of matter to selfish ends and for separative purposes, which has been responsible for mankind's misery in the past. It is said:

"Today humanity is being given a fresh opportunity to build again on sounder and more constructive lines that better civilisation which is the dream of those who love their fellowmen, and to attain a new aptitude in handling substance. If men can demonstrate a gained wisdom in the creation of a form which will house the spirit of reconstruction and express the enlightenment gained by the bitter experience of the past, then Humanity will rise again."(Externalisation of the Hierarchy p 483 by Alice Bailey)

FORTY VERSES ON REALITY

By Ramana Maharshi

Invocatory

- i. If Reality did not exist, could there be any knowledge of existence? Free from all thoughts, Reality abides in the Heart, the Source of all thoughts. It is, therefore, called the Heart. How then is one to contemplate it? To be as it is in the Heart, is Its contemplation.
- ii. Those who know intense fear of death seek refuge only at the feet of the Lord Who has neither death nor birth. Dead to themselves and their possessions, can the thought of death occur to them again? Deathless are they.

1. From our perception of the world there follows acceptance of a unique First Principle possessing various powers. Pictures of name and form, the person who sees, the screen on which he sees, and the light by which he sees: he himself is all of these.
2. All religions postulate the three fundamentals, the world, the soul, and God, but it is only the one Reality that manifests Itself as these three. One can say, 'The three are really three' only so long as the ego lasts. Therefore, to inhere in one's own Being, where the 'I', or ego, is dead, is the perfect State.
3. 'The world is real.' 'No, it is a mere illusory appearance.' 'The world is conscious.' 'No.' 'The world is happiness.' 'No.' What use is it to argue thus? That State is agreeable to all, wherein, having given up the objective outlook, one knows one's Self and loses all notions either of unity or duality, of oneself and the ego.
4. If one has form oneself, the world and God also will appear to have form, but if one is formless, who is it that sees those forms, and how? Without the eye can any object be seen? The seeing Self is the Eye, and that Eye is the Eye of Infinity.
5. The body is a form composed of the five-fold sheath; therefore, all the five sheaths are implied in the term, body. Apart from the body does the world exist? Has anyone seen the world without the body?
6. The world is nothing more than an embodiment of the objects perceived by the five sense-organs. Since, through these five sense-organs, a single mind perceives the world, the world is nothing but the mind. Apart from the mind can there be a world?
7. Although the world and knowledge thereof rise and set together it is by knowledge alone that the world is made apparent. That Perfection wherein the world and knowledge thereof rise and set, and which shines without rising and setting, is alone the Reality.
8. Under whatever name and form one may worship the Absolute Reality, it is only a means for realizing It without name and form. That alone is true realization, wherein one knows oneself in relation to that Reality, attains peace and realizes one's identity with it.
9. The duality of subject and object and trinity of seer, sight, and seen can exist only if supported by the One. If one turns inward in search of that One Reality they fall away. Those who see this are those who see Wisdom. They are never in doubt.
10. Ordinary knowledge is always accompanied by ignorance, and ignorance by knowledge; the only true Knowledge is that by which one knows the Self through enquiring whose is the knowledge and ignorance.
11. Is it not, rather, ignorance to know all else without knowing oneself, the knower? As soon as one knows the Self, which is the substratum of knowledge and ignorance, knowledge and ignorance perish.
12. That alone is true Knowledge which is neither knowledge nor ignorance. What is known is not true Knowledge. Since the Self shines with nothing else to know or to make known, It alone is Knowledge. It is not a void.
13. The Self, which is Knowledge, is the only Reality. Knowledge of multiplicity is false knowledge. This false knowledge, which is really ignorance, cannot exist apart from the Self, which is Knowledge-Reality. The variety of gold ornaments is unreal, since none of them can exist

without the gold of which they are all made.

14. If the first person, I, exists, then the second and third persons, you and he, will also exist. By enquiring into the nature of the I, the I perishes. With it 'you' and 'he' also perish. The resultant state, which shines as Absolute Being, is one's own natural state, the Self.

15. Only with reference to the present can the past and the future exist. They too, while current, are the present. To try to determine the nature of the past and the future while ignoring the present is like trying to count without the unit.

16. Apart, from us where is time and where is space? If we are bodies, we are involved in time and space, but are we? We are one and identical now, then, and forever, here, and everywhere. Therefore we, timeless, and spaceless Being, alone are.

17. To those who have not realized the Self, as well as to those who have, the word 'I' refers to the body, but with this difference, that for those who have not realized, the 'I' is confined to the body whereas for those who have realized the Self within the body the 'I' shines as the limitless Self.

18. To those who have not realized (the Self) as well as to those who have the world is real. But to those who have not realized, Truth is adapted to the measure of the world, whereas to those that have, Truth shines as the Formless Perfection, and as the Substratum of the world. This is all the difference between them.

19. Only those who have no knowledge of the Source of destiny and free-will dispute as to which of them prevails. They that know the Self as the one Source of destiny and free-will are free from both. Will they again get entangled in them?

20. He who sees God without seeing the Self sees only a mental image. They say that he who sees the Self sees God. He who, having completely lost the ego, sees the Self, has found God, because the Self does not exist apart from God.

21. What is the Truth of the scriptures which declare that if one sees the Self one sees God? How can one see one's Self? If, since one is a single being, one cannot see one's Self, how can one see God? Only by becoming a prey to Him.

22. The Divine gives light to the mind and shines within it. Except by turning the mind inward and fixing it in the Divine, there is no other way to know Him through the mind.

23. The body does not say 'I'. No one will argue that even in deep sleep the 'I' ceases to exist. Once the 'I' emerges, all else emerges. With a keen mind enquire whence this 'I' emerges.

24. This inert body does not say 'I'. Reality-Consciousness does not emerge. Between the two, and limited to the measure of the body, something emerges as 'I'. It is this that is known as Chit-jada-granthi (the knot between the Conscious and the inert), and also as bondage, soul, subtle-body, ego, samsara, mind, and so forth.

25. It comes into being equipped with a form, and as long as it retains a form it endures. Having a form, it feeds and grows big. But if you investigate it this evil spirit, which has no form of its own, relinquishes its grip on form and takes to flight.

26. If the ego is, everything else also is. If the ego is not, nothing else is. Indeed, the ego is all. Therefore the enquiry as to what this ego is, is the only way of giving up everything.

27. The State of non-emergence of 'I' is the state of being THAT. Without questing for that State of the non-emergence of 'I' and attaining It, how can one accomplish one's own extinction, from which the 'I' does not revive? Without that attainment how is it possible to abide in one's true State, where one is THAT?

28. Just as a man would dive in order to get something that had fallen into the water, so one should dive into oneself, with a keen one-pointed mind, controlling speech and breath, and find the place whence the 'I' originates.

29. The only enquiry leading to Self-realization is seeking the Source of the 'I' with in-turned mind and without uttering the word 'I'. Meditation on 'I am not this; I am That' may be an aid to the enquiry but it cannot be the enquiry.

30. If one enquires 'Who am I?' within the mind, the individual 'I' falls down abashed as soon as one reaches the Heart and immediately Reality manifests itself spontaneously as 'I-I'. Although it reveals itself as 'I', it is not the ego but the Perfect Being, the Absolute Self.

31. For Him who is immersed in the bliss of the Self, arising from the extinction of the ego, what remains to be accomplished? He is not aware of anything (as) other than the Self. Who can apprehend his State?
32. Although the scriptures proclaim 'Thou art That', it is only a sign of weakness of mind to meditate 'I am That, not this', because you are eternally That. What has to be done is to investigate what one really is and remain That.
33. It is ridiculous to say either 'I have not realized the Self' or 'I have realized the Self'; are there two selves, for one to be the object of the other's realization? It is a truth within the experience of everyone that there is only one Self.
34. It is due to illusion born of ignorance that men fail to recognise That which is always and for everybody the inherent Reality dwelling in its natural Heart-centre and to abide in it, and that instead they argue that it exists or does not exist, that it has form or has not form, or is non-dual or dual.
35. To seek and abide in the Reality that is always attained, is the only Attainment. All other attainments (siddhis) are such as are acquired in dreams. Can they appear real to someone who has woken up from sleep? Can they that are established in the Reality and are free from Maya, be deluded by them?
36. Only if the thought 'I am the body' occurs will the meditation 'I am not this, I am That', help one to abide as That. Why should we for ever be thinking, 'I am That'? Is it necessary for man to go on thinking 'I am a man'? Are we not always That?
37. The contention, 'Dualism during practice, non-dualism on Attainment', is also false. While one is anxiously searching, as well as when one has found one's Self, who else is one but the tenth man?¹
38. As long as a man is the doer, he also reaps the fruit of his deeds, but, as soon as he realizes the Self through enquiry as to who is the doer his sense of being the doer falls away and the triple karma² is ended. This is the state of eternal Liberation.
39. Only so long as one considers oneself bound, do thoughts of bondage and Liberation continue. When one enquires who is bound the Self is realized, eternally attained, and eternally free. When thought of bondage comes to an end, can thought of Liberation survive?
40. If it is said, that Liberation is of three kinds, with form or without form or with and without form, then let me tell you that the extinction of three forms of Liberation is the only true Liberation.

This refers to a traditional story of a party of ten fools who were travelling together. They had to cross a river and on reaching the other shore wanted to check up whether all of them had got safely across. Each one counted in turn, but each one counted the nine others and forgot himself. So they thought the tenth man had been drowned and began to mourn him. Just then a traveller came past and asked them what was the matter. He at once saw the cause of their mistake and in order to convince them he made them walk past him one by one, giving each one a blow as he passed and telling them to count the strokes.

Fragile Fringe Phenomena

From The Natural Depth in Man

By Wilson van Dusen

. . . . There is thought which is interior and more interior, also exterior and more exterior. What is actually the first effect of life is inmost thought, which is the perception of ends. But of all this hereafter, when the degrees of life are considered.

(Emanuel Swedenborg, Divine Love and Wisdom [p2], 1763)

In our gradual descent into the natural depth in man we now enter an area that is less understandable than what came before. We went from the external aspect of one's perceptions of others to the more conscious processes of mind to processes that gradually become more feeling-laden and symbolic. Now we pass through a region that is among the least understood. It is also one of the most difficult regions from which to get data. Some of the phenomena from this region are so little known they do not even have a name.

One general tendency of our descent into mind has been to move away from conscious ego control. The phenomena to be described here are just over the conscious/unconscious border. While traces of ego are involved, it is mostly as an observer of the quite spontaneous and autonomous processes within.

Most of what is to be described are phenomena from the hypnogogic state. Even some psychologists do not know of this state. Hypnogogic phenomena arise when one is lying down, very relaxed and nearing sleep. The general sequence of events as one approaches this state can be described. First one lies down and becomes comfortable. Worries from the day and sensations from the bed are mixed for a while. One may choose to centre on a favourite fantasy. Gradually the mind slips out of gear. Stray images and phrases float through one's head. Yet one is still awake enough to note these if one chooses to make the effort. The individual can watch relatively spontaneous unconscious processes bubble to the surface. Most people lazily fall into a fantasy and walk of into a dream and sleep. It requires unusual persistence to stay poised between sleep and waking. Few have done it, and those who have tried it lost a lot of sleep. Yet they found a new and complex realm of possibilities, which will be seen to be an extension of what was beginning to appear in meditation. There is a great deal of symbolism in this area. It is perhaps all Symbolism.

To my knowledge there are only a few great explorers who have recorded their observation in this area. Oddly enough, one of the earliest explorers in this region made the richest and most complex discoveries. Moderns seem far less daring and poorer equipped to deal with autonomous symbolic processes. Swedenborg has done more work in this area than anyone else. He approached this region by focusing inwardly and breathing minimally in the style of Raja Yoga. At first he wanted to focus all his powers of concentration to think better. As shown in his Journal of Dreams and Spiritual Dairy, he soon saw he had was watching the raw natural processes of the mind at work. This region is immensely symbolic, and he learned to penetrate symbols from this experience. Incidentally he broke through from the hypnogogic state into a personal journey through heaven and hell, and he left a profound and fascinating account of his discoveries. Even very average people who explore this region can run into strange people and strange symbolic conversations that look like visitations from another world. In more modern times the French existentialist Jean-Paul Satre also spent many hours exploring the hypnogogic. Sartre missed the great key to understanding this region that had been understood by Swedenborg and found again later by Herbert Silberer. The region is naturally autosymbolic, that is, it represents where one is at the moment. Or, put another way, it represents itself.

Much of the hypnogogic area looks simply like cute images and odd sentences being tossed around

in one's head until one asks precisely what the individual was thinking of at that same moment. Then it begins to look like either a representation of the person's state or an answer to his query. Examples will clarify this autosymbolic character of the state.

I was trying to pick up hypnogogic experiences and heard, "Still a nothing," I wasn't getting much and it said as much. While I was trying to see in detail how the hypnogogic experience forms I heard, "Do you have a computer?" I was getting very sleepy in the hypnogogic state and heard, "The usual snoofing." At the time the odd word "snoofing" sounded like a cross between snooping (trying to snoop on the hypnogogic) and snoozing (getting sleepy). It was a playful representation of where I was both snooping and snoozing.

In the hypnogogic there isn't much doubt one has run into something alien to normal mental processes. The images arise suddenly alien to normal mental processes. The images arise suddenly and are fully formed before one can even guess what they imply. Similarly, a person can hear sentences or phrases that are not immediately understood. The process requires some study to find meaning in it. Even with concerted effort one may be able to trace sense in only a portion of what turns up. For Instance, in the same night I picked up the above comments I also heard someone say, "Master, you are playing games with me." Later someone said with great determination, "It does with me!" It was as though I had broken into someone else's conversation. I couldn't connect it with my state at the moment, but that may have been because it passed so fast. Even when the hypnogogic is obviously being autosymbolic of one's state at the moment, it is just of that precise instant. A fraction of a second later what it is representing may have passed. But the above phrases were quite beyond my understanding. That same evening I heard the hypnogogic saying, "I didn't want anything to happen to my sphere so I read Chekhov. Your sphere will have a repair letter on it." I have no idea why this conversation occurred, though it is intriguing. These spoken phrases are usually said in the tone of your own voice. It is surprising at first to see your mind thinking and talking without your bidding. When you say something to yourself the meaning is there before it is said. When something is said in the hypnogogic, or an image is experienced, the meaning is not there. It may take considerable work even to find its possibility.

My suspicion is that the hypnogogic and psychotic hallucinations are closely related. There is the same alien quality of an image or a sentence suddenly appearing out of nowhere, leaving one guessing as to why. There are differences, though. Hallucinations are much more vivid. Psychotics can literally and clearly see and hear things while awake. Normals, with considerable effort, have difficulty picking up these trance experiences while nearly asleep. Also, auditory hallucinations in psychotics are usually not in their own voice. My guess is that the psychotic, being more alienated from his own nature, experiences the same general processes as more intense and in a more alienated form.

The general nature of this inward terrain can be described. The way to the hypnogogic state is to lie down and relax as though going to sleep. One might direct attention to the eigenlicht, the vague, half-apparent coloured lights and images seen with eyes closed. These are also called the entoptic or idioretinal lights. With concentration on them they can become clearer images. The patterns swirl, move, constantly change. With an intensity of inner awareness they can form into simple objects or geometric patterns, sometimes in complex over-all designs. One I've often seen is formed out of delicate fern leaves. If one awakens slowly from sleep one may be able to linger on half asleep, looking at a wholly formed scene. A common one for me is a shore line of city lights. These inner eigenlichts seem impossible to hold still. My guess is that the brilliantly coloured background imagery one may hallucinate under the drug LSD or other hallucinogens is simply an amplification of the normal eigenlicht. The meaning of the eigenlichts is quite unknown, since few people have examined them. My guess is that they too are autosymbolic of one's state. Seeing geometric patterns goes with a more analytical set. My own fern-leaf designs seem to go with a very peaceful languid

state, the feeling suggested by ferns growing in shaded areas. The eigenlichts seem to be the bare beginning of inward self representation.

To my knowledge, another phenomenon in this area has not been described before. When nearly asleep I find myself locked into some kind of logical relationship. There may be a fixed image and I go over the logic within its form repeatedly. I have the impression it is like a perfectly balanced, very complex, logical presentation. When I awaken it is difficult to remember, though. I may come out with some very paradoxical statement. When, within it, all its logical relationships seem perfectly clear although complex and often paradoxical. I have the feeling it is gone over repeatedly to get it fixed in the mind, yet it fades rapidly on full waking. My own inner tendency and deepest need is to understand things. A common fantasy is that I am giving a very complex and well-presented lecture. My guess (and this is clearly an area of guess and uncertainty) is that this unnamed kind of instructive logical process is autosymbolic of my own tendencies. I badly need a total understanding of a whole system. Left to its own devices, my mind seems to fall into such understandings. Others, with other tendencies, may well have a parallel kind of process going on in them. My wife, a woman of native good humour, falls into a humorous situation as she goes to sleep. I can tell by her mumbled chuckle that she has fallen asleep.

A rough descriptive map of the hypnogogic realm can be drawn. It is clearest in the state between sleeping and waking. Both sides must be present. One is totally relaxed and approaching sleep so inner processes can become more conscious. But one is awake enough to observe them. It occurs on the way into or out of sleep. If one awakens part way, it is quite easy to observe hypnogogic phenomena until one becomes so awake as knock them out. The main advantage of this difficult balancing act between sleeping and waking is that the conscious person can observe an indeed even talk to and experiment with inner process! Examples of this will be given later. This state has the advantage over fantasy and meditation in that one can be sure one is not generating the actual responses of the hypnogogic state. Usually these are autonomous, i.e., the images and what was said are not immediately understood.

There is no question that the hypnogogic area is difficult to deal with in contrast to the states already described. One easily falls off to sleep. On the other hand, if one is too wakeful, it is easy to block it. This is the first major lesson to be learned. The hypnogogic comes spontaneously in little quick images or things said. If one instantly alerts and tries to retain it, this much ego can block any further appearances of it. It may take weeks or months to learn to relax enough to continue to observe the hypnogogic without blocking it by an excess of ego. Very clearly it is the antithesis of ego. Where ego is absent, it can appear. One of the several values in developing an ability to observe hypnogogic phenomena is in learning to lay aside ego, learning ego's deleterious effect in inner processes. Often it is difficult to remember. Like a dream it fades fast on awakening and getting into normal activity. If you can dictate into a tape recorder when half asleep you can capture a good deal of it. The eigenlicht, images with eyes closed, hypnogogic, and dreams could well be a single continuum in which ego fades and the inner awakens. Dreams seem longer and more intense experiences than these forerunners. The person is usually in his dream but is more of an observer of the hypnogogic.

For most people the hypnogogic is primarily visual, for some primarily auditory. This same kind of division will later be found in psychotic hallucinations. It is not known yet why these differences exist. It could have something to do with the way one enters the process (i.e., concentrating on the eigenlicht, making it visual, or listening for voices). Or it could reflect basic personality differences. Perhaps those more extroverted and sensation-orientated see things and those more introverted and of intuitive bent hear things. The images can be black and white or in colour. My guess is that the more intense the process the more likely it is to be in colour. All other senses can appear too, i.e., taste, physical sensations, ect. One young man in a hypnogogic state felt hit with a solid object that

struck him in the head, made his ears ring and muscles contract, and felt faint. This particular experience was easily remembered because it was so intense.

Even though it is a difficult state to achieve and explore, it has its own lessons. It is my vague impression that there are levels of the hypnogogic state itself, which seem to have to do with how well one understands and deals with the process. As one enters into it better, its own apparent richness and power seems to grow. This may be an extension of the general idea that the main thrust of inner processes seems to be autosymbolic; the processes may reflect not only one's state, but also one's understanding and capacities.

Material roughly illustrative of these levels will help clarify something of both the levels and power of the hypnogogic. When one first runs into the hypnogogic it seems to be just a lot of random firings of the brain, bits of images and phrases. I have seen faces I couldn't recognize and heard comments in the background. I wasn't sure if I were overhearing bits of conversation or hearing bits of my own thoughts.

Upon closer examination it appears rather clearly autosymbolic. I was thinking of the richness of the process and heard, "My liberal arts course." While meditating on a pain in my head I heard, "Nonmaterial!" Of course the experience of pain is nonmaterial, but that is not how I would ordinarily think of it. I was trying to hear something like a random conversation nearby and heard, "Drowned people in the bush." Both "drowned" and "bush" seemed to represent the muffled unclear quality of what I was trying to hear. It was unclear, so it clearly says it is unclear! Again, this choice of language and conception was not one normal to me. Another time I was listening and heard, "Anybody over the telephone?" It represented the act of trying to pick up conversation.

More complex examples of this autosymbolic level can be given. It is possible to watch feeling shape itself vaguely and then explode in an image or something said. Sometimes it would be a word or name that had no meaning in itself. Once I heard "Edward Conze," another time "Anzeema." More recently someone asked, "Where is the Ogalala?" My impression is that these names reflect a particular inner state in their sound qualities. For instance, Oga for me has some implication of something big, powerful, and threatening. Lala I associate with pleasant wandering. "where is the Ogalala?" then has the implication of searching for something powerful in this wandering inner state. The process feels autosymbolic, though with an odd name, "Edward Conze," and sound, "Anzeema," I am on less certain ground. At the moment the name explodes in awareness it seems to represent the background feelings it came from by the arrangement of its sound qualities.

On another level the hypnogogic seems to be instructing the person. At this level one may have enough experiences to be able to question the process and have it answer back. Like the rest of the hypnogogic, these dialogues are often brief. One wakes up too much to stay in the process. And the dialogue doesn't always make nice clear sense. It isn't like talking to one's self. It is more like talking to a very playful stranger who thinks symbolically. While meditating on a headache I heard, "There is an old bitch or bastard and you can't see how intimate he is. Concentrate on the pain. It is useful." This sounded like instruction. I was already suspecting that meditating on pain had use, so much of the statement could be autosymbolic of this. The "old bitch or bastard" was about the way I felt about the pain. The making of an unseen male or female person out of it really surprised me. The lesson to be learned from this was unclear.

Once I asked who was speaking and heard, "A soul in the next place." I asked what next place and heard, "The episode of the pregnant----" It was cut off by my becoming too alert. But "The episode of the pregnant----" didn't sound as though I were going to learn of the next place in any easy fashion! I once asked, "What do you think of my lying in bed?" and immediately heard, "Nut." I asked if it were harmful in some way and my own word "harmful" was turned into "horrible." My

question instantaneously became its answer. I have had many indications that the hypnogogic doesn't approve of my staying in bed in the morning on the pretext of studying this state. It has never objected to my losing sleep time at night while studying it. I once asked the hypnogogic whether or not I should change jobs and circumstances. For once I got a nice clear answer. I saw a river that had worn down through a gorge for centuries and heard, "Wear down like a river." I came out of it with a feeling of the great pleasure of knowing one place for centuries. This looked purely instructive. Sometimes the instruction is a bit beyond my undertaking. For instance, I was thinking of the meaning of a dream while half awake and heard, "Liberal instruction is Beethoven's paycheck." I can only guess at the meaning of this. Beethoven was a man who gave much to the world by pouring out himself in music. It seemed to say the one who gives liberally of himself will be rewarded by liberal instruction.

Most of my dialogue with the hypnogogic has taught me something of myself and more of the playful elusive quality of the inner processes. The following is an odd and beautiful example of this. I was about to reject the hypnogogic and wake up when I suddenly heard, "Don't you like my sister?" I quickly inquired, "Who is your sister?" The process answered, "Heaven. Talk to me now." I said, "Tell me of your nature," and got the answer, "Handsome breath." After such a dialogue you are left with the feeling something nice has transpired but you are not sure what! The words spirit and breath have the same Latin root. Roughly, the above incident seemed to say that by rejecting the hypnogogic I was rejecting the hypnogogic's sister, or heaven. The hypnogogic's own nature is handsome breath, which I take as a noble spirit whose sister is heaven. This brings us to the deepest level of the hypnogogic.

I prefaced the whole matter of the hypnogogic by saying that it is a difficult state to reach and deal with. Within it, its deepest level is a kind of satori or enlightenment. Suddenly the questioner and the answerer are one. This breaks into infinite images of all its representations. The individual awakens as though from a trance, puzzled by what was suddenly seen and experienced. On one of these occasions I experienced a gigantic mandala, which is a fourfold symbolic image of the real self. It was an intricately and deeply carved Oriental wood design of a fourfold form. The centre of the design was an empty hole through which the fearsome force of the universe whistled.

If the hypnogogic is explored just deeply enough to see feeling form into words and to catch autonomously appearing images and words, the experience begins to modify ordinary daily life. Having caught images and words popping into the head from nowhere, you begin to see them also in daily life. You can better recognize the autonomous given. What you might normally have accepted as your own thought begins to be seen as "out of the blue." You begin to feel much more like an observer of a process rather than the only one ruling your own head. Your own head and experience becomes more like a meeting place of many. Your own head and experience becomes a bit more modest about his own processes. It is as though he has begun to experience the rolling hills and distant seas of the psyche and feels much less presumptuous about his own scope. Yet, as the individual sees the inner acting playful and wise, he gains more confidence in beauty and wisdom within. It is a somewhat odd world within, and yet it is a "handsome breath."

Summary.

1. Images seen with eyes closed (eigenlichts), the hypnogogic state, and dreams are perhaps on a continuum.
2. It is difficult to poise between sleeping and waking in the hypnogogic state. Most of the early lessons in this state involve learning to keep one's ego quiet so inner processes can emerge.
3. The great advantage of the hypnogogic state is that ego can observe and even deal with processes that are autonomous and outside its bounds.
4. There may be levels in this state that may relate to one's own understanding and dealing with the

state.

5. A rough hierarchy of levels would seem to be represented by:

- a. random bits of images and phrases;
- b. experiences that are pretty clearly autosymbolic or representative of one's state at that moment;
- c. hypnogogic experiences that are instructive, including the possibility of questioning the process and learning from it;
- d. hypnogogic experiences that break into trancelike periods of enlightenment.

6. Experiences with this state tend to:

- a. make one able to see similar experiences in normal consciousness;
- b. make one less presumptuous of his personal powers and, correspondingly;
- c. make one more confident of beauty and wisdom in the natural depths of mind.

Freedom and the Warrior's Path

By Charles Mitchley

What does freedom mean to you? Is it a life devoted to leisure — a kind of grand retirement? Perhaps it means not having to do a specific thing — looking after your parents/children, or working in a particular job, or perhaps not even having to work at all, so that you can concentrate on "living." This is the category into which most people fall, for, when asked, most of us would say that we could be really free "if only we did not have to _____ " or "if only we had _____."

However, all of these wishes and little escapisms have little to do with real freedom. This is because they leave us "hooked" to a specific outcome, and so we remain trapped until that outcome comes about. Freedom for those wishing to follow the warrior's path is somewhat different, and is described in a series of books by Théun Mares, a Toltec author and teacher.

The warrior knows that life is unpredictable, and therefore the outcome we desire may never materialize, leaving us sad and disillusioned. How many people limp along in their jobs, because they only have five, ten, 15 years to go before their retirement, consoling themselves that they will then be able to do what they've always wanted? Yet, even if our dream does come to fruition, we soon discover that the freedom we have sought still eludes us — as most millionaires will readily testify. Even with a million dollars in the bank, even after retirement, we find that we still have the same hang-ups, the same fears, the same relationship problems, the same arguments with our families, and the same deep sense of regret that we could have lived life to the fullest instead of having frittered it away.

The warrior understands so well that, because of the unpredictability of life, not only may future hopes never materialize, but also that he may die at any time. We all like to believe that we are going to be alive next week, next year, or in five years, but not so the warrior. He or she knows that we have no guarantees upon life, and that death can therefore tap us on the shoulder at any moment.

The warrior cultivates a healthy awareness of the presence of death, and uses this to live always on the edge, where life is ever nascent, ever new. Yet, through our social conditioning we have been taught to live for tomorrow, and so most people spend their lives in a kind of limbo, waiting to win the "lottery of life" that is going to transform their lives from a mediocre existence into an exciting adventure.

For the warrior, freedom is not escaping or waiting for life to give you a better break, but is instead an attitude of mind. This attitude will enable you to rise above the belief that you are a victim, and will imbue in you the knowledge and certainty that you can take charge of your life's circumstances.

However, because such an attitude of mind is so contrary to our social conditioning, its cultivation is not only a long journey, but also a journey that is more akin to a constant battle than a stroll through a meadow. In this regard, realize that people normally look upon their birth as having been beyond their control; therefore, they also think about their lives as being the product of their environment, social status, culture, religion, education, etc. In other words, people see themselves as victims of their circumstances.

A warrior is never a victim. By fighting for freedom from the debilitating effects of social conditioning, warriors take full responsibility for their birth, their life, and their death.

It is the bane of our human condition to believe that the problems in our lives stop us from realizing our full potential. The warrior knows that whatever his or her life's circumstances, or whatever

problems have arisen, they have not come about as a punishment but as an opportunity for growth. Each and every one is a challenge to enable us to claim our power. We are never given something that we cannot handle, and thus the warrior knows that the greater the challenge, the greater the gifts of power will be at the end of the day.

How else is the warrior expected, in a practical way, to go about achieving freedom? The first three books by Théun Mares lay the foundations for both the concepts, as well as the practical teachings, on this. These are some of the basic tools and techniques that are taught to every apprentice on the path of freedom. Although they may initially seem simple, once they are understood and put into practice, they are not only very powerful, but they also yield to greater and greater depths of complexity and understanding.

- Through the process of recapitulation we can learn to come to terms with our past and see our life for what it really is. Apart from the vital importance of gleaning every gift of power from all of our life experiences, unless we can also learn to see the folly in our behavior patterns, we will simply continue to re-enact our folly instead of truly living.
- Words are powerful tools for a warrior, for they literally shape our world. We therefore learn how a warrior approaches the correct use of words.
- We are all creatures of habit. Therefore, it is often not enough simply to achieve clarity on a particular issue. Only through the technique of "not-doing" can we break those destructive behavior patterns that are ingrained, longstanding, and that always manifest in myriad different, and obscure, guises. Hunters are masters of stalking their prey. Our biggest prey is our self-destructive behavior, and warriors learn first and foremost to stalk their behavior. However, because it is easier to see the faults in other people, we start by learning to stalk the behavior of others.
- For the warrior, the whole world is nothing more than a mirror of potential behavior that exists within us, whether this is past, present, or future behavior. Therefore, by using the concept of mirrors, we first learn to recognize, and then we change in ourselves, the damaging behavior we see reflected, for the truth is that we can never change other people, only ourselves. Naturally, with a correct application of this technique, the need to judge others also quickly falls away.

Freedom means many things, but perhaps the essence of freedom is the knowledge that whatever happens to us, we have a choice. Knowing that we have the ability to choose how to respond in any situation is the heart of freedom. Any other way is to leave us dangling like a puppet on the strings that have been set up for us by our parents, friends, and society, and the problem with dangling like a puppet or victim is that we not only debilitate ourselves, but also those around us, for at the end of the day, life is thoroughly interrelated, interdependent and interconnected.

Therefore the star upon which warriors fix their gaze as they battle for freedom carries the legend: "If you uplift yourself, you automatically uplift all those around you, and if you shoot yourself in the foot, you automatically let all those other people down too." Implicit in this motto is another facet of freedom, namely that we cannot force other people to change; we can only change ourselves. But through constantly working to uplift ourselves we can, and do, work miracles in the world around us.

About the Author

Charles Mitchley is a writer, publisher, and apprentice of Toltec author/warrior Théun Mares, whose third book on the warrior's path, *The Mists of Dragon Lore*, is now available (\$16.95 softcover). The first books in the series are *Return of the Warriors* (\$24.95 clothbound) and *Cry of the Eagle* (\$24.95 clothbound).

Available at (888) 822-6657, or online at amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.

WAYS to DETERMINE YOUR LEVEL of INNER FREEDOM

By Guy Finley

Want to know how free you really are? Good! You're about to be presented with a unique opportunity to learn all about your individual level of inner liberty.

As you review each of the inner liberties on the list, just note mentally whether or not that particular freedom belongs to you. Our intention is simply to learn what's true about ourselves, not to prove anything about ourselves. Allow these forty freedoms to awaken and stir that secret part of you that knows living in any kind of bondage is a lie. Then follow your own natural sensing all the way to the free life.

You're Well Along Freedom's Path When:

1. You have no desire to change places in life with anyone else.
2. You step over setbacks without stopping or looking back.
3. You accept and appreciate praise, but never take it to heart.
4. You don't overeat or feel driven to diet.
5. You don't think about your sex life.
6. You meet and do what's true without fear of the consequences.
7. You really don't want anything from anyone.
8. You stop thinking about how much money you may or may not have.
9. You don't carry any upset from the last moment into the present one.
10. You have no interest in old resentments.
11. You start spending more time alone and enjoying it more.
12. You stop dreaming of the perfect vacation.
13. You're neither frightened nor shocked by the evening news.
14. You stop making deals with yourself.
15. You dress for comfort, not for compliments.
16. You lose all interest in trying to win mental arguments.
17. You don't blame anyone else for the way you feel.
18. You forget what it was you didn't like about someone.
19. You're awake to and spontaneously considerate of the needs of others.
20. You see beauty in life where you never could see it before.
21. Your life gets progressively simpler.
22. You see where you're wrong sooner than later, and stop defending yourself faster.
23. You do what you need to do (but don't want to do) and you do it with a lighter spirit.
24. You're not afraid of having nothing to say or do, if that's your true condition.
25. You can take criticism without cringing away from the truth it may hold.
26. You have no concern for what others may think of you.
27. You stop trying to make others see life in your way.
28. You enjoy the sound of silence as much or more than the sound of your own voice.
29. You see the same unpleasant traits within yourself that have made you shun others.
30. You say what you want, and not what you think others may want to hear you say.
31. You actually enjoy hearing about the good fortune of someone else.
32. You see more and more just how un-free you and others really are.
33. Your moods are fewer, lighter, and move on much quicker.
34. You see that society is destroying itself and that the only solution is self change.
35. You can listen to others without the need to tell them what you know.
36. You don't find a thrill in any kind of fear.
37. You know that forgiveness of others is the kindest thing you can do for yourself.
38. You realize that the world is the way it is because you are the way you are.

39. You'd rather not think about yourself.

40. You can't come up with one good reason why you should ever be anxious or frightened.

There's one more important point to bring to our attention: never be discouraged over your present location!

Discouragement is a negative emotion with more than one trick up its dark sleeve. It tricks you into mentally or emotionally dwelling in the very place you want to leave. Drop all such sorrow permanently by daring to see through this deception of the unconscious mind. Who you really are, your True Nature, is no more tied to the kind of person you've been than the wind is tied to the skies through which it moves. Your past is just that, the past, a place within your psyche with no more reality to it than the picture of a castle on a postcard is made from stone. You have a destination far beyond where you find yourself standing today.

It may not seem so at first, but your new findings are a great start. Now keep going. Use this list and your new discoveries to help you ignite your wish to be free. Then step back and welcome the spiritual firestorm. Watch as it burns away the ties that bind. This is what it means to let the Light fight for you.

(Excerpted from Freedom From the Ties That Bind by Guy Finley 1999 Llewellyn Publications. About the Author Guy Finley is the best-selling author of a half dozen books on self-transformation.

His works, which have sold over a million copies and have been translated into seven languages, are recommended by doctors, ministers, and industry leaders. For information on books, tapes, and helpful on-going study groups call (541) 476-1200, write to the Life of Learning Foundation, P.O. Box 10, Merlin, OR 97532, or visit his website at <http://www.guyfinley.com>

What's Your Frequency

By Darlene Zagata

While most of us are aware that all energy vibrates, we don't often realize the subtle effects these vibrations have on our entire being. Everything vibrates whether it be animate or inanimate. We are affected by these vibrations whether we realize it or not. Our own bodies vibrate right down to the cellular level. Not only does everything vibrate but these vibrations take place at different frequencies.

You've probably encountered individuals that you just don't care to be around although they've never given you any particular reason to feel that way. In fact, they may seem quite pleasant yet there is something about them that makes you feel uncomfortable. Perhaps you or others have tried to explain your feelings by saying maybe you knew the person in a past life or that your senses are picking up bad vibes about the person in question. While these are all plausible possibilities, your feelings could be telling you that the person is vibrating at a frequency quite different from your own. Then there are those individuals that you meet and instantly hit it off with. Surely at one time or another, someone has said to you, "We must be on the same wavelength." It appears that there may be more to those words than we would have imagined.

Vibratory influences affect us on many levels including our physical health. They can help to heal us as well as causing ill health. For example, noise pollution can be detrimental to our health. Noise is everywhere so it is virtually impossible to avoid being affected. Noise can affect one's hearing; it can cause anxiety and tension. Noise can interfere with learning ability and interrupt concentration. It can cause irritability especially in those who are particularly sensitive to sound and noise. Not all sounds have negative effects. Certain sounds can be quite uplifting and even aid the healing process. In recent years we have seen an upsurge in the use of sounds such as whale songs, the sound of a heart beat and rushing water used to calm, lower blood pressure and speed recovery.

Music has been known for its effects since mothers first began to croon the lullaby to calm and soothe their infants into sweet slumber. Various sounds are said to affect specific organs in the body. Music is also thought to affect behaviour which is why many parents are concerned about the type of music their teenagers listen to. Such concerns may turn out to be more valid than what parents themselves had first thought. Even in some ancient cultures certain types of music were prohibited due to the suspected influence on behaviour. Today's music does affect our children but can music actually affect intelligence levels on either a negative or positive scale? Studies using mice may indeed indicate that various types of music can affect learning patterns as well as behaviour. Aggressive behaviour has also been associated with certain types of music and sounds. Studies involving plants have also shown increased growth or debilitation in response to different music and sounds. It certainly appears that various sounds can create balance or imbalance. These subtle imbalances take place not only in our bodies but also on a global level.

Once again, all matter vibrates at different frequencies. These frequencies are affected by sound, colour, the food we eat and more. We are affected by the environment, the weather and the energies of others. We all know the feeling of walking into a room where the tension is so thick it could be cut with a knife. We're familiar with the feeling that overtakes us when we walk into a room and suddenly all eyes are on us; it makes us feel self-conscious. What we're actually feeling is the energy vibrations of the other people in the room. Many people tend to become depressed in the winter and then feel rejuvenated once spring arrives. More than likely, you've heard someone mention their biological clock. Although they might not know the dynamics of which they're speaking this is usually a reference to biorhythms, the natural cycles of the body.

Did you ever notice how you feel better when you're outside in the midst of nature? Many people

make it a practice to take a walk when they feel anger building. Others go to the beach or mountains when recuperating from an illness. A picnic in the country can be a great pick me up for someone needing a momentary escape from the hectic pressures of city life. We are more sensitive to vibration than we realize. Colour is a factor that influences our lives as well. Some people don't feel comfortable wearing bright colours while others are right at home in them. One person might prefer to wear a dark muted colour because they want to blend in while the next person prefers red or bright yellow. It's not surprising to find that the woman wearing the red suit is an extrovert with a vibrant outgoing personality. Pastel colours are thought to produce a sense of calm serenity while colours such as grey or brown may incite depression. Red is thought to be a colour of seduction, producing passion and also perhaps anger. Colours as well as sound produce their own type of effects.

Most of us are not as perceptive as we should or could be, not fully utilizing our normal five senses, let alone those beyond the physical but we are more sensitive than we realize. How often do we really slow down enough to truly taste our food or fully enjoy the wonders that our eyes and ears perceive? We are in such a rush through our daily lives that we don't fully hear or see. It is most often when something disturbs us that it gets our full attention. Most of us have experienced the irritating sound of fingernails on a chalkboard but some people actually find the sound of another's voice disturbing. Why? Listen closely and try to determine why. As already mentioned, noise is everywhere and certainly can't be avoided entirely but we can make an effort to surround ourselves with sounds that soothe and heal. We can carefully choose the music we listen to and we can also learn the value of silence, which is all too rare in our daily lives.

We can sit back and listen to the sounds of nature. We can experiment with colour by adding different hues to the home and the wardrobe. We can also become more aware of the words that we use in our speech because they too affect us as well as others in both positive and negative ways. Not only do our words have a profound impact but the tone of voice in which those words are spoken can either soothe or upset. Try to become more consciously aware of the words you use and the manner in which you speak. Make a concentrated effort to speak pleasantly to others rather than using a harsh tone. Too often when we are preoccupied, feeling rushed or tired do we tend to snap at others simply for intruding on our space or asking us a question. A harsh reply or angry tone of voice does affect the person you are speaking to and it affects you as well even though you may not realize it at that moment. Remember the old adage: Think before you speak. There is wisdom in that phrase. Listen carefully to yourself, to the sounds of nature and seek to align with the vibrations of love, peace and harmony.

About the Author

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Fusion and Occult Knowledge

By M.E.Haselhurst

Fusion is both a product of consciousness and the means whereby consciousness is expanded. To consider fusion, as the joining of two things to make one is a limitation of the truth which, in occult philosophy, the term is intended to convey. Fusion does, in truth, transform two phenomenal appearances into one appearance, but it acts, not to join the two, but to burn away the barriers which created the apparent duality, thus revealing the essential unity from which the dual appearance stemmed.

Always must it be borne in mind that the significant words behind all efforts at spiritual fusion are Life-Quality-Appearance- the appearance at our present stage consisting of the three-fold body which expresses soul quality and enables Life to reveal itself. In achieving the progressive fusion incidental to the life of discipleship, this basic framework is not altered. The fusion of the personality with the soul is a merging of two fires or energies in the realm of consciousness. The effect is to have the three-fold body as the medium of expression in the three-fold world of human evolution, and to release into that living mechanism a flow of soul energy so steady and so sustained that the forces of the personality are drawn into, dissolved and made one with the higher, dominating energy. Thus a new unity is made manifest; instead of soul and personality the soul-infused personality appears, thus consummating the second great fusion of the Path of return. (The first fusion is achieved when the different elements of the personal self are integrated and brought under the direction of the mind).

The relation between fusion and occult knowledge lies in the realm of awareness. It is conceivable that the fusion of the personality with the soul might be brought about, and proceed to demonstrate its validity in saintly living, without the lower self being aware of what had taken place. Such ignorance would not negate the reality of the fusion, but would possibly circumscribe also the effects produced at subtler levels. Occult knowledge leads to a correct appraisal of what has taken place, and of the energies which have been released, thereby enabling those energies to be used to directed ends with maximum effect.

Put thus, however, the situation is over-simplified. The relationship between fusion and occult knowledge goes deeper, is infinitely more complex, than the connection between energy and its application. Occult knowledge, if correctly related to the Love Aspect of Deity, tends always towards fusion since it removes the separating barriers of ignorance and non-understanding. As such knowledge increases, so the possibility of ever more inclusive fusion becomes apparent, and the techniques for bringing the fusions about are made clear. Occult knowledge is, therefore, part of the means whereby the results of fusion may be understood and demonstrated.

Fusion produces always an enlargement of consciousness and therefore, a truer demonstration of Reality. This is not because consciousness has actually been made greater. As Mrs A. Besant states in her book "A study in Consciousness" . . . "consciousness is the one reality in the fullest sense of that much-used phrase . . ." What fusion achieves is the removal of limitation, with consequent revelation of new arcs of consciousness involving new fields of energy wherein the Self may carry forward Its divine experiment, knowing new experiences and evolving new methods of expression.

The Doctrine of the Heart insists that these experiments and experiences must be related to the service of humanity, and that their expression is service must be such as to make the life of the spirit practical and apparent in daily living. This demonstrable relationship between Life and Appearance depends upon many factors, each subject to infinite modification. In general, the principles involved may perhaps be summarised in certain simple rules: -

1. Be persistent in effort.
2. Let aspiration be continually renewed.
3. Make penetrative endeavour a daily habit.
4. Look for spiritual opportunity in daily experience.
5. Learn to recognise and respond to human need.
6. Increase by all known means the sensitivity of the instruments by means of which the work of the Spirit is accomplished.

Applying such rules within the scope of immediate opportunity, it becomes possible to make soul fusion and occult knowledge steps towards spiritual potency, achieved stages in the process of the stated truth . . ."The arcs of consciousness are fused by the flame of the heart."

The Garden of Souls and Spirits

By Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov

From The Seeds of Happiness

Human beings can be compared to flowers or fruit or even vegetables. Every time you meet some, every time you talk to them and listen to them, you can enjoy their fragrance or taste their flavour. But is this what you actually do? No, you rarely pay attention to anything but their clothes or their jewellery, their faces, their legs or their hands; you never think of nourishing yourself on the life which is hidden under all that and which emanates from their heart, soul and spirit. And this is a great pity! Henceforth try to be more attentive and learn to appreciate the human beings who are bearers of the subtle life. Pause when you meet someone and say to your self, 'he represents an aspect of the H Father; she represents the Divine Mother. Thank you Heavenly Father! Thank you, Divine Mother! Thanks to these human "fruits and flowers" I can come closer to you and contemplate you today. Through their splendour I can breath your perfume and taste your sweetness.' And you will go on your way happy because this fruit or this flower will have brought you closer to Heaven.

I know of course that some of you will be astonished that I should compare human beings to fruit and flowers or vegetables. But what is so astonishing about that? Poets are always comparing beautiful young girls or boys to roses, violets, lilies, jasmine or lotuses! And one of the favourite endearments of the French is, 'my little cabbage', while someone who allows himself to be put upon is called a 'pear', and someone who is stupid is called a 'gherkin!' Well, enough of this market-garden vocabulary! The important thing is to understand that this is an extremely effective method: if you learn to you it not only will you avoid many mishaps and complications but you will always be full of joy and inspiration.

How do men and woman usually look at each other? What do they see? They see only the external appearance, the body or the clothes, and this proves that they do not possess true knowledge. It is exactly as though, looking at a car, you had eyes only for the bodywork and ignored the person behind the wheel, that is to say the being that thinks, feels and acts. But it is precisely this being that you must learn to look for, that you must learn to see and feel in people. Always try to go further and deeper so as to discover the soul and spirit of those you meet, for it is there that you will discover riches and treasures, heaven itself.

It is simply a question of ridding yourself of your habit of looking at things in a way that distorts and impoverishes life. All human beings have a body that goes without saying but that doesn't mean that you have to look at nothing but their stomachs or their intestines. What good will that do you? Of course you will tell me that you are not interested in people's intestines, that what you look for in others is beauty and that you find that beauty in their eyes, their faces, hands and legs, ect. Well there is nothing very wrong with that, but if you stop there and never go any further you will be laying yourself open to disappointments for you are confining yourself to details that are strictly material. If you want to feel continually happy and inspired try to rejoice in the presence of all the flowers and fruit that surround you and enjoy their emanations, remembering that an invisible divinity is hidden in each one. Over and above a person's physical body are all those things that emanate from him on the subtle planes, and it is they that matter most.

As long as human beings continue to consider only each other's physical appearance they will never find the joy they seek. Someone who says, 'I need beauty and love', should know that he will find them only when he learns to seek others in the fluidic world of emanations, radiations and vibrations. When you meet somebody wonderful and begin to love him and want to get to know him, instead of doing all you can to get close to him on the purely physical plane, learn to listen to the vibrations of his voice, to capture the light of his glance, to rejoice in the harmony of his

gestures. In this way you will gradually build up a relationship with all that is most subtle and divine in him, and the sensations you experience will be beyond anything you have ever known or imagined. In the same way you will also discover that people whom you may have been inclined to despise or ignore are in reality exceptional beings who can give you far more than many others who seem outwardly to be more interesting or attractive.

There is a whole new field of study for you here. Go ahead, do some experiments and analyse yourselves. Now that you know these truths don't just ignore them and go on in the old way, repeating all the same unhappy experiences. For I assure you, unless you change your point of view, your experiences will continue to be unhappy: don't delude yourself about this. It is no good believing in the impossible. You plunge into all kinds of adventures that can only end in grief and disenchantment and you think, 'It was just bad luck; we could have been happy.' 'No, never! Happiness and unhappiness are never a question of chance or luck. They depend on you. It is you yourselves who sow the seeds that will give you one or the other.

The Gift of Choice

From The Inner World of Choice

By Frances G. Wickes

"Man was created for the sake of choice".

"The more one sees of human fate and the more one examines its secrets springs of actions, the more one is impressed by the strength of unconscious motives and by the limitations of free choice."

THE ART OF LIVING is, in its essential meaning, a development and transformation of the power of inward choice. It is of all creative arts the most the most difficult and the most distinguished. Its products are fashioned in the workshop of the soul whose windows open upon inner and outer worlds. If the door between these worlds be locked, transforming energy is imprisoned, and awareness, that precursor of new consciousness, becomes bereft of its mobility, its power of quick response.

Man! swinging-wicket set between the Unseen and Seen needs both worlds, for each act of creation is born of a subtle interchange, or clashing encounter, of inner and outer.

Truly this art is one of rare distinction. It involves

A condition of complete simplicity

(Costing not less than everything), a humility that holds the sense of the real within the heart, a courage that dares the leap into the unknown, and an acceptance of the dignity of human life that comes from a reverence and respect for the potential existing in each individual. Thus it comes to pass that this artist is not primarily concerned with concrete objective expression though, when form and pattern are perceived by inner vision, there may arise a compelling desire to express its meaning objectively. For the artist seeks to reveal to himself and, through himself, to others a world within man that cannot be expressed in three-dimensional form.

A work of art can never be wholly objective, for spirit, shaping and reshaping, moves within the creator, changing, transforming, expressing its own dimensions, moving in a world of eternal meanings. Spirit, entering into the simplest act of love, here also creates its own dimensions in human form. It steps out of time into eternity, for an act of awakening and awakened love lives on long after the actor has become spirit or earth. All decision and choice rests primarily upon our openness to the transforming spirit, upon awareness of its messages and a simultaneous awareness of the outer situation and our own involvement in it.

God says, " Choose what you will and pay for it." We choose; we try to bargain with this mysterious god, secretly expecting him to give back our money if we do not like what we have chosen. But in merciless wisdom, he-this "Wholly Other"- extracts full payment, through which new consciousness may be born and a step towards wholeness taken. Hardened by defeat, confronted by his own weakness, tempered by the very injustice of life, man is thrown back upon himself and begins to see the nature of and the reasons for his choices. The payments then become the means of his learning how to choose.

Refusal of inward choice and its creative power makes of life a repetitious round, a treadmill of duty or a merry-go-round of meaningless activity. Man is bound to the wheel of fate until consciousness of his God-given power of choice dawns upon him. Then he glimpses the paradoxical nature of the force that has both bound him and given him power to break the bonds if he will choose the pain entailed in the struggle and accept the perils of freedom to be encountered on the spiral way that sweeps upward from the broken wheel.

The Power of a Glance

From The Book of Divine Magic

By Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov

Just as our ears enable us to hear sounds, our eyes enable us to see light, colours and forms; like the ears, they are passive, receptive organs. But the eyes differ from the ears in that they can also be emissive and active; one can suggest, influence and command with a glance. For this reason, looks or glances fall into the category of gestures and, like other gestures, they have to be brought under control and educated so as to produce only beneficial effects.

The first rule is never to look at someone insistently, in an attempt to impose one's will on them; no one has the right to do this. But it is not good to look at people purely passively and without expression either; this can make them feel demagnetised, vampirized. Yes, vampirism can exist in the form of gestures, words and looks. In fact some people have cultivated it, consciously or unconsciously, so such a degree that they can drain away your last drop of vitality just by looking at you! I have often seen this. I don't like to meet the eyes of certain people because they paralyse my energies, feeling of listlessness comes over me and I cannot do anything for them. Whereas others give me something when they look at me; their glance is alive, and I can give them a great deal more, also.

You should try to observe yourself and pay attention to the expression of your eyes. Ask yourself, 'Am I giving or taking?' It is good to give and it is not a bad thing to take something in exchange. We feel like running away from someone who always takes, because he is like a thief, whereas we are drawn to someone who knows how to give and radiate, because this is the highest form of magic.

You must look at others with love, therefore, but without insistence, so as to leave them completely free. Don't try to force people to respond to your look and to manifest themselves according to your own wishes. If you project your will at someone in this way, he will feel it as a constraint and a violence; besides, nothing you can do will force him to open himself to you. He will remain unmoved by all your wiles. The secret of how to win over other people is to show a disinterested love which never attempts to take their hearts or souls by storm.

Astrologers will tell you that the kind of glance people have depends on the ruling planet in their chart. If it is the Moon, for instance, they will have a vague, dreamy look that shows that they are 'in the moon'. If their ruling planet is Mercury, their eyes pry into everything . . . sometimes even into your pockets! Those who are ruled by Venus have a languorous look and will try to attract you with 'the glad eye'! Mars will stare at you defiantly as though to say, 'Be careful, I'm quite willing to wrestle with you'! Jupiter folds you in a protective glance which means, 'Rely on me, I can help you; I know a lot of important people. I'll talk to them about you.' Saturn's gaze is full of suspicion; he looks at you distrustfully because he is always thinks you are going to do something to injure him. The gaze of the Sun, on the other hand, is frank and open and full of light.

How should we look at people? Not, at any rate, like Saturn, who looks at you suspiciously. You will say that you have to distrust everybody, otherwise you will be cheated and robbed. True, but if you are perpetually distrustful of others, you will create the same frame of mind in them and life will be unbearable.

More often than not, when human beings meet in the street or elsewhere, they look at each other with indifference, like strangers or even enemies. Unless they have any specific reason for attracting someone's attention, it does not occur to them to give others a look of kindness and light which might help them. And yet you all have the power to help those who are threatened by doubt, sorrow

or despair and renew their courage, simply by the way you look at them. Wherever you go, in the streets or in trains and busses, you meet quantities of people whom you could help and encourage with a kind look and a positive thought. At the time, they will certainly not realize what you are doing to them, but their soul and the spiritual entities that inhabit them will welcome what you send them and their frame of mind will change for the better.

Sometimes you suddenly feel happy and joyful without understanding why. The explanation is very simple. Has it never happened that you have glimpsed someone in the street who struck you as being particularly attractive and to whom you sent a rapid thought or feeling of sincere affection? The person in question may not even have seen you, but they will have received the gift you sent them and will certainly feel enriched. Well, when you suddenly feel happy for no apparent reason, it is certainly because an inhabitant of the visible world has passed by and, in passing, has looked at you and sent a ray of love that has reached your heart.

Yes, there are many beings in the visible world to whom you are very dear and, when they meet you, they send you a loving glance. But you can also meet an enemy and, in this case, you will suddenly feel bruised and wounded. Everywhere in the world, crowds of people meet and mingle and exchange things. And it is the same in the invisible world: there, too, we are constantly in the midst of a multitude of beings; some send us beneficial currents and others harmful ones, and our state of mind can very often be explained by this. The power of a glance is immense; in fact, people sometimes actually fall ill because a being who does not love them whether in the visible or the invisible world has looked at them with malevolence.

You must be careful never to give anyone a black look. Human beings are constantly slaying each other with hostile looks. You should be thankful, in fact, that the laws on earth are less severe than those in the kingdom of God, for an inhabitant of the Kingdom of God who allowed himself to give even one hostile glance would immediately be expelled and sent to wander in the infernal regions. Surely we must all have been sent down on earth because we have aimed at least one black look at someone! The gates of Paradise have been closed to us and we have fallen into this place where these faults are committed every day. In fact, war is one of the consequences of the murderous looks human beings never stop sending each other.

When you approach others, you must do so with a glance of spiritual love, in imitation of the sun which looks at us and sends us vivifying waves every day. The sun is an image, the most beautiful, sublime image of God. We must put ourselves in the presence of God every day, so as to contemplate Him and try to catch His eye. A single glance from God is enough to transform us, something that we would be unable to forget for all eternity! This is why we must work for a long time so as to approach God and win a glance from Him.

The spiritual life begins with the education of the glance. Of course, in this context, the word 'glance' is symbolic, it expresses everything: a glance is a projection of forces, of energies which can be baneful or beneficial, tenebrous or luminous. Astrology has a proper understanding of this. In fact, if you study it you will see that the whole of astrology can be explained by it: one of the planets in your chart glances at another with animosity, and it is enough to create the difficult conditions from which you will have all the trouble in the world to extricate yourself. Yes, for the glances of the stars crystallize and solidify on the physical plane and, as the physical plane is extremely hard and durable, it is not easily changed.

If we want to counteract the negative influences of the planets, we must begin by learning to look at the whole of creation, at the stones, plants and stars, with benevolence. If we do that, Heaven itself will look on us with benevolence too, and only Heaven's glances of benevolence have the power to counteract all that we have received from our enemies on the physical, astral and mental planes in

the course of all our incarnations.

A glance is the starting point of so many things in life! Love, hatred and accidents all begin with a glance. A man meets a woman, sends her a certain look and she falls in love with him; the succession of events that follow all stem from that initial glance. Similarly, he who sends someone a black look triggers disorders and conflict.

Study this question in your own family and social life, and you will see that a great many things depend on the way people look at each other. To know how to look at others is a science in itself: the influence that a glance can have on a person's destiny has never been sufficiently studied. And don't say that it is an unimportant detail. Everything is contained in a person's glance, for it is a synthesis of the whole being; also, it leaves its seal on everything it touches. You can only change your glance if you change your whole life, your whole way of thinking, feeling and behaving, for it is through a person's glance that his character and temperament manifest themselves, that his strengths and weaknesses effect people and objects and leave their mark on them. A glance of the greatest importance; astrology is not in error when it defines a person's horoscope as a synthesis of the glances the planets cast on him at the moment of his birth.

When you are angry with someone, your natural tendency will be to send him a black look. But be careful: you must never look at someone with hostility; in moments like that, it is better to close your eyes and transform the forces that are boiling up inside you. If you let them out in the form of a hostile glance, they will do all kinds of damage, without your realizing it and, in the end, will be turned against you.

Also, you must try not to look down for too long at a time, because this has the effect of linking you to the powers of the subterranean world. From time to time, look up at the sky, so as to detach yourselves from the lower realms. Of course, you must not spend your time looking up at the sky, either. On the other hand, if you are talking to someone and looking at him, it is not a good thing suddenly to lower your eyes to the ground. Also, when you want to see what someone beside you is doing, turn your head to look at him; don't be content to give him a sideways glance; this is a very bad habit; it is a sign that you are not frank. And, when you are talking to someone, never put your hand over your eyes, for this gesture erects a barrier between the outside world and the inner glance.

There will come a day when human beings will look at each other just as God looks at them. They will have no more evil thoughts for each other and every man will give free expression to his love by means of his eyes and his smile. A glance is the language of God. God and the Angels speak with their glances. No one in Heaven has time to stop and talk to you; the Angels move through space at dizzying speeds greater than the speed of light, but as they pass they send you a glance which, if you are conscious of it, you will remember for eternity, and which will heal, illuminate and save you. There is nothing in the world to compare with such a glance. This is the true language of Heaven.

In the future, human beings will speak to each other only with their eyes, for the mouth is not yet capable of expressing our subtlest feelings. Just imagine, for instance, that you went out into the street where you met hundreds of people, and that each one gave you a look full of purity, sincerity and light: you would have the impression that you had arrived in the Kingdom of Heaven. If you had been in a state of despair, you would immediately be healed and resuscitated by those glances brimming over with trust. This experience is enough to drive home to you the power of a glance. What a pity that the glances you have experienced so far have, more often than not, been glances that disturbed or wounded you.

And now, let's pause for a few moments and let each one of us endeavour to send a glance of light

and love to every creature in the world.

Someone who has not learned to master his glance cannot be enrolled in an Initiatic School. If you still unconsciously trigger negative forces every day, how can you expect the greatest secrets of Heaven to be revealed to you? True disciples of the Divine Science know how to send their glance and their greetings to all the luminous beings of the visible and invisible worlds. They know how to transmit their salutations to these beings, every day, and how to receive salutations from them in exchange; in this way, they feel themselves constantly stronger and more brightly illuminated.

The Glory of the One

By Mary W. Turner

The occult path cannot be followed blindly. Intelligent thought and appraisal are necessary. Yet the results must oft be held in abeyance pending that clarification which can come only through release into love of humanity.

Even those who are 'saturated with the teachings' can experience new revelations and succumb to unsuspected blind spots. Therefore, those who are still painfully picking their way through the extreme fluctuations of the thorny path of discrimination into the heart of the teaching, can be temporarily baffled and lost in the paradoxes with which the wisdom-teaching abounds. How irritating to the concrete mind to discover statements mad by the same source which are apparently in direct opposition to one another. Unless there is the capacity to keep going, and to hold contradiction, much time can be wasted while the lower mind sinks deeper into the morass of its own creation under the weight of its own preoccupations.

Mental detachment is a difficult thing for many to achieve. A certain quality of mind demands the assurance of a clear passage and the complete mastery of one step before another is attempted. Yet on the occult path this is seldom possible. And the teaching if we have confidence in it reveals a golden thread which we can learn to follow through a maze of unresolved mental problems, watching them drop off or recede into nothingness as we go. The unimportance of perplexing things to the unfolding consciousness of true values achieves perspective as we learn to distinguish between problems of growth impinging on the mind as the soul takes control, and the ceaseless searching of the concrete mind for a satisfactory means of hurdling the immediately impossible. There are a multitude of questions arising along the path that can only be answered by moving beyond them, and looking back.

One of the most perplexing adjustments for many lies within the resolution of the 'inner' spiritual life to the mundane 'outer' world of daily living. We are told to 'look within', and we are told to 'serve without'. And as we endeavour to balance this duality in effective spiritual living, we tend to tip one way or the other to the changing emphasis of our thought life. The dual life includes many apparently opposite factors upon the cross-formed by the so-called vertical and horizontal life. One familiar mental block revolves around the concept of service, and its relation to the technique of meditation. Our confusion may be increased as we delve into the teachings given on meditation and service, only to find each displayed as the supreme value. So we read: 'The technique of meditation is the outstanding creative agent on the planet', 'All that is, is created by meditation.' 'The technique of meditation governs all expansion of consciousness, all registration of Plan and Purpose and, in fact, the entire process of evolutionary unfoldment' and so on. And then, by contrast: 'Service is the scientific mode par excellence, to evoke spiritual integration and to call forth the resources of a divine Son of God'. 'The science of service takes priority over the science of meditation.'

Plane into Sphere

And as we think about it, and try to decide which of the two is the cause, and which the effect, we may come to the point where we recognise meditation and service as two sides of one coin. And for a period, during a stage on the path subject to the analytical faculty and two-dimensional thought of the concrete mind, they may be so. But as the higher aspect of the mind impinges, and the individual approaches the point of discipleship integration of soul and personality, the dimension of depth transforms the flat-planed coin into an inclusive sphere in which the common identity of life and experience is known. At the same time, the even-armed cross of vertical and horizontal life renounces separation as a duality, to the synthesis achieved through the free circulation of life and

the consciousness from point to point. Again, the whole sphere is formed in which there is naught but the centre and the periphery, and the relationship in conscious identity between the two.

So in time we begin to understand, through a living experience of its reality, that service and meditation are one and the same thing, different only in the same sense that the right hand and the left hand are used differently with any musical instrument. Similarly, we can understand that meditation and service, the vertical life and the horizontal life, become one as alignment, or relationship, is experienced in consciousness between the periphery the personality expression and the field of service and the centre the emanating source of life and dynamic intent.

Seen with this sense of synthesis and identity, meditation all formal meditation, individual or group, for any purpose whatsoever becomes a supreme service in helping to create synthesis and conscious alignment within the planetary life; and service is seen as the contemplative life of those whose minds vibrate to the Plan in the creation of right human relationships. Then we may remember that the New Group of World Servers are the lowest correspondence of the Nirmanakayas the Divine Contemplatives. And the jigsaw pieces in the channel of alignment and relationship between man and God, fall into place in our minds.

The Touchstone of Release

At this point we see that there is no higher or lower, inner or outer. There is only one common centre of life and its area of experience. Having placed our emphasis first on one fragmental aspect of wholeness, then on another; having 'meditated' and 'served' struggled for self-mastery and then for self-forgetfulness, we find the touchstone of release in 'love of humanity'.

Love of humanity is the transcendent motive behind spiritual creativity, transforming a son of man into a Son of God. The motif 'love of humanity' is the crest jewel on the brow of the serving disciple, directing a beam of light along the path we all must tread, adding a strand in consciousness to the golden cable of life relating our planet to the Heart of the Sun.

Guide to Losing Your Mind Before You Go Crazy

By Tracy Togliatti

I would like for you to go on an excursion with me, away from your mind. In our journey, you will be able to re-discover the world with childlike wonder and curiosity. Your stress level is going to drop significantly and you are going to become more effective with your mind than what you may now think is possible. This might seem like a totally unrealistic goal to you, maybe even completely far fetched. Please bear with me though, with an open mind and heart. We could very well be taking the first step towards changing your life!

This adventure we are going on will take one week of your time. It won't cost you a dime and you don't need to pack anything at all. You can still go about your daily activities and might even find yourself becoming more productive with them as we go. You can invite a friend or loved one, or as many as you like. I will be your humble guide to lead you through the events. Please remember there is a purpose of each adventure that is planned. It will all come together at the end. Now, if you are ready we can begin.

Here is your Itinerary:

Day One: Today we are going to live through our eyes. Spend the entire day looking. It's as simple as that. Allow your brain to take a break, it doesn't need to describe or tell you what you are looking at. Just use your eyes to see everything you can see today. Go about your daily tasks as usual while using your eyes as much as you get the opportunity to. Experience the colours in your world, the textures, shapes and architecture; see the trees and sky and nature. Look at your loved ones as though for the first time. If your mind starts thinking about what you're looking at, just allow the thoughts to pass on by and bring your attention back to seeing with your eyes.

At the end of the day, spend a few moments reflecting about your adventure of looking with your eyes. Use your feelings to experience the emotions about today's event. Get a good night sleep to prepare for tomorrow's journey!

Day Two: This is the day we are going to listen. There is no need to think about what you hear, simply allow your ears to fully live their experience of listening. You can even find silence has a sound to it if you pay enough attention. Listen to the sound of your breath and any sound at all that's close or far away from you. Listen for tones, volume levels, pitch. Any sound at all is worthy of your ears today.

Spend your evening reflection time to notice how your listening experiences felt throughout the day.

Day Three: Today we are going to physically feel, everything. Feel the way you sit, stand, walk, and recline. Feel how the clothes feel against your body and how the air feels on your skin. Touch things. Feel textures and comfortable temperatures. Allow your body to stretch out and take up space. Feel how your body feels in that space. Your mind does not have to tell you what you are feeling; your body can feel everything all by itself.

During your evening reflection time, feel with your emotions how it feels to feel with your body. Now let that body get some good rest. Tomorrow is another busy day!

Day Four: This is the day we are going to breathe. Of course we have to breathe to survive. But today we are going to pay attention to this. As we breathe, we are going to allow our noses to smell. Breathe softly through your nose today, allow the air to fill into your stomach area and then

into your lungs and exhale naturally. As you are doing this, notice the aroma around you, in the air, in the clothes you're wearing, yours or others perfume, whatever is around you that has an aroma, let your nose notice it. Again, there is no thought necessary for this, just breath and smell as your primary activity today.

Please remember to spend some time reflecting on this adventure at the end of your day. Oh, and keep breathing, I've heard it's good for you!

Day Five: Today is about tasting. If you normally read or watch TV, or work while you eat, please reschedule that today. Every time you eat today, do nothing else other than taste what you are putting into your mouth and body. Really take your time chewing each bite and tasting the flavours of the foods and liquids you choose to eat and drink. Allow your taste buds to fully experience this event without your mind telling you what it is that you're mouth is busy tasting for you.

Tonight reflect on the adventure of fully tasting the food you ate. If your mind wants to wander, allow it to consider the full experience of what eating is in your life.

Day Six: Today is the final day of our excursion. It's going to be an adventurous one! Today is about paying attention to everything we have worked on all week. It might take a lot of practice to pay attention to seeing, hearing, feeling, and tasting all at the same time. That's okay; take as much time as you need to fully incorporate that into your life. Today, just try it out. Breathe all day, then look and listen. Touch what you are looking at and feel it, mix everything all together and see how it goes for you. Remember, your mind still doesn't need to tell you how to do any of these things, or to tell you what you are doing. Let the thoughts flow by as they may without dwelling on them. Always bring your attention back to seeing, hearing, feeling, and tasting.

For tonight's reflection feel gratitude for the senses that allow you to fully experience your life.

Day Seven: I hope you had some good fun and good learning during this journey with me. This is the last day I will ask you to do anything. From now on the rest is up to you. Today, I would like for you to reflect on how the past six days have gone for you. Are you feeling that you've been able to experience old things in brand new ways? How has your stress level been while you stayed busy using your senses? Have you noticed you can think more clearly about the things you want to think about, and spend less time on all the mental chit chat that distracts you from staying aware of your senses?

Come back to your senses with me anytime you need to lose your mind! I'm always an email away and would love to talk with you. You are welcome to email with questions about applying these tools to your unique lifestyle, or if you need more insight into our daily adventures.

I do want to make special mention to people who may not have all of their physical senses. It's important to me that no one gets left out of our journey. On the days we are working on anything you may not have use of, substitute that as you normally do. Example; if you are blind, use your sixth sense and your hands to see things for you on the day we are using our eyes.

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Guilt

From Insight Meditation

The practice of freedom

By Joseph Goldstein

A close colleague of unworthiness, walking hand in hand with it through our heart and mind is guilt. This mind state or emotion often intrudes into situations where we may have done or said unskillful things that caused suffering to ourselves or to others.

It is important to know that we actually have a choice about how we treat such situations. The customary response is to condemn ourselves, to have that feeling of "I'm so bad." But this state of harsh self-judgement is really a trick of the ego. The mind or the ego tricks us into solidifying a sense of sense of self, of "I", in a negative judgement.

This sense of self is not a solid, continuous structure in the mind that we have to get rid of. We create the sense of self anew in each moment when we are not mindful, when, when we are identifying with whatever is happening. So in every moment of awareness, wisdom frees us from the contraction of self, because ego delusion is as discontinuous and impermanent as everything else. The wisdom of mindfulness and the delusion of selfhood cannot coexist at the same time; the one drives the other.

As guilt arises in our mind, it is fed when we identify with it and make it "self," when we fail to notice it with awareness. So when guilt comes, make that the object of your awareness. Note it. In the moment of recognition, acceptance, and non-identification this is difficult, and it may take some time to master you can see what a flimsy paper tiger this fierce mental force really is. Guilt arises, you note it, and in the moment of noting, when you no longer identify with it, it falls away. In contrast to guilt there is another possible response to our unskillful actions. We might think of this response as wise remorse. We acknowledge and accept that we have done something unskillful, we understand its unwholesomeness, we see it bears certain fruits, and with wisdom we let our acknowledgement be the force for restraining such actions in the future.

Thus we avoid that slippery, inverse trick of aggrandizing ego through negative stress on self. We feel wise remorse in a mental environment of forgiveness, because forgiveness recognizes the truth of change; what happened in the past does not have to happen in the future. There is no forgiveness in guilt because we have congealed the sense of self into a kind of unchanging stasis through negative self-judgement; according to guilt, "once bad, always bad."

One time when I was in retreat, guilt came up very strongly and unpleasant about a particular thing I had done. It came so incessantly that I drew closer to it, very interested in understanding how I was so enmeshed in it: "Okay, what's going on here? What is this? What is this suffering about? Finally I saw that the guilt I felt was really just a ruse of the ego, which had tricked me into creating a sense of "I."

Here is the work of Mara. Mara in Buddhism is the symbolic personification of ignorance and delusion all those thoughts and impulses that try to draw us away from liberation. When the Buddha-to-be was making his last, great effort for enlightenment, it was Mara who attacked him under the Bodhi Tree and tried to break his concentration.

When I recognized that guilt is the work of Mara, I developed a new technique of practice I call wagging the finger at Mara. Just as the Buddha described in discourses how he would exclaim, "Mara, I see you," I wagged my mental finger at Mara: "I see you!" By that wag of the finger, the identification and deception disappeared, and the guilt I had been experiencing quickly dissolved.

Then arose the feeling of genuine and wise remorse. Wise remorse freed me from being stuck, mired in the sense of "I'm so bad." Through it I understood that the particular action that had gripped my memory was unskillful, that I could make the effort not to do it again, and that I could move on.

Try this wagging-the finger meditation next time guilt visits your heart. "Oh, you should feel bad about this. You did something really bad, and you are really bad!" Do you accept that approach? Do you take it? Do you claim it as "I"? If you do, Mara has won. But if you see the trick and wag your finger "Mara, I see you! then thoughts of guilt may come, but you do not empower them with identification.

And then there is room for more genuine feelings of remorse. You did something unskillful. You did not deny it. You open to it. You see it. You learn from it. And then with a sense of forgiveness, you understand that it was impermanent. In such a moment you may feel that crucial mental shift from a place of tight ego involvement to one of great spaciousness, and you may delight in the fact that indeed you have a choice.

Harmlessness

From The Psyche and Psychism

By Torkom Saraydarian

The state of harmlessness can be reached when we purify our physical, emotional and mental vehicles and enter into awareness of intuition. Purification of the personality vehicles means:

1. To develop them to their perfection as mechanisms.
2. To integrate them so that they work well not only individually, but also in-group formation.
3. To pay their karmic debts.
4. To tune them in with the Inner Lord.

These four steps must be carried forward to a relatively high stage before conscious harmlessness is achieved. Let us take the first one:

1. The physical, emotional and mental bodies must be cultivated, developed and unfolded, so that each with its own centres become a sensitive instrument for reception, assimilation and expression of energies. It is necessary because any defect in this individual instrument can distort and misuse energies or impressions coming from various sources and unconsciously cause harm to others and to the divine Plan.
2. These three vehicles namely the physical, emotional and mental bodies - must also be integrated with each other to such a degree that they do not distort each other's functions, speed or activity. For example, if one wheel in a watch is trying to turn 200 revolutions per minute and another one is resisting or jumping, you have chaos and inaccuracy. So the mechanisms rendering service other than that of their individual sphere must be aligned to such a degree that the group purpose is fulfilled, and the needs of the individual vehicles are met. Harm can be caused even if these vehicles individually are in good condition but do not have good integration with each other.
3. To pay their karmic debts. In esoteric literature we read that each vehicle is the body of an entity. For example, we have a physical entity, an emotional entity and a mental entity. They each have their karma, resulting from their individual actions and also from their misuse by the man. Purification means clearing their karma by consciously handling in such a way that they do not produce any more negative karma, but only positive karma. Increasing positive karma and not increasing negative karma eventually clears karma. Then you have a fine instrument, which can be used in the hands of the evolving human soul to further the Plan on earth.
4. To be attuned to the Inner Lord. Unless these bodies (physical, emotional and mental) are connected with the powerhouse of the Inner Lord, they generally have a tendency to follow the path of least resistance, or the involutory path to separatism, to degeneration, to materialism and associated crimes. Actually, an integrated personality is more dangerous and has a greater possibility of being harmful than a non-integrated personality. When the personality is united the man is in crises because the personality is tempted to reject the will of the Inner Lord and proclaim its independence. Such a man is divided within himself. This is the most harmful state of a man, when the personality forcibly works for its own ends, without consulting the Inner Guide. Very destructive criminals were in this stage when they committed their crimes.

Harmlessness makes us:

1. Strive, dare and feel the divine Plan, to bring out the Beauty, Goodness and Truth which is inherent in us.

2. Not impede or block the evolutionary processes of other life forms.
3. Help and reach the souls of living forms, and call them to the service of the Plan.

These are the hardest lessons that man is going to learn on the path of his evolution: how to live a life which will not cause harm to any living forms and at the same time strive to fulfil the Plan, to fulfil the divine will, despite the resistance that can be created because of our speed in service and evolution. This is the situation that must be resolved by the striving one. A man can be harmful: through his thoughts: through his emotions: through his words: through his actions.

1. One can be harmful if the thoughts are motivated by selfishness, separatism, and charged by the will to impose, dominate and block. Thought inspired by hatred, by greed, by anger usually create a degenerative effect on the substance of the aura. Decomposition of the aura is a fact, and a decomposed aura carries many germs and eventually leads the man into Physical, mental and moral failures.

When a person thinks, he creates thought forms, and if these thought forms are not charged by Beauty, Goodness and Truth, they hurt people and increase the originator's karma. That is why man must be so careful not to hurt, mislead and pollute people with his base thoughts.

2. Our feelings and emotions are harmless if they are charged with joy, love, kindness, respect and appreciation. All negative emotions are harmful because they create depression, separatism, anger, fear or apathy. Harmful emotions are like arrows, which penetrate into the spheres of other persons and produce poison there or paralyse the emotional mechanisms of others. Harmful emotions generally carry with them a destructive mental force or thought form. Harmful emotions mixed with harmful thoughts accumulate within rooms, or attach themselves to the object used by the subject. Every harmful thought and emotion, by the law of frequency, accumulates in the space and contributes to the harmful strata over the planet. It is from such accumulation that criminals receive their inspirations. It is also true that these strata prevent many benevolent rays coming from the space or breaking their voltage considerably.

Harmless provides opportunity to come in contact with creative forces in nature.

3. Harmful words or speech create cleavages and foster separatism, destruction and confusion. Harmful speech creates negative polarization and personality reactions. Harmful speech burns the etheric body and the etheric webs around the pineal gland, the pituitary body and the carotid gland. Harmful speech is the greatest enemy to the creative thread. When harmful speech is ensouled by evil thoughts and negative emotions, the person is in grave danger of burning his protective net around his body and allowing dark forces to obsess or possess him.

4. Harmful actions are usually accompanied by harmful thoughts, negative emotions and dishonest speech. Harmful actions are efforts to violate the freedom and rights of other people, to deprive them of the joys of life, to prevent people from reaching greater levels of unfoldment and success, to use others for one's own needs. Harmful actions done to others are like seeds of weeds planted in our own garden. Days or years later each seed will sprout and bring us multiplied effects of our harmful deeds. Harmlessness is the compass of those who are preparing themselves to enter into greater light. On the vast ocean of life only the compass of harmlessness will lead us to our destination. Harmlessness puts your life in line with the law of love, and none of your expressions create any friction with the law of love. Every time we create karma by acting against love, we develop fear. Thus a life of love annihilates fear. Harmlessness is love in action. Harmlessness evokes spiritual response in others, and the laws of nature support you. Harmlessness is a state of consciousness in which you do not plan or think about violating the expression of life, or hindering

its unfoldment and progress toward Goodness, Beauty and Truth in any form.

The Higher Order

By Evelyn M. Holt

"There is a higher order towards which we may climb with the help of the power above".

"Birth is a mystery, and death is a mystery, and in the midst lies the tableland of life, and its struggles and performances." So wrote the son of Lord Alfred Tennyson in reference to his father's famous poem, *Idylls of the King*. The meaning of this epic goes far deeper into life than the yesterdays of any particular nation, or the fanciful romances and adventures of crusading knights. It is not the history of one man and his followers, or of one generation, but of a whole cycle of generations. Edwin Markham once called poetry "the revelation of the strange in the familiar, of the eternal in the transitory, the impassioned cry of the heart in the presence of the wonders of life." Tennyson's last idyll, *The Passing of Arthur*, seems clearly to reveal spiritual initiation, for it poetically describes the final experience of the human soul in its conscious ascent towards fulfilment. The principle characters are the ageing King Arthur, whose valiant knights of the Round Table had one driven many heathen hosts from the kingdom, and who well represent the soul-infused initiating disciple; and his faithful knight, Sir Bedivere, symbolic of the active mind, organ of illumination. It is he, "the first and latest left of all the knights" who recounts the final scenes of their long journey where succeeding steps bring loneliness, detachment, isolated unity, and purification. The climaxing point of this expansion of consciousness will bring the King to greater revelations of light, and his knight will become a subjective Voice "among new faces and other minds," the group new man. It is only in group formation, we are told, that the higher energies can be tapped and used in service.

As the story opens we find King Arthur weary and disillusioned from his long seeking for the good in life. "In his ways with men I find him not," he complains. "Why is all around us here if some lesser god had made the world, but had not force to shape it as he would, 'till the High God behold it from beyond, and enter it, and make it beautiful?'" In the workings of nature he had been able to recognise the omnipresence of God. "I found him in the shining of the stars; I mark'd him in the shining of the stars; I mark'd him in the flowering of his fields." "Perhaps," he reasons, "the world is truly fair, only men are blind to see. They know not the end from the beginning." As the fires of divine love descend, the King finds that even the loves and desires of his integrated personality life have been destroyed. ". . . and all whereon I learned in wife and friend is traitor to my peace, and all my realm reels back into the beast, and is no more." In an agony of despair he cries: "My God, thou hast forgotten me in death." Yet at the same time he is urged forward by a growing sense of Divinity, and affirms, "Nay, God, my Christ, I pass, but shall not die."

Then comes a dream in which King Arthur sees the wandering ghost of Gawain, a knight long dead. He represents the desires of the past whose "hollow forms" still float about the astral world. It is interesting to note that in astrological lore *Ursa Major*, constellation of the Great bear, from which a sevenfold stream of energy is said to pass via *Shamballa* to our earth and produce transformation, is often called King Arthur's "wain" or wagon. Also that the name Arthur is derived from "arth" meaning bear, and "uthyr" meaning wonderful. Gawain gives Arthur the assurance that his fate will not be ever to wander, but that he, as King, will find eventual peace.

Sir Bedivere then urges Arthur not to dwell on the past. He must attain divine indifference and "let pass whatever will." This means a changing in his point of view toward the aggregate of form encountered in life, for soon he will have to battle the greatest of his enemies, Modred. Modred is the embodiment of all the foes within himself which must now be conquered. To do this Arthur must develop a fiery aspiration and centre his consciousness high in the head so that the Solar Lord, the Real Man, can impose new rhythms and response habits on all his lower nature. "Cling to all high places like a golden cloud forever, and rise, go forth and conquer as of old," is Sir Bedivere's

challenge.

The Hardest Fight.

Knowing it to be his hardest fight, pitted against his very self, the King exerted himself to the utmost. He "moves his host by night, and ever pushes Modred, league by league back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse." Here, in a series of tests on the astral plane, is fought the "last dim weird battle of the West." In the enveloping mists where "fragments of forgotten people dwell" Arthur struggles with the karmic forms of his own making. Some are good, some bad, and he often cannot tell friend from foe. At twilight this preliminary battle ends, and a cold wind from the North blows the mists aside. The tide rises, and the King, now the impersonal observer, looks across the quiet field. There is no life, only dead faces and broken forms. He realises that all he had built up is gone, and he doubts his kingship over anything. However, Sir Bedivere reminds him that "even the dead have kings," and salutes him still as "my King." In the Rays and the Initiations we are told that one of the helps in reaching high polarisation is the reiterated appreciation of the words "I am Self, the Self am I." As the next phase of the battle, the meeting with the Dweller on the Threshold ensues, we note that Arthur rushes to attack Modred shouting "King am I, whatsoever be their cry, and one last act of kingship shalt thou see, yet 'ere I pass." Raising Excalibur, the many jewelled sword of truth which had won him many victories, the King slays Modred. In so doing his own head centre is rent, separating the veil between the inner and outer worlds, and weakening him to the point of death.

Sir Bedivere then bears the King to a ruined chapel near the field. Its broken cross is a fit sign of victory over death. This shrine lies "on a dark strait of barren land," bounded on one side by the ocean, on the other by a great water. The moon is full. Now is a time of heightened consciousness, and heart and mind can become closely aligned with the soul. When the accepting disciple becomes the pledged disciple, it is said, he slips out of a physical plane concentration and of identification with the forms of the three, and finds himself at the midway place between the world of outer affairs and the inner world bereft and alone. Sorrowfully, Arthur tells Bedivere: "The sequel of today unsolders all the goodliest fellowship of famous knights whereof this world holds record . . . I think that we shall nevermore, at any future time delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds, walking about gardens and the halls of Camelot, as in the days that were." He has broken with the past, and is breaking loose from the mass consciousness to which he has been accustomed, but has not yet found his way into the group where he will function. Therefore, he says in despair: "I perish by the people which I made." This experience is a difficult but necessary one. The tangible world must be suspended by the intangible world of values, involving a new sense of proportion, a new range of values, and new responsibilities.

Now that this cycle has ended, and form has been revealed as the "heresy of separateness," a final sacrifice must be made before wholeness can be achieved. The mystic Excalibur must be returned to the source from which it came, for truth seen by man is but a part, and relative to, a greater truth. Sir Bedivere is commanded by King Arthur to carry this weapon of prideful power to the lake, and "fling it far into the middle mere." This well could typify the mental plane, the middle place where the Angel (the soul) is met and known, and the three aspects of the Triad, plus the ego and the lower mind are blended and fused. At its border Sir Bedivere stops to admire the sword's beauty and strength, then feeling it too valuable to lose, he hides it among the dry reeds at the water's edge. The King, now identified with the highest light, knows from his knight's report that the act has not been carried out, so sends him forth again. This time Sir Bedivere allows his own selfish thoughts to convince him that the King himself is not capable of straight thinking. Again he hides the sword, and returns to Arthur saying that only the sound of rippling water can be heard at the lake. Harmony through conflict is the dominant ray of the fourth creative Hierarchy, and livingness can only be gained by supreme sacrifice, so this time the King sends his knight forth on pain of death.

Mission Accomplished

The third time the reluctant Sir Bedivere closes his eyes to the illusionary beauty of the blade, and the strongly wields and throws it. It flies in a rainbow arc of colour. But, ere it dips the surface, projected from the other side, rises an arm clothed in white which brandishes it three times in triadal strength and draws it into the deep waters of understanding. The King now knows the mission is accomplished, and the soul is no longer needed as a mediating body. The illumined mind, driven by higher power, bears the form of the King on his shoulders to where a barge of solemn splendour awaits its coming. Three queens with crowns of gold receive him, and minister to his wounds as they remove the armoured helmet from his head. In his last words to Bedivere the King affirms the fact that, "the old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world." Comforted by the assurance that new and better forms must ever succeed the outworn ones, and realising that by invocation contact with the soul can be maintained, for "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of," Faithful Sir Bedivere takes leave of his Lord. When the barge that bears the King has slowly moved into the distance, a great silence falls. Then Bedivere climbs to the top of the iron crag and hears faint, echoing sounds from afar "as if some fair city were one voice around a king returning from the wars." He climbs still higher, and standing poised and balanced on mental and etheric levels, and "straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand" he projects the light of the antahkarana from centre to periphery. He then "sees or thinks he sees the speck that bears the King, down that long water opening on the deep somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go from less to less, and vanish into light." Thus the consciousness of man which has been centred to so long on the notself, or material world, becomes that of the self, the spiritual man, and passes from the darkness into light, from the unreal to the real, from death to immortality. "Then the new sun rose, bringing the new year."

Trusting the Higher Self

By Sam Stevens

As very few people achieve enlightenment in one lifetime, as the both the subconscious mind, which has a drive to destroy and the conscious mind are very resistant to suggestions from the Higher Self. This is because messages from the Higher Self mostly manifest as gut feelings and hunches and the "orders" often are often perceived by the conscious mind to be irrational or impossible to attain. However, if you live by the belief that we live in a universe where there is a supply for every demand than nothing in theory nothing is impossible to attain. When you find yourself in a hopeless situation I find repeating the mantra "With God all things are possible. Spirit is never too late!"

The conscious mind is very absorbed with the self. It is the self that is hugely responsible for creating blocks to prosperity.

There are many blocks to prosperity that are created by the personality. The personality's resistance to the calls of the Higher Self can be represented by a few phrases:

"I am not good enough." This is common in a personality that suffers from low self-esteem and a lack of confidence. In this case, there is an inner critic present, probably from childhood that constantly insists that the individual is paid what they are worth -- next to nothing.

"What if I fail?" This is a terrible block as it persuades the subconscious mind to attach fear to success. This kind of personality needs approval from others and is constantly weaving something that backfires into the best of plans. This kind of person is always jumping for the brass ring, and missing it by half a centimeter.

"There is not enough time." Your Higher Self loves clichés such as "the universe is unfolding as it should." But the personality is impatient. This kind of person feels overwhelmed and doesn't put plans in effect because they don't have the ability to create the time to plan their projects and goals. These kinds of individuals often encounter a prosperity block that takes the form of a treadmill - living paycheck to paycheck.

Another common block to prosperity has to do with habit. Many people have been raised to feel guilty if they supersede the success of their family and friends. For many, it is somehow safer and more secure to stay at a certain level of income rather than try and get rich. Fear and guilt prevent these individuals from realizing their full potential, as subconsciously they believe that success will lead to loneliness.

Removing prosperity blocks is not easy and usually requires a long talk between your Higher Self and your personality. You can do this in a meditation by visualizing your perfect you (your Higher Self) having a conversation with your personality. Let your personality express its fears and see what your Higher Self has to say about the matter. This is one way to create a larger self-awareness as well as recognize chronic habits and patterns that may be depriving of you of money.

Many of us don't trust our higher selves because we often think we have been trusting our higher selves all along and it is exactly those hunches and gut intuitions that have led us to our bad financial situation in the first place.

Usually this perception is a delusion as primal desires and attachments from the subconscious drive the conscious mind. The subconscious mind is greedy, primal and loves to destroy.

Also often what most of us perceive, as hunches are actually compulsions and emotions coloring our judgment. There is no anxiety attached to a true message from the Higher Self. Many of us actually have gut instincts that have been damaged by events from childhood so we often hear "faux" calls to action.

The best way to make financial choices and decisions is with a mind that is clear of all emotions. Messages from the Higher Self are not usually attached to any kind of "heady", compulsive or emotional feeling. In fact, a feeling of elation might be a warning that your judgment is off the mark and maybe the product of disturbed brain chemistry.

When you are in dire straits financially and at an absolute loss as to what to you might want to try a sincere prayer. As Lisa Simpson once said "Prayer is the last refuge of rascals and scoundrels."

The most common way to release a burden is to cast it up to God or a higher power. Some people also refer to this as "giving it to the universe." The prayer usually is worded something like this;

"Please God, this is too much for me. Whether I am naughty or nice, I am still your child and I ask to be taken care of. Please help me to resolve this situation and if it can't be resolved than help me to accept it. If there is loss, than please have this loss replaced by its equivalent or better. Amen."

You also might want to try Elizabeth Clare Prophet's Violet Flame ritual. According to this great visionary and metaphysician's spiritual practice, the violet flame is a metaphor for the ability of the Higher Self to wipe out or erase problems. It is a way of casting the burden of your problems for the universe to take care of. I usually light a violet candle and picture all of my burdens, anxieties and resentments being transformed into positive energy by the power of the flame. This lovely ritual greatly relieves strength and appears to aid one in bypassing the personality so that you can access the inspiration and wisdom of the Higher Self. Its most therapeutic aspect is its intention to practice transmutation: all negative energy is transformed into positive manifestations aided by the power of the Divine Light.

About The Author

Sam Steven's metaphysical articles have been published in many high-standing newspapers and she has published several books. You can meet Sam Stevens at <http://www.psychicrealm.com> where she works as a professional psychic. You can also read more of her articles at <http://www.newagenotebook.com> where she is the staff writer. Currently she is studying technology's impact on the metaphysics.

Honesty as a Spiritual Practice

By Carroll Boone

"What I want most in this relationship is honesty." "I believe in being honest." "I want to be honest with you." "You can trust me to tell the truth."

I have heard these or similar words most often when someone wants to tell me what he or she doesn't like about me. For example, a friend once said to me, "I must be honest with you. Your smile bothers me." Another honest person I know said to her partner, "To be frank, I think you are a terrible cook, even though you try really hard."

This kind of communication is sometimes called "brutal" honesty. Some people value it and consider it an advanced form of communication and even an advanced form of relationship building!

However, I call this kind of honesty "judgmental honesty" to distinguish it from a kind of honesty I prefer and choose as a spiritual practice: "heart honesty." I see "judgmental honesty" as a form of expression that separates me from my spiritual self (the self that sees the good/God in everyone and everything) and keeps me from connecting with my spiritual self and the spirituality in others. Even when I am praising or complimenting — a form of judgmental honesty that seems innocent and even positive — I express a belief in duality: good or bad, right or wrong.

On the other hand, heart honesty is a spiritual practice of connecting with compassion and loving-kindness. If I am living this spiritual practice of "heart honesty," I do not tell you what I think is wrong with you. Instead, I share what is true for me, leaving out words that judge, shame, blame, or criticize. The practice of leaving out judgment is hard, and takes commitment, persistence, and patience. As it gets easier, it also gives the gift of time — more time for heart honesty.

Heart honesty is the practice of being self-authentic. It starts with sharing my feelings and the needs underlying my feelings, without reference to you or your behavior as the cause of my feelings. This is different from the "active listening" method I once learned that taught me to say "I feel angry (or unhappy or upset) when (or because) you did (or did not) do (or say) something." Active listening is a very common and well-accepted kind of judgmental honesty. Heart honesty is based on a more current communication model, "nonviolent communication," developed by Marshall Rosenberg.

Using the practice of heart honesty, I share any request as a preference or a possibility and not as a demand. I know that my request is really a demand when I react with anger or upset to a "no" response. I do have judgments, and I do share them — sparingly, consciously, and responsibly — using words that show that they are mine: I preface my judgments with "owning" words such as "I believe," "I think," "I prefer," "I like," "I want," "I need."

I practice noticing when I am thinking or speaking "judgmental honesty" so that I can choose to shift to "heart honesty." This is not easy. If you want to shift from judgmental honesty to heart honesty, here are some examples to help you get started:

Instead of "Your hat is beautiful," try "I really like the color of your hat."

Instead of "Stop shouting at me," try "I think your voice is loud, and it scares me. Would you be willing to lower it?" Pause and listen.

Instead of "You never tell me what you think," try "I would like to hear what you think. Would you be willing to tell me?" Pause and listen.

Instead of "Why are you always late?" try "I like to be on time. I notice that you are often late. Would you be willing to talk so we could come up with a way that meets both of our needs around time?" Pause and listen.

Instead of "Of course there is a God," try "I believe that there is a God. I would like to hear about your belief. Would you be willing to tell me?" Pause and listen.

Instead of "You never take me seriously," try "I want to be sure that you hear me. Would you be willing to wait until I finish before you start talking?" Pause and listen.

Although using different words helps me shift from judgmental to heart honesty, I believe that my clear and constant intention is even more important. In fact, any words I use will sound judgmental if I use them while I am thinking "right/wrong" or "good/bad" when I am trying to get you to see or do it my way.

How do I keep my heart honesty intention clear and sharp in my mind? Every morning in the interim moment between sleeping and waking, and also any time during the day when I notice myself wanting to be "right" or "judgmentally honest," I affirm or confirm my intention by saying something like this to myself:

I am committed to heart honesty as a spiritual practice of authenticity, so that my beliefs, thoughts, words, and actions come from the same place, the loving-kindness and compassion of my heart, rather than the judgment of my busy and well-trained mind. I choose this as a spiritual practice because I want to value, accept, and respect differences, including my own uniqueness. For me, this includes being 100% responsible for knowing and meeting my own needs, without judging, shaming, or blaming myself or anyone else.

At the same time, I am committed to meeting others' needs whenever it is not at my own expense. When I cannot meet their needs because to do so would be at my own expense, I am committed to saying so without judging, shaming, or blaming. When I notice myself judging, I will return to this statement of intention for guidance.

Coming back to my intention — the reason I am committed to heart honesty — helps to keep me from slipping into old and well-established habits of judgmental honesty. I notice that the clearer I am about my intention and the more I practice with patience and persistence, and without judging myself for judging, the more often my honesty comes from my heart and not my judgment. I strongly believe that honesty is an important spiritual practice, a vital complement to the spiritual practices of prayer, meditation, and study — but only when it is the honesty that comes from the heart.

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How to Awaken Love and Compassion

From The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying

By Sogyal Rinpoche

Before you can truly practice Tonglen, you have to be able to evoke compassion in yourself. That is harder than we often imagine, because the sources of our love and compassion are sometimes hidden from us, and we may have no ready access to them. Fortunately there are several special techniques that the Buddhist "training of the mind" in compassion has developed to help us evoke our own hidden love. Out of the enormous range of methods available, I have selected the following ones, and have ordered them in a particular way so as to be of the greatest possible use to people in the modern world.

1. Loving Kindness: Unsealing the Spring

When we believe that we don't have enough love in us, there is a method for discovering and invoking it. Go back in your mind and recreate, almost visualize, a love that someone gave you that really moved you, perhaps in your childhood. Traditionally you are taught to think of your mother and her lifelong devotion to you, but if you find that problematic, you could think of your grandmother or grandfather, or anyone who had been deeply kind to you in your life. Remember a particular instance when they really showed you love, and you felt their love vividly.

Now let that feeling arise in your heart, and infuse you with gratitude. As you do so, your love will go out naturally to that person who evoked it. You will remember then that even though you may not always feel that you have been loved enough, you were loved genuinely once. Knowing that now will make you feel again that you are, as that person made you feel then, worthy of love and really lovable.

Let your heart open now, and let love flow from it; then extend this love to all beings. Begin with love who are closest to you, then extend your love to friends and to acquaintances, then to neighbours, to strangers, then even to those whom you don't like or have difficulties with, even those whom you might consider as your "enemies," and finally to the whole universe. Let this love become more and more boundless. Equanimity is one of the four essential facets, with loving kindness, compassion, and joy, of what the teachings say form the entire aspiration of compassion. The inclusive, unbiased view of equanimity is really the starting point and the basis of the path of compassion.

You will find that this practice unseals a spring of love, and by that unsealing in you of your own loving kindness, you will find that it will inspire the birth of compassion. For as Maitreya said in one of the teachings he gave Asanga: "The water of compassion courses through the canal of loving kindness."

2. Compassion: Considering Yourself the Same as Others

One powerful way to evoke compassion, as I have described in the previous chapter, is to think of others as exactly the same as you. "After all," the Dalai Lama explains, "all human beings are the same made of human flesh, bones, and blood. We all want happiness and want to avoid suffering. Further, we have an equal right to be happy. In other words, it is important to realize our sameness as human beings."

Say, for example, you are having difficulties with a loved one, such as your mother or father, husband or wife, lover or friend. How helpful and revealing it can be to consider the other person not in his or her "role" of mother or father or husband, but simply as another "you," another human being, with the same feelings as you, the same desire for happiness, the same fear of suffering. Thinking of the person as a real person, exactly the same as you, will open your heart to him or her and give you more insight into how to help.

If you consider others just the same as yourself, it will help you to open up your relationships and give them a new and richer meaning. Imagine if societies and nations began to view each other in the same way; at last we would have the beginnings of a solid basis for peace on earth and the happy coexistence of all peoples.

3. Compassion: Exchanging Yourself for Others

When someone is suffering and you find yourself at a loss to know to help, put yourself unflinchingly in his or her place. Imagine as vividly as possible what you would be going through if you were suffering the same pain. Ask yourself: "how would I feel? How would I want my friends to treat me? What would I most want from them?"

When you exchange yourself for others in this way, you are directly transferring your cherishing from its usual object, yourself, to other beings. So exchanging yourself for others is a very powerful way of loosening the hold on you of the self-cherishing and the self-grasping of ego, and so of releasing the heart of your compassion.

4. Using a Friend to Generate Compassion

Another moving technique for arousing compassion for a person who is suffering is to imagine one of your dearest friends, or someone you really love, in that person's place. Imagine your brother or daughter or parent or best friend in the same kind of painful situation. Quite naturally your heart will open, and compassion will awaken in you: What more would you want than to free them from their torment? Now take this compassion released in your heart and transfer it to the person who needs your help: You will find that your help is inspired more naturally, and that you can direct it more easily.

People sometimes ask me: "If I do this, will the friend or relative whom I am imagining in pain come to some harm?" On the contrary, thinking about them with such love and compassion can only be of help to them, and will even bring about the healing of whatever suffering and pain they may have gone through in the past, may be going through now, or have yet to go through.

For the fact that they are the instrument of your arousing compassion, even if it is only for an instant, will bring them tremendous merit and benefit. Because they have been responsible, in part, for the opening of your heart, and for allowing you to help the sick or dying person with your compassion, then the merit from that action will naturally return to them.

You can mentally dedicate the merit of that action to your friend or relative who helped you to open your heart. And you can wish the person well, and pray that in the future he or she will be free of suffering. You will be grateful towards your friend, and your friend might feel inspired and grateful too, if you tell the person that he or she helped you to evoke your compassion.

So to ask, "Will my friend or relative I am imagining in place of the sick or dying person come to some harm?" shows that we have not really understood how powerful and miraculous the working of compassion is. It blesses and heals all those involved: the person who generates compassion, the person through whom that compassion is generated, and the person to whom that compassion is directed. As Portia says in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice:

The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: It is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes . . .

Compassion is the wish-fulfilling gem whose light of healing spreads in all directions. There is a very beautiful story that I love that illustrates this. Buddha once recounted one of his previous lives, before he became enlightened. A great emperor had three sons, and the Buddha had been the youngest, who was called Mahasattva. Mahasattva was by nature a loving and compassionate little

boy, and thought of all living things as his children.

One day the emperor and his court went to picnic in a forest, and the princess went off to play in the woods. After a while they came across a tigress who had given birth, and was so exhausted with hunger that she was on the point of eating her little cubs. Mahasattva asked his brothers: "What would the tigress need to eat now to revive her?"

"Only fresh meat or blood," they replied.

"Who could give his own flesh and blood to see that she is fed and save the lives of her and her cubs?" he asked.

"Who, indeed?" they replied.

Mahasattva was deeply moved by the plight of the tigress and her cubs, and started to think: "For so long I have been wandering uselessly through samsara, life after life, and because of my desire, anger, and ignorance, have done little to help other beings. Here at last is a great opportunity." The princes were walking back to join their family, when Mahasattva said: "You two go on ahead. I will catch you up later." Quietly he crept back to the tigress, went right up to her, and lay down on the ground in front of her, to offer himself to her as food. The tigress looked at him, but was so weak that she could not even open her mouth. So the prince found a sharp stick and cut a deep gash in his body; the blood flowed out, the tigress licked it, and grew strong enough to open her jaws and eat him.

Mahasattva had given his body to the tigress in order to save her cubs, and through the great merit of his compassion, he was reborn in a higher realm, and progressed towards his enlightenment and his rebirth as the Buddha. But it was not only himself he had helped through his action: The power of his compassion had also purified the tigress and her cubs of their karma, and even of any karmic debt they might have owed to him for saving their lives in the way he did. Because it was so strong, in fact, his compassionate act created a karmic link between them that was to continue far into the future. The tigress and her cubs, who received the flesh of Mahasattva's body, were reborn, it is said, as the Buddha's first five disciples, the very first to receive his teaching after his enlightenment. What a vision this story gives us of how vast and mysterious the power of compassion truly is!

5. How to Meditate on Compassion

yet, as I have said, evoking this power of compassion in us is not always easy. I find myself that the simplest ways are the best and the most direct. Every day, life gives us innumerable chances to open our hearts, if we can only take them. An old woman passes you with a sad and lonely face, swollen veins on her legs, and two heavy plastic bags full of shopping she can hardly carry; a shabbily-dressed old man shuffles in front of you in line at the post office; a boy on crutches looks harried and anxious as he tries to cross the street in the afternoon traffic; a dog lies bleeding to death on the road, a young girl sits alone, sobbing hysterically in the subway. Switch on a television, and there on the news perhaps is a mother in Beirut kneeling above the body of her murdered son; or an old grandmother in Moscow pointing to the soup that is her food for today, not knowing if she'll even have that tomorrow; or one of the AIDS children in Romania staring out at you with eyes drained of any living expression.

Anyone of these sights could open the eyes of your heart to the fact of vast suffering in the world. Let it. Don't waste the love and grief it arouses; in the moment you feel compassion welling up in you, don't brush it aside, don't shrug it off and try quickly to return to "normal" don't be afraid of your feeling or embarrassed by it, or allow yourself to be distracted from it or let it run aground in apathy. Be vulnerable: use that quick, bright uprush of compassion; focus on it, go deep into your heart and meditate on it, develop it, enhance, and deepen it. By doing this you will realize how blind you have been suffering, how the pain that you are experiencing or seeing now is only a tiny fraction of the pain of the world.

All beings, everywhere, suffer; let your heart go out to them all in spontaneous and immeasurable compassion, and direct the compassion, along with the blessing of all the Buddha's, to the alleviation of suffering everywhere.

Compassion is a far greater and nobler thing than pity. Pity has its roots in fear, and a sense of arrogance and condescension, sometimes even a smug feeling of "I'm glad it's not me." As Stephan Levine says: "When your fear touches someone's pain it becomes pity; when your love touches someone's pain, it becomes compassion." To train in compassion, then, is to know all beings are the same and suffer in similar ways, to honour all those who suffer, and to know you are neither separate from nor superior to anyone.

So your first response on seeing someone suffer becomes not mere pity, but deep compassion. You feel for that person respect and even gratitude, because you now know that whoever prompts you to develop compassion by their suffering is in fact giving you one of the greatest gifts of all, because they are helping you to develop that very quality you need most in your progress towards enlightenment.

Inducing Soul Control and The Urge to Creative Life

From Esoteric Psychology Vol II

By Alice A. Bailey

This realization brings us to the consideration in a little more detail of our fourth point, which is the urge to creative life through the divine use of the imagination. As we have seen, it is necessary for humanity to recognize that there is a world of meaning behind the world of appearances, of form - behind what has been called the "world of seeming." It is the revelation of this world of inner meaning that lies immediately ahead of the race. Hitherto we have - as a race - been occupied with the symbol and not with that for which it stands, and of which it is the outer appearance. But we have today largely exhausted our interest in the tangible symbol, and are searching - again as a race - for that which the outer world of appearance is intended to express.

Much is heard today of the New Age, of the coming revelation, of the imminent leap forward into an intuitive recognition of that which has hitherto been only dimly sensed by the mystics, the seer, the inspired poet, the intuitive scientist and the occult investigator who is not too preoccupied with the technicalities and the academic activities of the lower mind. But one thing is oft forgotten in the great expectancy. There is no need for too great an upward straining or too intense an outward looking, to use terms which the usual limited point of view can grasp. That which is to be revealed lies all around us, and within us. It is the significance of all that is embodied in form, the meaning behind the appearance, the reality veiled by the symbol, the truth expressed in substance.

Only two things will enable man to penetrate into this inner realm of causes and of revelation.

These are:

First, the constant effort, based on a subjective impulse, to create those forms which will express some sensed truth; for thereby and through this effort, the emphasis is constantly shifted from the outer world of seeming to the inner side of phenomena. By this means, a focusing of consciousness is produced which eventually becomes stable and withdrawn from its present intense exteriorisation. An initiate is essentially one whose sense of awareness is occupied with subjective contacts and impacts and is not predominantly preoccupied with the world of outer sense perceptions. This cultivated interest in the inner world of meaning will produce not only a pronounced effect upon the spiritual seeker himself but will eventually bring about the emphasis, recognized in the brain consciousness of the race, that the world of meaning is the sole world of reality for humanity. This realization will, in its turn, bring about two subsequent effects:

1. A close adaptation of the form to the significant factors which have brought it into being on the outer plane.
2. The production of a truer beauty in the world and, therefore, a closer approximation in the world of created forms to the inner emerging truth. It might be said that divinity is veiled and hidden in the multiplicity of forms with their infinite detail, and that in the simplicity of forms which eventually will be seen, we shall arrive at a newer beauty, a greater sense of truth and at the revelation of God's meaning and purpose in all that He has accomplished from age to age.

Secondly, the constant effort to render oneself sensitive to the world of significant realities and to produce, therefore, those forms on the outer plane which will run true to the hidden impulse. This is brought about by the cultivation of the creative imagination. As yet, humanity knows little about this faculty, latent in all men. A flash of light breaks through to the aspiring mind; a sense of unveiled splendour for a moment sweeps through the aspirant, tensed for revelation; a sudden realization of a colour, a beauty, a wisdom and a glory beyond words breaks out before the attuned consciousness of the artist, in a high moment of applied attention, and life is then seen for a second as it essentially is. But the vision is gone and the fervour departs and the beauty fades out. The man is left with a sense of bereavement, of loss, and yet with a certainty of knowledge and a desire to

express that which he has contacted, such as he has never experienced before. He must recover that which he has seen; he must discover it to those who have not had his secret moment of revelation; he must express it in some form, and reveal to others the realized significance behind the phenomenal appearance. How can he do this? How can he recover that which he has once had and which seems to have disappeared, and to have retired out of his field of consciousness? He must realize that that which he has seen and touched is still there and embodies reality; that it is he who has withdrawn and not the vision. The pain in all moments of intensity must be undergone and lived again and again until the mechanism of contact is accustomed to the heightened vibration and can not only sense and touch, but can hold and contact at will this hidden world of beauty.

The cultivation of this power to enter, hold and transmit is dependent upon three things:

1. A willingness to bear the pain of revelation.
2. The power to hold on to the high point of consciousness at which the revelation comes.
3. The focusing of the faculty of the imagination upon the revelation, or upon as much of it as the brain consciousness can bring through into the lighted area of external knowledge. It is the imagination or the picture-making faculty which links the mind and brain together and thus produces the exteriorisation of the veiled splendour.

If the creative artist will ponder upon these three requirements - endurance, meditation, and imagination - he will develop in himself the power to respond to this fourth rule of soul control, and will know the soul eventually as the secret of persistence, the revealer of the rewards of contemplation and the creator of all forms upon the physical plane.

This use of the creative imagination and the fruits of its endeavour will work out into the many fields of human art according to the ray of the creative artist. We must not forget that the artist is found on all rays; there is no particular ray which produces more artists than another. The form will apparently take spontaneous expression when the inner life of the artist is regulated, producing the outer organization of his life forms. True creative art is a soul function; the primary task, therefore, of the artist is alignment, meditation and the focusing of his attention upon the world of meaning. This is followed by the attempt to express divine ideas in adequate forms, according to the innate capacity and the ray tendencies of the artist in any field which he may choose and which is for him the best medium for his endeavour. It is paralleled by the effort, constantly made upon the physical plane, to equip, instruct, and train the mechanism of brain and hand and voice through which the inspiration must flow, so that there may be right expression and a correct externalisation of the inner reality.

The discipline involved is great and it is here that many artists fail. Their failure is based on various things - on a fear that the use of the mind will cripple endeavour, and that spontaneous creative art is, and must be primarily emotional and, intuitive, and must not be crippled and handicapped by too great an attention to mental training. It is based on inertia which finds creative work the line of least resistance and which seeks not to understand the way in which the inspiration comes, or how the externalisation of the vision becomes possible, or the technique of the inner activities, but simply follows an impulse. Again it indicates an uneven, unbalanced development which results from the fact that, through specialization or focused intense interest over a period of lives, there comes a capacity to make a soul contact along one line of endeavour, but not the capacity to be in contact with the soul. This is facilitated by the fact that the artist for many lives comes under the influence of one particular personality ray. Hence the occult paradox stated above, which warrants the attention of artists. Another factor upon which failure is often based is the supreme conceit and ambition of many artists. There is the ability to excel in some field and, in that one particular, to

evidence greater capacity than the average man. But there is not the ability to live as a soul and the vaunted excellence is only in one direction. There is frequently no life discipline or self-control but instead there are flights of genius, stupendous achievement in the chosen line of art, and a life lived in contradiction to the divinity expressed through the artistic achievement. The understanding of the significance and technique of genius is one of the tasks of the new psychology. Genius is ever the expression of the soul in some creative activity, thus revealing the world of meaning, of divinity, and hidden beauty which the phenomenal world usually veils but will some day indicate in truth.

Indifference

By Anna Ernst

When soul forces pour into the physical bodies of the individual or of the group, there is first a conflict which destroys all that is a hindrance to God's Purpose, and then a stimulation of that which is divine in the form nature, leading to the transmutation of the forms.

Divine indifference affects the groups of disciples dedicated to service to humanity. It involves recognition of these basic facts:

There is a divine plan for humanity as a whole, whose working out is inevitable; nothing can stop it. This Plan is implemented by cosmic energies working through the rays. As the new Aquarian age is being ushered in there is apparent a world of conflict which affects all forms on the planet, and is destined to destroy those forms not capable of dealing with them. As happens in the case of the individual when soul force pours into his bodies, there is conflict, resulting in the ills of mankind; it also results in stimulation of that which is divine in the form nature, leading eventually to the transmutation of the forms.

Shamballa energy is now streaming into humanity, and the contact is producing a conflagration destined to burn away and purify all that man has erected in his civilisations and cultures, which is out of context with divine purpose and will. The monadic Will will inevitably transmute the human will.

What is the task of disciples at this stage of the spiritual evolution of humanity? All that is happening to humanity as a whole is also happening to the disciples as individuals. Immersed as we all are in the conflicting ideologies, propaganda, ideas, hopes, fears, conflicting appeals to reason or to precipitate action, to all that makes 'divine indifference' so difficult, the servers of humanity must nevertheless attempt it.

What does it imply? It implies skill in invocation, exact knowledge about the energies and forces at play; understanding of the nature of Love, Light, Will. It implies recognition that these energies are impersonal, are not respecters of the desires, aspirations, hopes of those who invoke them. Invoking the Will of God the disciple must be prepared to have that Will conflict with his little will; the Light he invokes may show up weaknesses in himself for which he may be unprepared. In the great opposing camps it is unrealistic to indulge in the false, perhaps comforting, belief that all good is on one side and all evil on the other side, and he must be ready and prepared to reconstruct his thinking, free himself from all pre-conceived ideas and thoughtforms and be ready to test them against that which, in his moments of communion with his soul and in its light, he knows to be the truth.

All this he must do knowing all the while that he functions in and through his group, and that what efforts he makes at self betterment is transmitted to the group, and to that extent he reinforces its power in service. With the individual the emotions distort thinking, his life purpose, weakens his power to align and integrate his personality with the soul; so with the group. The group must know, without doubt and reservations, what is invoked, what the results will be of the response to invocation, and be entirely indifferent to these results as they affect themselves. Only then will their service be pure, and may they dare to say: 'Thy will be done'.

Divine indifference, if understood and practised, would have its effects on the attachments which men have to the various group of which they are a part, social, ethnic, religious, political, family ect. To have been 'born into a group', of whatever sort, does not necessarily dictate eternal loyalty to it; mental discrimination, once emotional attachment is overcome, may make it clear that what holds

the group together has lost its purpose or no longer holds true; or it may point up the fact that it is largely separative or selfish and does not conform to that which the disciple know to be true.

When much of this has been overcome through a conscious refusal to be identified with anything which does not have spiritual significance, groups will be ready to form for the purpose of furthering that which is good and true for all men. Free from personal or group attachments, they are free to manifest that spiritual attachment which is the basis of the brotherhood of men and, to the extent to which their spiritual capacities permit, to practice the Science of Invocation and be responsive to the evocation by the spirit. This is the higher aspect of love which operates even where, as personalities, people are not congenial, do not even like one another.

Identified with the soul, and therefore receptive to the spiritual Will which, when working through the heart, results in harmlessness and, when working through the mind, in intelligence, the disciple is approaching the point where he can be used by the Hierarchy for service. All the while the individual disciple, by freeing himself from attachments to any aspect of the no-self, makes it possible for the redemptive energies of soul and spirit to recreate the bodies that they may reflect and radiate light; itself a service to the group and humanity.

Initiation and four words defined: Initiation, Wisdom, Knowledge & the Probationary Path.

From Initiation, Human and Solar

By Alice A. Bailey

The question anent initiation is one that is coming more and more before the public. Before many centuries pass the old mysteries will be restored, and an inner body will exist in the Church - the Church of the period, of which the nucleus is already forming - wherein the first initiation will become esoteric, in this sense only, that the taking of the first initiation will, before so very long, be the most sacred ceremony of the Church, performed esoterically as one of the mysteries given at stated periods, attended by those concerned. It will also hold a similar place in the ritual of the Masons. At this ceremony those ready for the first initiation will be publicly admitted to the Lodge by one of its members, authorized to do so by the great Hierophant Himself.

Four Words Defined

When we speak of Initiation, of wisdom, of knowledge, or of the probationary Path, what do we mean? We use the words so glibly, without due consideration of the meaning involved. Take, for instance, the word first mentioned. Many are the definitions, and many are the explanations to be found as to its scope, the preparatory steps, the work to be done between initiations, and its result and effects. One thing before all else is apparent to the most superficial student, and that is, that the magnitude of the subject is such that in order to deal with it adequately one should be able to write from the viewpoint of an initiate; when this is not the case, anything that is said may be reasonable, logical, interesting, or suggestive, but not conclusive.

The word Initiation comes from two Latin words, in, into; and ire, to go; therefore, the making of a beginning, or the entrance into something. It posits, in its widest sense, in the case we are studying, an entrance into the spiritual life, or into a fresh stage in that life. It is the first step, and the succeeding steps, upon the Path of Holiness. Literally, therefore, a man who has taken the first initiation is one who has taken the first step into the spiritual kingdom, having passed out of the definitely human kingdom into the superhuman. Just as he passed out of the animal kingdom into the human at individualization, so he has entered upon the life of the spirit, and for the first time has the right to be called a "spiritual man" in the technical significance of the word. He is entering upon the fifth or final stage in our present fivefold evolution. Having groped his way through the Hall of Ignorance during many ages, and having gone to school in the Hall of Learning, he is now entering into the university, or the Hall of Wisdom. When he has passed through that school he will graduate with his degree as a Master of Compassion.

It might be of benefit to us also if we studied first the difference or the connection between Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom. Though in ordinary parlance they are frequently interchanged, as used technically they are dissimilar.

Knowledge is the product of the Hall of Learning. It might be termed the sumtotal of human discovery and experience, that which can be recognized by the five senses, and be correlated, diagnosed, and defined by the use of the human intellect. It is that about which we feel mental certitude, or that which we can ascertain by the use of experiment. It is the compendium of the arts and sciences. It concerns all that deals with the building and developing of the form side of things. Therefore it concerns the material side of evolution, matter in the solar systems, in the planet, in the three worlds of human evolution, and in the bodies of men.

Wisdom is the product of the Hall of Wisdom. It has to do with the development of the life within the form, with the progress of the spirit through those ever-changing vehicles, and with the expansions of consciousness that succeed each other from life to life. It deals with the life side of

evolution. Since it deals with the essence of things and not with the things themselves, it is the intuitive apprehension of truth apart from the reasoning faculty, and the innate perception that can distinguish between the false and the true, between the real and the unreal. It is more than that, for it is also the growing capacity of the Thinker to enter increasingly into the mind of the Logos, to realize the true inwardness of the great pageant of the universe, to vision the objective, and to harmonize more and more with the higher measure. For our present purpose (which is to study somewhat the Path of Holiness and its various stages) it may be described as the realization of the "Kingdom of God within," and the apprehension of the "Kingdom of God without" in the solar system. Perhaps it might be expressed as the gradual blending of the paths of the mystic and the occultist, - the rearing of the temple of wisdom upon the foundation of knowledge.

Wisdom is the science of the spirit, just as knowledge is the science of matter.
Knowledge is separate and objective, whilst wisdom is synthetic and subjective.
Knowledge divides; wisdom unites. Knowledge differentiates whilst wisdom blends.
What, then, is meant by the understanding?

The understanding may be defined as the faculty of the Thinker in Time to appropriate knowledge as the foundation for wisdom, that which enables him to adapt the things of form to the life of the spirit, and to take the flashes of inspiration that come to him from the Hall of Wisdom and link them to the facts of the Hall of Learning. Perhaps the whole idea might be expressed in this way: Wisdom concerns the one Self, knowledge deals with the not-self, whilst the understanding is the point of view of the Ego, or Thinker, or his relation between them.

In the Hall of Ignorance the form controls, and the material side of things has the predominance. Man is there polarized in the personality or lower self. In the Hall of Learning the higher self, or Ego, strives to dominate that form until gradually a point of equilibrium is reached where the man is controlled entirely by neither. Later the Ego controls more and more, until in the Hall of Wisdom it dominates in the three lower worlds, and in increasing degree the inherent divinity assumes the mastery. This realization brings us to the consideration in a little more detail of our fourth point, which is the urge to creative life through the divine use of the imagination.

The Inner Dialogue

By Remez Remez

Do you talk with yourself? When we hear people talking aloud with themselves we consider it weird. But have you noticed that all people, with no exception, talk silently with themselves? This, we do not consider odd or weird.

If someone hurts you in some way, or says something you do not like, what do you do? You enact a whole scene of anger in your mind! You envision yourself talking angrily; you shout at him and tell him some not so nice things. Sometimes people spend hours in such negative, destructive inner dialogues.

There is a continuous conversation going on in everyone's head, and a lot of energy, time and attention are wasted on small unimportant incidents. This conversation goes on from the moment of waking until falling asleep.

The inner dialogue continues while working, studying, reading, watching TV, talking, walking, eating, etc. There is a constant judging of people, commenting on what is going on, planning, gossiping, and mental conversations with people.

These inner dialogues bring about a snowball effect. The more we conduct them, the more we become chained to them and unable to stop them. When the emotions are also evoked, more power, energy and attachment are added. This has an adverse effect on the behaviour, judgment and general performance.

On many occasions the inner dialogue is negative and strengthens any negative attitude and behavior. Few people have enough faith in themselves and in their abilities, so as to conduct positive inner dialogues. The process and effect of these inner conversations is similar to affirmations. Constant thinking about the same subject influences the subconscious mind, which consequently accepts these thoughts and words and acts on them. Negative inner dialogues bring negative results, and positive inner dialogues bring positive results.

You can use this process to your advantage. It is an automatic activity, which goes on whether you are aware of it or not. If you learn to become aware of it, you gain the ability to control it. You can turn it into a positive dialogue. If you do that, you come to realize that you have a mighty power in your possession .

Try to be aware of your thoughts. Calmly watch what is going in your mind, even if after a few moments you may forget to do that. The inner dialogue goes on even when physically you are engaged with something else. It is not so easy to mentally separate oneself from the thoughts and words the flow through the mind.

Over and over again endeavour to keep your attention of what is going inside your head, and eventually you will be able to become aware of the inner dialogue for longer times. Watching the mind and what is going on inside it develops detachment. Detachment gives a better control of the mind and its chatter.

Whenever you catch yourself conducting a useless, futile conversation with yourself, stop it. Change it to something more useful. Replace the subject, and the words. It is like running an audiotape. Why not replace it with another tape that you like? Why let this tape play by itself? Change the words of the inner dialogue to positive ones about good health, happiness and success.

There is another thing you can do, but this needs concentration and will power. You can try to stop this inner conversation altogether. Try to ignore it and give your mind a vacation. Let the mind rest for a little while. Life can certainly go on, even when this dialogue is silenced. For a little while, enjoy some rest from the mind's incessant conversation.

The inner dialogue is fine sometimes, but most of the time it is just incessant useless chatter, which distract the attention from what you are doing at each moment. By becoming aware of it, and replacing it with a positive one, or just refusing to become involved with it, you gain the ability to control it.

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Your Inner Voice

By Dr. Rita Louise

Words are thoughts expressed which carry the message of our intentions with them. Our external speech can be thought of as a reflection or external manifestation of our inner programming. The words we use can tell us a lot about how or what we think. Words can be either charged with the positive energy of love, that helps us expand, or they are charged with the energy of fear, that causes us to shrink away from who we truly are.

Our words have power, and our speech has the power to set the energy or the directions we choose in our lives. If we say good and positive things, good and positive things (experiences) happen to us. These words give us the opportunity to experience life from a positive or optimistic point of view. If, on the other hand, we come from negativity and say negative things, accordingly, negative things happen to us or we end up seeing life as one big problem or disappointment.

While we are all familiar with our external speech or voice, we also have another voice that we work with and interact with daily. This is our "inner voice". While at first glance you may think: "what inner voice"? But when you come right down to it, we are all familiar with our inner voice. Our inner voice is that small utterance that comes from deep within us, whose job it is to provide us with guidance. This is a different kind of communication than what comes from our normal waking conscious, which I call our analyzer. When our analyzer is talking, the communication we receive tends to seem more like a nonstop conversation that goes on inside of our heads all day and sometimes well into the night.

It is through the mechanism of our inner voice that "spirit" communicates with us. It can be likened to the images portrayed on television of a little white angel standing on one side of our heads telling us the "right" thing to do, while our brain or analyzer stands on the other side (the little devil character), telling us what we "should" do, regardless of integrity or merit. Our inner voice can be thought of as our conscious, poking and prodding us into action or inaction as the case may be.

How many times has your inner voice told you to do something, you in turn choosing to ignore its promptings, only to find out it was a big mistake? I'll bet, in that moment, you say to yourself, "I should have listened to myself". Case and point, you were not paying attention to the guidance provided to you by your inner voice.

Your inner voice is there to help guide you along the path called life. Sometimes the promptings of our inner voice are subtle, reminding us to pay a bill or call a friend. Other times our inner voice can be more insistent, where it may seem as if it is nagging us, reminding us over and over of some unfinished business for perhaps days, weeks or even years.

Many people confuse thoughts or passing emotions for the information they receive from their inner voice. In fact, many of us confuse information provided by our brains, or analyzers for the inner promptings of spirit. But if you quiet your mind, you can easily tap into this information. This can be accomplished through meditation, quiet contemplation, exercise, art, dance and even music. Each of these activities helps to turn off our analyzer, allowing us to commune with our higher self, our spirit or the universe.

If these techniques aren't working for you, here is a good rule of thumb to follow. If your inner voice, those inner promptings that urge each of us into action lasts more than a week, i.e., you find the same thoughts and feelings coming back to you over and over again, then know that this is your inner voice looking for expression. Trust the information you are receiving, and use it to guide you into action

Our inner voice also works on another basic principal: if you ask yourself a question, you will always receive an answer. So if you ask, "What should I do now?" you will always be prompted as to your next step. At times you may receive a whole digression as to what you could or should be doing. Our inner self always provides us with information that is for our highest good, even if the tasks it requires of us are hard. It will always lead us on the right path, but it cannot compel us to follow. We were all provided with something called free will. It is our ability to choose what we want for ourselves. Bottom line, we can choose to follow spirit, or we can choose to take a different path.

When you listen to the prompting of spirit, life happens much smoother. Things that may have been a problem or issue, in the past, seem to be miraculously avoided and life is good. When you choose to not listen to spirit, it is as if you are taking your life into your own hands. Spirit will poke you and prod you, it will even nag at you with the things you should be doing.

The more you don't listen, or choose to not pay attention, the further and further you are moving from your center and your true path. Your inner self starts to become unbalanced. The more unbalanced you become, the stronger or louder the promptings become. Obstacles or tests are put in our path increase in intensity. Finally, the last straw is placed upon the camel's back. It is as if the universe smacks you up the side of the head with a 2 x 4, an index card pinned to the end of it, which reads "Are you ready to listen now?"

Listening to spirit, your higher self or the universe is all about trust...trusting that what you are being told or lead to do is what is best for you highest good. Trust is a challenge for many of us to master. Working with the promptings of our inner voice makes us acknowledge that we are not necessarily in control. In fact, it forces us to giving the steering wheel of our life over to someone else. It is hard for us to give up control of our lives. But once you choose to follow spirit by trusting and surrendering control, you will see miraculous changes happening in your life almost immediately.

About the Author

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Integration of the Personality

By Christopher Tatham

It is one thing to talk about the integration of the personality and quite another to achieve it. This achievement is not accomplished by the integration of the known self but must also involve an understanding and clearing of the Unconscious. Many people can never achieve integration because they cannot first of all achieve integrity. Even if they are able quite honestly to secure self mastery so that neither the emotional life nor wrong thinking can betray them, they still have not established integrity within that subconscious realm where so much that is detrimental lies. For instance it is quite possible that as a race the Americans suffer less from repressions and an acute sense of inadequacy than the English do, it certainly would appear as though this is likely, but a national trait is not necessarily that of every individual, and the sense of inadequacy can well be overlaid with a cultivated self assurance which leaves the earlier experience anything but dissipated.

Quite clearly, the advance we are looking for demands not only a right self-assessment but also a complete cleansing of the past; there must be absolute self-forgiveness if there is going to be real integrity, and without integrity the personality can never be completely unified. When this unification has been sufficiently secured the known personality is, we are taught, to be dedicated to the service of the Soul. We are then told that the personality gradually loses its existing quality and that out of the material so presented to it the Soul reconstructs a new personality through which it can adequately express itself.

It might seem that the personality so re-formed would exist and function in the natural course of events upon the same level, but this clearly is not the case, and to employ the word "personality" at all for that which is re-created by the Soul may be perfectly accurate, but to imagine that this new Soul-created personality exists on the same level as the old personality is a mistake. The old personality, now integrated and "justified", becomes the vital, living, highly trained instrument through which the Soul can function at will in this material world. Itself it lives and moves as integral facet of the Soul, accomplishing Soul purpose in this world. The measure of that service will be conditioned by the innate capacity of the instrument and its essential ability to enter into conditions in this life to which, by virtue of its own experience, it has peculiar access.

Many people are continually looking for "the Superman", looking, that is to say, for a human personality functioning as normal personalities do, but with tremendous effect. This effect would be due to the fact that the personality had been totally recreated by the Soul out of the material submitted to it. They envisage a personality returning to "primordial flux", and a wholly new thing being created. Their only hesitation lies in the fear that such a wholly new personality, not bearing the scars of past experience (having no past experience), would fail to carry those credentials which would enable it to enter with understanding into the suffering of others. It would, in fact, have no credentials.

The truth is of course that this new personality possesses the qualities of the old, only purified. It recalls old experiences but is now purified from any possible guilt-sense it might have retained. Its credentials lie in these inherited and perfected qualities. This new personality is completely unified with the Soul, and as long as life lasts will function as the Soul's instruments without hindrance in this world. It is the Soul's ordained means of Self expression in this world of human affairs. It can do the most marvellous work by those limitations which are inherent even in a purified and Soul inspired instrument.

There is the whole world of difference between what one looks for at one stage and what one looks for at another. One comes to recognise that the condition demanded for the freedom of this instrument is that kind of cleansing that takes place into account the past in all its significance, as

well as the present. Only such self-understanding and some recognised and authoritative act of Redemption can make of the redeemed personality a purified and redeemed instrument.

Integrity and Spirituality

By: Nick Arrizza

The concept of integrity has arisen often in discussions of spirituality. What do we mean however when we invoke this concept in this context? What is the role of integrity in spirituality? How will we know it when we encounter it? More importantly what will be the consequence to us if we choose to remain ignorant of its crucial importance as a foundation stone to our spiritual enlightenment? Here I intend to address these questions and to give a fresh perspective on how to achieve what I will define as Spiritual Integrity.

The Oxford definition of the word "integrity" includes words such as honesty, soundness and wholeness. Interestingly these words themselves embody an enormous wealth of knowledge and intelligence that slowly unfolds upon reflection of their meanings. It is upon such reflection that I feel we can begin to get a clearer sense of the underlying meaning of the concept of integrity.

The concept of honesty basically refers to being truthful to one's self and others about everything. The concept of soundness refers to the "rightness" or "correctness" of one's position i.e. again referring to truthfulness. The concept of wholeness refers to a sense of completeness, i.e. not leaving anything of significance out of the picture. The truth is not only, in and of itself "complete" it also gives one a sense of completeness or wholeness, because nothing is left out when one is living it. So, in summary, integrity appears to have a great deal to do with living truthfully or living a life in alignment with one's own truth.

Now living truthfully may at first seem like a simple task until we recognize that individuals clearly have diverse beliefs about many things and what the "truth" is, is one of them. Hence the concept of "truth" may be more elusive than at first thought. In fact, aren't people killing each other on this planet "in the name of the truth"? So, are we to conclude that killing others in the name of the truth is the road to spiritual enlightenment? Are we to conclude that being in or having integrity is "not" a key principle in achieving spiritual enlightenment? Perhaps we should choose to be out of integrity, i.e. be "untruthful" instead. So you see, it is not as simple as it first appeared. How do we steer through this morass of confusion without becoming hopelessly lost and disillusioned?

I would like to point out that such confusion largely arises out of our "beliefs" about where the "truth" resides in us. Most individuals turn to their repertoire of "beliefs" when asked to ascertain the truth about something. This repertoire is stored in the mind/brain and is added to and modified daily as the individual learns new information throughout their life. Mysteriously, at some given point in time, an individual "chooses" to "accept" one belief over another as being more credible for that day, week, month, etc. and hence it becomes the "truth" for them in that period of time. Sometime later, the tides might shift and the old belief becomes supplanted by a new belief that then becomes the "truth" for them.

If we choose to search for the "truth" in the vast repertoire of beliefs that is stored in our minds/brains then we find ourselves with a "truth" that is forever shifting, much like quicksand. Sounds paradoxical, doesn't it? After all, isn't the truth supposed to be something fixed, absolute, unmovable, eternal, solid, certain, and so on? You see, the very fact that we recognize the paradox suggests that something is not sitting right with us about the belief that the truth lives in our minds/brains. If this were not so, you would not have recognized the paradox, and would have thought and felt that everything was fine. So, there must be a deeper intelligence within you that is able to recognize this paradox and comment internally, to you that "something doesn't sit right about this situation".

The paradox arises here because of the "belief" that it, the truth, is to be found among our learned

beliefs stored in the mind/brain. Perhaps this is not "the truth". As mentioned, there appears to be a repository of intelligence inside of us that is acutely aware of this and tells us this one way or another. So where is this intelligence and how do we access it? In order to answer this question I ask you to follow me in a short diversion.

Assess the two statements below:

- a) I am sitting down.
- b) I am standing up.

Which of these statements is the truth for you at this moment? Well if you are, in fact sitting down, the former is. Otherwise, if you are standing up, the latter is. If you are neither sitting nor standing at this moment (i.e. perhaps lying down) then neither of these are true for you.

Let us now suppose you are sitting down at this moment. If you aren't then please sit down for a moment. Now then, how do you know that statement a) is the truth for you right now? This may seem like a redundant question, especially since I just asked you to sit down, but bear with me for a moment. After some consideration you might say that a) is true because it reflects the posture of your body at this moment Correct! So what you have just done is used the sensory information about the posture of your body as the reference upon which you assessed the veracity of statements a) and b) against. In having done so you automatically came to the conclusion that a) and not b) is true for you at this moment. In other words you didn't have to think you just had to "feel" in order to determine whether a) or b) was the truth for you.

Another way of saying this is that you relied on your "feeling intelligence" to determine the truth. This is sometimes also referred to as one's intuition or inner knowing. I would like to point out that when you are sitting down, your sensory apparatus would always be relaying to your brain this information. Not surprisingly, however, sometimes this information can be tampered with, modified or distorted on its way to the brain. A simple example is when say, hypnosis is used to fool the brain into "thinking" that you are standing when, in fact you are sitting. This is done theoretically by tricking the brain into accepting a suggestion, or statement, that is contrary to the true sensory experience of the body. If one chooses to accept the hypnotic suggestion thereby over-riding their true sensory experience one is essentially choosing to "lie" to themselves about their actual state.

As just about any hypnotic suggestion can be made acceptable to the brain, i.e. you're flying, you're swimming etc., the truth, if gauged by the beliefs held in the brain, can be quite varied. Buying into any of these altered beliefs clearly disconnects you from the real "truth" of your reality and causes you to live in a false reality. So what would be the consequences to you if you "thought" that your reality (as gauged by your thoughts) was very different from your true reality (as gauged by your feeling experience)? I think that you can see that this would clearly put you in some danger of getting hurt.

Now you might say that this is only a minor problem as hypnosis occurs only as a stage phenomenon and that you're unlikely to experience this in normal daily life. I would however like to suggest otherwise. In order to show this I would like to elaborate a bit on this inner feeling intelligence. First, where is it? Let us say that this intelligence not only resides in you but also "is" you. In other words, "you" must be the source of this intelligence.

As you are the being that is trying to assess the veracity of a given situation for your self then, by definition, "you" must be using "yourself" as the reference point against which to "measure" or "assess" whether something is true for you. You couldn't possibly be able to determine whether

something was true for someone else because you wouldn't necessarily have direct access to that other person's feeling intelligence. To highlight this, to ask you whether it is the truth that another person likes the taste of, say, ice cream, would be impossible for you to answer without having input from that other person.

Similarly, without you present and sentient to your ever present situation you would never be able to say what the truth about your situation actually was at any given moment. For example, if you were, say, rendered unconscious, you would clearly be at a loss to say whether you were conscious or not. So now the next issue that arises is the question of where you are in your body. This may sound like a rather odd question, as most people consider themselves in their entire body, or at least in their mind or brain. I do however wish to belabor this issue as I think it will yield some surprises that are unexpected.

So here we go. Now I want to suggest that you think of something, i.e. quality or characteristic that you appreciate about yourself. Then take a few moments and appreciate yourself for this and notice where you feel the feelings of appreciation in your body. Now most people feel this feeling of appreciation over their mid-chest i.e. over their heart. If this is not your experience then I ask that you spend some more time with this exercise.

Now because it is "you" who are doing the appreciating, then the feelings of appreciation "must", by definition, be originating from you. Consequently, because you feel the feelings of appreciation emerging from your mid-chest or heart area then this must be where you "are" inside your body. If this comes as a surprise, I'm not surprised. The reason for the surprise may be due to the fact that you probably "believed" yourself to reside in your mind or brain. Isn't this what most people "think"? Haven't we, since the time of Descartes, been "hypnotized" into "believing" that we are our minds or our brains?

So now that you know where you are inside your body, if you pay attention to the feelings that are coming from this "you", the only you, you will have greater clarity of assessing how your ever changing life situation feels like to you. It is these feelings then, that will help you determine whether something that you're living through at any given moment is what is desirable or the "truth" for you.

By focusing on these inner feelings, you will be doing all of the following: a) bringing yourself fully back into your life and beginning to feel more "whole" b) being truly connected to the source of your own inner "truth" which then allows you a reference point from which to be more "honest" with yourself about everything that is going on in your life, and c) sensing a rightness about things that will leave you with a feeling of "soundness" about your life choices. In summary, you will be in a state of personal integrity within yourself.

Now that we have found a way to integrity, how does this fit in with spirituality? We choose to define spirituality as the state of being and living as one's "true self". Well this is exactly what we described in the last paragraph. In other words being "spiritual" is the same as invoking the constant presence of "you" in your life. That is being present and sentient at every moment. In other words, according to our definition, being spiritual is essentially the same as being in integrity! Hence we introduce the term "spiritual integrity" to mean the constant presence and sentience of you as a human being.

The final question then becomes what is the consequence to you of not being in spiritual integrity. Well, according to our definition it basically implies that you are neither present nor sentient. So, if this is your situation, then where are you and what state are you in? One might describe such a predicament as one similar to being spiritually asleep. This is the opposite of being spiritually

awake or enlightened. So finally, we can surmise that being in spiritual integrity is the essence of spiritual enlightenment.

About the Author

Dr. Nick Arrizza, Internationally Energy Psychiatrist, Author and Developer of the Powerful Mind Resonance Process(TM) is a Spiritual Healer who helps Individuals and Organizations Realign themselves with their powerful Divine Energy thereby enhancing creativity, health, performance, longevity, intuition, energy, motivation, compassion for self and others, and reawakening within them their Divine Global Mission. He offers International Consultations to individuals, groups and organizations via telephone, teleconferencing and live group workshops.

<http://www.telecoaching4u.com>

Intention and Tension

By Frances E. Sparkes

Even in the small activities of everyday life it is wise and necessary to form an intension in order to work successfully and to make orderly progress; whether we are baking a cake or making a garment, we achieve the best results by working to a plan. This also applies to more spectacular undertakings. For instance, it would be considered foolish, if not possible, to erect a house or to build an ocean liner without a blueprint. How much more important to formulate a clear intension with regard to the building of the antahkarana; to know what we are doing and why we are doing it. Our aim is to bring the Higher Self and the lower into one complete and functioning unity. It is not possible to achieve this if we work in a hazy and haphazard way, and without any clear idea or definite purpose as to what we are striving to create.

The task of building the antahkarana in its final stages calls for direct and consecrated effort on the part of the disciple. He must be intent on his task, if his creation is to be a thing of beauty and strength, and is to form a shining strand in the Group Antahkarana, of which it is destined to become a part. Intension produces a definite course of action; it directs the whole life along a clearly defined course and brings about complete reorientation. It stimulates the will aspect.

Intention also produces a one-pointed attitude, or a focussed activity which we call Tension. We might say that tension is the cumulative force which breaks down the barriers of form, one by one, and liberates the essence. It is a process of divine alchemy. The following phrase was recently used by Canon McNarney over the radio: "We only get pure gold when we use a scorching fire." Surely an apt simile embodying the definition of intension and tension! In the work of creating the Rainbow Bridge, there must be fixed intension focussed through a point of tension, persistently held and increasing in power and intensity until all that separates the Higher from the lower is purged away and the work of transmutation is completed. The thread of conscious awareness has to be carried from the lower mind to the Higher Mind, via the soul, so that continuity is established and wholeness achieved. Intension is a divine conception a formulated purpose, while tension is the persistent and creative urge to its fulfilment. Spiritual intension on the part of the disciple is analogous to the Will of God, or Divine Intention. It has power to transform to transfigure - and to transcend, thus bringing release from the domination of form. It leads to a recognition of and union with the Whole, till man becomes in very truth a Son of God.

Invocation and Evocation

From The Rays and the Initiations Vol V pp519-520

By Alice Bailey

These two words are descriptive of that mysterious something emanation, voiceless appeal, inherent urge towards the light which is innate in all forms, which produces interplay and relationship, and which is the cause the cause of all progress or pushing forward along the path of an expanding consciousness and a penetration into the light.

This is true of a plant pushing its way out of the darkness of earth into the light of the sun, a child extricating itself under the life impulse from the womb of its mother, of the human being pushing himself into realms of greater knowledge and effective physical living, of the aspirant driving forward out of the Hall of Wisdom, of the disciple penetrating into the realm of soul light and life, of the initiate passing from grade to grade in the Hierarchy of Liberation, of the Christ moving on into the Council Chamber of Shambhala, and of the Lord of the World Himself undertaking those processes which will lead Him into realms of divine life of which even the highest initiate on our planet has no conception.

All comes about as part of a great system of invocation and evocation, of appeal and response, and all are distinctive of the "mode of Life" which governs the entire graded hierarchy of Being upon our planet.

This evolutionary pushing forward along the Lighted Way, out of darkness into light, from the unreal to the real, and from death to immortality, is an inherent urge in all forms. It constitutes one of the most subtle and one of the least understood laws of the universe, being related to the Life principle, of which we know as yet naught; it underlines the Law of Evolution as well as the law of Karma and is, in reality, the law of the Life Purpose of the Planetary Logos; it is an expression of His dynamic intension as it forces all substance in manifestation and in time and space to act and react in conformity to His Will. He thus enables His form - the planet which is a compound of all the seven kingdoms in nature - to express logoc intention for the "duration of the Great Breath"; of this breath, time and space are the two aspects. It affects the tiniest atom and the most exalted Being within the sphere of His consciousness and the scope of His livingness; it affects the subhuman kingdoms, unconsciously to them, and is (in relation to them) sometimes spoken of as "the Law of Life of the Sun".

The human family, after the stage of the personality integration, after the stage of personality integration is reached, reacts with increasing consciousness of the divine purpose. One the antahkarana is constructed and the higher initiations are taken, the initiate then cooperates with that purpose in full understanding and intension. He no longer simply reacts to his own interior urges, which force him ever to invoke the higher aspect of life and of consciousness which he senses on ahead. He now knows. He sees; he participates in the Plan; he relates himself to the divine Intention through an understanding of the doctrine or Science of Tension; he makes the divine Intension his, as far as he can grasp it. This reciprocal interplay produces the mutability of form and the immutability of the divine nature which is distinctive of those liberated Consciousnesses which have freed Themselves from the prison of form.

The definition of religion, which will in the future prove of greater accuracy than any yet formulated by the theologians, might be expressed as follows: Religion is the name given to the invocative appeal of humanity, and the evocative response of the greater Life of that cry.

Inward Journey

By Sonia Choquette, Ph.D.

In order to initiate psychic development, you need to tell your subconscious mind that you intend to be psychic. The best way to communicate this intention to the subconscious mind is through gentle repetitive suggestions.

The four necessary decisions you need to make and convey to your subconscious mind are that:

- * you are open to psychic guidance,
- * you will expect psychic guidance,
- * you will trust psychic guidance, and
- * you will act on psychic guidance.

Being Open to Psychic Guidance

The first intention you must establish is, "I am open to my intuition". This sets up your frame of mind to be receptive. Intuition and psychic energy are subtle. You need to create a mind-set that allows for these subtle influences to enter your field of awareness. Ask yourself: Am I open to psychic feelings? Am I comfortable thinking of myself as psychic? Am I mentally flexible enough for psychic energy to influence my behaviour? An attitude of openness is the beginning of psychic development.

Psychic energy and psychic feelings are repressed by a closed mind. If you are reading this, you are probably interested in psychic ability, but are you truly open to it occurring for you?

It is important to see yourself as a naturally intuitive receiver of psychic guidance. The truth is, you are presently being psychically influenced all the time. It happens when you are around strong-minded people. It happens when you think about someone, only to have them call the same day. It happens when you spontaneously change your plans for no reason and chance upon a very important discovery by doing so. It happens with every "coincidence" you experience. If you reflect on your own life, you may recall many events that were psychic, that you may have not acknowledged consciously. Therefore, you can see how being open to psychic energy is positioning your mind to allow you to acknowledge psychic energy when it does occur, rather than dismissing or minimizing its significance, as you may have done up until now.

Being open to your psychic ability is the first step on the psychic pathway. It is the beginning of what will make your experience different from that of the close-minded person. It is the shift that will allow your life to be assisted by psychic ability and by the divine assistance of angels, guides, teachers, and God.

Expecting Psychic Guidance

The second step is even more bold, more intentional, than the first. Once you are open to psychic guidance, you must move on to expect it! This may seem presumptuous to the old conditioning of your mind, but if you realize that your soul is living in a psychic receiver, the instrument called your body, it makes perfect sense that you should expect psychic communication. You are designed to receive this communication. It's natural.

Imagine for a moment that your body is like a radio receiver. It is designed to pick up and relay psychic vibrations, just as a radio is designed to receive and relay sound vibrations. Being open to psychic ability is like turning on the radio receiver. Expecting psychic communication is like turning the dial, the tuner, to a clear band of communication with your Higher Self.

The dial that tunes this band of psychic guidance is your attention. When you tune your attention to the realm of psychic activity, you can expect to receive this relay. If a radio is turned off, it will not receive and relay sounds that are being transmitted even though the sounds are always being sent. By being open, you turn your field of awareness "on" to psychic energy. By expecting it, you tune your attention to a particular band of psychic vibration called your Higher Self.

Ask yourself:

- * How often do I check in with my intuition when faced with a decision?
- * Do I expect my intuition will be available to me as I need it?
- * When I do experience a psychic feeling, how do I react?
- * Am I comfortable with it?
- * Does it feel natural?
- * Am I surprised?
- * How does this feeling come across?

By making the decision to expect your Higher Self to guide you, you are placing both your attention and your intention directly onto your conscious station to your Higher Self. This shifts your orientation away from the energy outside of yourself coming from other people or from appearances as the basis for your decisions and places it primarily on the guidance coming from your Higher Self and your guides. By making this shift, you become a person who responds to life, rather than one who reacts to it. Expecting psychic guidance realigns you with your natural heritage and affirms that you are a spiritual being directed and assisted by God at all times.

Trusting Your Psychic Guidance

The third step on the psychic pathway is to trust what your Higher Self conveys to you. This step may be harder for some people to take. You may have a difficult time or struggle with your intuitive feelings because these feelings may not be supported or confirmed by appearances or by your beliefs. Or you may not want to trust your psychic feelings because they are telling you something you may not want to hear.

For example, suppose you meet a new man or woman for the first time, and you are really attracted to him or her for reasons of appearance, personality, or charm. And suppose that in spite of your strong attraction to this person, your psychic feeling is not as enthusiastic and warns you to be careful, cautious, and to get more information before you open yourself to this new person. What would you do, especially if you are lonely and want a new friend? Would you ignore your feelings and proceed ahead enthusiastically, wearing blinders? Or would you slow down your emotional enthusiasm and take more time getting to know this new person before you become attached?

I know that can be a difficult choice. People, especially sensitive people, are very easily carried away with their emotions. They make decisions based on first appearances or on a strong desire to see everything through rose-colored glasses. Being psychic requires that you refrain from jumping to conclusions before "checking in" with your Higher Self and it means trusting your intuition, even when your desires and appearances urge you to do otherwise. It is the act of listening to the relay you have gone to the trouble of turning on.

Psychic guidance is God's gift to you. It is the collective voice of your Higher Self, your guides, your teachers, your angels, and the divine. To receive such a gift and have it work for you, you have to value it by listening. You have to accept that your intuition is there to help you, guide you, inspire you, protect you, teach you, lead you, and support you. It is a loving and beautiful force. But it is gentle. It will not override your free will or your emotions or manipulate you in any way. You have to listen to this influence and recognize that these psychic feelings, although inconvenient at

times and frequently confusing, are a sacred counsel and should be not only trusted, but, even more, appreciated.

Walking the psychic pathway takes courage. It takes courage to let go of the egocentric viewpoint of appearances that says we are made up only of body and mind, that our worth is measured by our acquisitions, that we must fight and fear other people and strive to gain power over others. To walk the psychic pathway means to trust in yourself, in your psychic ability, in the counsel of God's helpers, to strive in every way to recognize that your soul is a true essence, and to see the soul in everyone you encounter.

To lead the psychic life takes courage to stand apart from the majority and to direct your life from within, focused on your inner counsel. It means taking risks and being patient as things unfold. It means making the decision to put your trust in the spiritual direction you receive.

Reflect on your own past psychic experiences and ask yourself:

- * Did these feelings turn out to be accurate?
- * Did this psychic feeling help me?
- * Did I trust it? If not, what did I trust?
- * Would I have been better off had I trusted my intuition? How?

For all the years I have been teaching psychic development, and for all the years I have lived on the psychic path, I have never known intuition to have harmed me or anyone else. True intuition, the natural voice of the Higher Self, seeks only to assist you in your growth. Most people acknowledge, in hindsight, the unhappy consequences of ignoring their intuition, but when they do trust it, it almost invariably is to their advantage.

Psychic feelings sometimes make us aware of our own shortcomings, and this recognition enables us to do something about them. Psychic ability supports your growth, but not at the expense of other people. Psychic guidance seeks only to return you to your divine heritage. Psychic ability can be trusted to guide you and help you in every way to express your creativity, but it won't be there to manipulate others on your behalf. So, in being willing to trust your intuition, you must also be willing to give up wrong beliefs or erroneous conclusions. You must be spontaneous and flexible and be willing to redirect yourself midstream if your Higher Self suggests that you do so. Trusting your psychic voice will change the way you are in the world. It requires that you be willing to stop, change, redirect, or even abandon a plan completely if your intuition suggests it, without letting your ego get flustered about it.

If you were on an expedition in a foreign land, didn't know the terrain very well, and had a limited time to achieve your goal, would you welcome an expert if he or she unexpectedly volunteered to show you the best and most beautiful way to explore the territory? Or would you reject the guidance, stick to the map, and fumble on? Either way would be okay, but the guided tour would be a lot easier, more fun, and more enlightening.

You are given that kind of opportunity when you choose to trust your intuition. And your experience in trusting this guidance will verify for you that it is indeed trustworthy! The final decision you must make and convey to your subconscious mind is that you are willing to act on it.

Acting on Your Psychic Guidance

Acting on your psychic feelings is the leap of faith that will propel you forward into the world of the extraordinary. Every time you make a decision to act on your intuition, you are telling your subconscious mind that you are serious about your psychic faculties, and you are telling your Higher Self that you trust and value its counsel. You are affirming to your guides and teachers that

you will incorporate their guidance into your affairs. But above all, you release yourself from living your life through the limited power of your ego and place the power of your life into the hands of your soul and into the hands of God.

Acting on your intuition is an act of surrender on the part of your ego not an unreasonable or foolish resignation, but a conscious and wise leap into the counsel of an infinitely higher form of reason than that of your limited personal awareness. Acting on your intuition is making the choice to allow your life to be directed from a divine source, as opposed to being directed by your small, fearful ego.

Choosing to act on your intuition in no way relieves you of the responsibility of doing your work in life. I must stress that psychic energy will not be available to those who are manipulative. Avoiding responsibility is a form of manipulation. Rather, you must continue to focus and concentrate as hard as ever on any goal you may be working on, but the reward of this effort is that psychic ability becomes an added assist with which to move you toward your goals. Psychic ability, the Higher Self, becomes a partner to your reason, leading you to faster, more efficient ways to achieve what you set out to do.

Choosing to act on your intuition is the final shift into being in the world differently. It is the necessary step toward setting up an extraordinary life. Going back to the analogy of the radio receiver, when you are open to it, you turn on your receiver. When you expect it, you place your attention like a tuner onto the band of energy called your Higher Self. When you trust it, you pay attention and value the psychic guidance being relayed. You "listen", if you will, to the music. When you act on it, what happens is like what happens when you listen to beautiful music coming from a radio. You find yourself moved by it, and you allow yourself to express it. You begin to dance.

Acting on psychic energy is dancing the "dance of soul". Your life becomes a spontaneous flow of movement, carried by the beauty of the transmission. It becomes a life where you are carried from moment to moment with a conscious awareness of the spiritual vibration of divine energy. Life is free of self-consciousness, anxiety, and fear. A life lived on the psychic pathway is a life lived in peace and inner security.

A Key to Karma

By Martha Burleigh

The Tragedies that befall us, the pain and suffering we endure are a mystery to us. Why do these things happen to us? Why? That is our eternal question, and well it should be, because by asking why, we will someday find the answers.

Those of us who know about Karma that there is a law of cause and effect. We are told, and we accept the fact that our tragedies, great and small, are the effects of causes set in motion at some earlier time, either in this life or a former life. But our interpretation of Karma varies greatly.

There are those of us who look on Karma as a burden, with which we were saddled at birth, a burden to which we must be resigned. Some believe that we must pay through our suffering for the sins of our past lives; that Karma is a punishment for some act we don't remember, an act that was done by another personality, which in some way is connected with us. Interpreted or understood in this way, the principles of Reincarnation and Karma would be a doctrine of defeatism. Such a concept of Karma would lead us to a negative attitude. We could say, "These things are my fault though I don't know why. I am no good." We could wallow in self-pity. Or we could say, "There are no accidents. This is my Karma and I must go through it." We could become martyrs. We could say these things, and we could believe these things there are many who do. But Reincarnation and Karma are not a doctrine of defeatism. Karma is not punishment. It is a part of the Plan of God for man, and God's Plan for man is good.

God gave us free will in order that we may have experience and learn from it, in order that we may know, in order that we may have wisdom. We reincarnate many times in order that we may have all experience, not limited experiences of a single lifetime. The law of Karma or Cause and Effect provides us with experience. It is the means by which we grow, by which we learn to Know, by which we attain to Wisdom.

When we have pain in the body we start to look for the source of pain. We recognize pain as a warning signal, as a help and a guide that leads us to the source of the trouble, in order that we may correct it. So it is with the karmic patterns, they are warning signals; of trouble brewing, of imperfections in our being, of lessons we need to learn. They are not punishments for misdeeds, inflicted on us wilfully. They are signals to Stop, Look, Listen, and Learn. A well-known singer said the best advice she ever received came from a friend who asked her if she could face her faults and learn from them. These karmic patterns are signals asking us to do just that. They are warnings that we are less than perfect, that we must seek to find and understand the source of trouble, and correct the area of imperfection.

For example - an accident befalls us: hidden in it is a lesson for us to learn. We find the lesson by asking "Why?" the soul searching question. If we seek sincerely and patiently we will find the cause, we will find the lesson to be learned, and we will be able to correct the fault. The accident will be seen in the true light; it is an opportunity for growth, it is a step on the Path.

Or again another person hurts us deeply. Do we blame and resent them? Or do we look for the reason in ourselves that caused them to do the thing which hurt us? By blaming them we shed responsibility we close the door on the revelation which this experience could hold for us. If we look for the answer in ourselves, we will find it revealed, and even more important, we will find another step that leads us upwards. The day will come when we can say truthfully, "I have learned so much from this experience, I'm glad that it occurred."

A striking illustration of this point is shown in the following story of a physician. He has made a

contribution to medicine that has saved the lives of thousands of people. His whole life is dedicated to the service of humanity. Service is the golden thread from which the fabric of his life is woven, his recreation as well as his profession. Yet in later years this man had polio and was crippled by it. "Why?" It was his question, it was our question, and probably it is your question. Service to his fellow man was the keynote of his life; why should such a man be crippled by polio? This searching question brought out this: When he was in college, three men from his fraternity undertook his "initiation". They did such a thorough job of it that he was in the hospital for many months. When relatives sought to take action against the three, he forbade it. This was his own private war. After he had recovered from his wounds, he embarked on a systematic training program to develop his skill as a fighter. When he was ready he announced to the three men that henceforth they should avoid him at all cost or take the consequences. Over the next few years he beat them up thoroughly, any time he met them face to face. But he did not need to seek vengeance. There is a greater law than the laws of men: one of these men died in prison, one of them died of a horrible disease, the third was still alive but he had lived a miserable life. The doctor hated these men; he still hates them, with a mighty hatred. Perhaps they deserved no better, but the doctor did deserve better. His hatred for them was a poison that hurt himself. Hate is a negative energy that can cripple and destroy. In this case polio may have been the resentment. It will poison your blood stream and do more harm than your worst enemy can ever do you."

No matter how well earned we judge our hate to be, it is a luxury we cannot afford. It will destroy us if we do not curb it. The physician paid the Karmic price. By asking "Why?" we find the answer. Polio can be a millstone on the Path, when through it a man learns that Hate is not for him. If he does not learn then it is merely the beginning of a long line of obstacles on his way, which will grow rougher and rougher until he is forced to learn.

When we finally learn that all things truly happen for a purpose, and the purpose is good, we have grown, we have found the Path that leads us ever to Him from whom we came. In small events we have learned this, we can then travel rapidly. In small events we will recognize great lessons. From our own experience and from the experience of others, we learn. We need not force ourselves to the torture rack, we need not become so unbearably uncomfortable that we will cry out "Why?" in utter agony. We must ask this "Why?", sooner or later, not vindictively, or accusingly, but humbly, meekly, sincerely, and dynamically. "Why" is the magic word, the key to karma. By its careful use we can, one by one, unlock the gates which block our way to the Mountain top.

Gathering Knowledge: Practical Tips to Actively Absorb Spiritual Wisdom

By Tom Russell

How can you get the seeds of knowledge past the intellect's filters so they reach deeper ground, germinate, and grow?

Spiritual seekers tend to be far too passive, as though they can just sit back and listen or read and let the knowledge transform itself. In my experience, it doesn't work that way. Deep spiritual knowledge requires initiative and effort, combined with a willingness to take risks. No teacher, no matter how gifted, can drink the water for you.

Here are seven proven ways to plant the seeds of knowledge deeply using such means as reading, personal instruction, discussion, contemplation, and so on. With them, you can raise the profitability and enjoyment of your study to entirely new levels.

1. Write your own journal of development

Dedicate a journal to capturing pearls of wisdom as you read, listen to CDs, and attend talks. Summarize your insights and note your questions. Create drawings or include photos. One good technique is to leave lots of space around each journal entry so you can return again and again, gradually filling the page with new connections and insights. For example, reviewing an entry from, say, from five years ago may arouse even more intensity than it did when you first made it. This shows how spiritual insights are connected; they are not separated by time.

Your journal will help you dig deep and mine the gold from rich veins of experience around you and within you. By referring to your journal often, you'll easily recall valuable lessons. When you have the discipline to develop it, you'll find that, over the years, no other reading is more profitable.

2. Contemplate for short periods and long ones

"Contemplation" is defined as the use of a single word, a concise sentence, or perhaps a mental picture or parable. It's good to activate your contemplative powers by probing with questions such as, "What is here I have yet to detect? What connection does this idea have to other ideas?" Or, "What am I afraid to see? What would disturb me?" When your contemplation has carried you as high and far as possible, let go and transition to silence. Author Vernon Howard said once, "Learn from books and classes, but most of all learn from silence."

You may wish to keep a card or computer file of ideas you've used for contemplation. Retain these cards and revisit them from time to time. Keep adding new insights to your notes. Doing this can be like a bounty in the garden as you see the seeds you planted years ago continue to sprout.

Contemplation can take place for extended periods when you're alone, but it's also perfect when you only have a few, spare minutes.

3. Read aloud when you're alone

Read enthusiastically and with conviction. Stand and let yourself gesture freely. Imagine that you're addressing a large audience, and that people in it care about applying the wisdom you're conveying. Those in your imagined audience can powerfully symbolize your own thoughts as they receive new information and begin to change.

Reading silently involves your intellectual center, while reading aloud adds to your speech center.

The more dimensions of yourself you involve in an activity, the greater the impact. Add to that your kinesthetic awareness of muscles and tension, and now you have activated three centers in a single activity. Put your whole heart, mind, and spirit—the whole of your being—into this task. Start with ten minutes and expand from there.

4. Stay with the same pages awhile

In addition to your other reading, select four or five pages from a truthful, engaging book and read these same pages every night for a week before going to sleep. After a week go to the next four pages. This is an effective way to deeply plant the seeds of knowledge into the fertile soil of your innermost mind.

5. Be a metaphor hunter

Doing this can be wonderful fun! Be alert to daily life experiences, historical examples, and experiences with nature that resemble or connect to a spiritual principle. For example, you walk past a building site and hear a carpenter declare, “That’s not done to our standards. Let’s take that door out and do it right.” This perks you up; it’s a sudden ray of rightness that reminds you of the high standards you’ve set forth in your inner world.

As another example, while on a hike, you observe an old tree that has fallen into a stream. The tree gets lodged, but the flowing water gradually breaks it away and takes it downstream. You think with delight how the movement of Truth, like the flowing water, clears away old thinking that no longer serves your purpose.

6. Express the knowledge you gather

Art, music, and dance are healthy venues of creative expression. Likewise, being a good parent, cooking, building a home, running a business, and even honest salesmanship are some of the many ways to express the knowledge you glean. If you instruct others in your area of expertise, this offers more potential for gathering knowledge.

See yourself as a conduit of information, similar to a lake that stays pure by taking in fresh water on one side and releasing it on the other. This is a master key for a rich and purpose-filled life. Refuse to be a stagnant pond! Find ways to live what you learn and expand your horizons to step out of familiar zones of competence. This includes finding ways to do much better what you now do well. The discomfort of pushing the envelope, of trying new things, of being a beginner greatly benefits your spiritual growth.

7. Participate in discussion groups

People who gather to discuss books can use a simple format with surprisingly good results by arranging chairs in a circle and letting participants take turns reading. The facilitator should allow frequent pauses for contributions and ensure all the attendees participate. It helps have someone summarize the discussion at the end of the meeting.

In addition to a book, your group could discuss a CD or DVD. Just sit close to the player so you can hit the pause button often for discussion. Contributions that include experiences about applying the principles and lessons learned are especially helpful and welcome.

Enjoy the endeavor

Gathering spiritual wisdom is one of life's most enjoyable endeavors. Our work is to collect all the facts we can about ourselves and our inner development. When we place this treasury of life-changing facts inside our minds, higher spiritual forces activate them—like the morning sun shining on a garden of rare and beautiful flowers.

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About the Author

Tom Russell is founder of the SuperWisdom™ Foundation (www.SuperWisdom.com * 773.353.8696), an oasis for awareness, purpose, and life-success. It helps empower men and women to live with a greater sense of focus and vitality, enjoy productive and harmonious relationships, and reap the benefits of self-reliance and independent thinking. Learn more practical tips for spiritual wisdom in Tom's newest book, SuperWisdom: Seven Vital Secrets for a Rich & Purpose-Filled Life. Also enjoy Tom's "Time Out for Truth Podcast" at <http://www.TimeOutForTruth.com>

Learning to Learn

From If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him!

By Sheldon Kopp

"No Plain not followed by a slope.
No going not followed by a return.
He who remains persevering in danger
Is without blame.
Do not complain about this truth;
Enjoy the good fortune you still possess."
I Ching

Whether pilgrim or wayfarer, while seeking to be taught the Truth (or something), the disciple learns only that there is nothing that anyone else can teach him. He learns, once he is willing to give up being taught, that he already knows how to live, that it is implied in his own tale. The secret is that there is no secret.

Everything is just what it seems to be. That is it! There are no hidden meanings. Before he is enlightened, a man gets up each morning to spend the day tending his fields, returns home to eat his supper, goes to bed, makes love to his woman, and falls asleep. But once he has attained enlightenment, then a man gets up each morning to spend the day tending his fields, returns home to eat his supper, goes to bed, makes love to his woman, and falls asleep.

The Zen way to see the truth is through your everyday eyes. It is only the heartless questioning of life-as-it-is that ties a man in knots. A man does not need an answer in order to find peace. He needs only to surrender to his existence, to cease the needless, empty questioning. The secret of enlightenment is when you are hungry, eat; and when you are tired, sleep.

The Zen Master warns: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him!" This admonition points up that no meaning comes from outside ourselves is real. The Buddhahood of each of us has already been obtained. We need only recognize it. Philosophy, religion, patriotism, all are empty idols. The only meaning in our lives is what we each bring to them. Killing the Buddha on the road means destroying the hope that anything outside of ourselves can be our master. No one is any bigger than anyone else. There are no mothers or fathers for grown-ups, only sisters and brothers.

Once a patient realizes that he has no disease, and so can never be cured, he might as well terminate his treatment. He may have been put in touch with good things in himself, and may even still be benefiting from the relationship with the therapist, but once he realizes that he can continue as a disciple in psychotherapy forever, only then can he see the absurdity of remaining a patient, only then does he feel free to leave. We must each give up the master, without giving up the search. If no one is really any bigger than anyone else, to whom then can a man turn? If we are each equally weak and equally strong, as good and as bad as one another, then what is left to us? We must learn that each of our lives can itself become a spiritual pilgrimage, an exiled searching without end. Our only comfort on this lonely journey is that for each man it is the same.

But if there is nothing to be gained, and nothing to be lost, why search? Why go on trying? The Yaqui Indian brujo that medicine man, sorcerer, and the shaman who is a Man of Knowledge, teaches that knowledge is not something to be finally had, to be kept in a man's pocket. "To be a man of knowledge has no permanence." Rather, there are natural enemies to be challenged, dangers to which most men succumb, such as the first foe, Fear. If a man overcomes fear, he acquires clarity of mind. But this very achievement of clarity becomes the next opponent to be faced. Once fear has

been dispelled, clarity becomes the next enemy by tempting a man to give up ever doubting himself. And so it goes. Each accomplishment, itself, becomes the next obstacle to be overcome.

The learning experience through which a man may challenge such enemies are many. When his apprentice wants to know which route he should choose, the Yaqui brujo answers: " .any path is only a path. All paths are the same: they [all] lead nowhere." The only important question you must ask is: "Does this path have heart?" If it has heart for you, then dare to follow it.

It is important to give up on irrelevant questioning, to take care not to waste yourself. Whenever the brujo's apprentice would ask for explanations or try to reason his way to knowledge, his teacher would turn him round, unhooking him from his head so that he might tumble into wisdom. At one point the brujo turns the would-be disciple on to the "little smoke" (hallucinogenic magic mushrooms), and teaches him how to change himself into a crow so that he might fly into the sky and broaden his vision. Later the young man asks: "

Did I really become a crow? I mean would anyone seeing me have thought I was an ordinary crow?" In essence, the teacher tells him that no proper crow would ask such a question. "Such questions make no sense. Maybe if you were not so afraid of becoming mad, or of losing your body, you would understand this marvellous secret. But perhaps you must wait until you lose your fear to understand what I mean."

But some men never lose their fear. Instead they succumb to it and try to give up the search. Such a withdrawal is not an uncommon phase of apprenticeship, a phase that may even last all the rest of a man's life.

And the brujo-sorcerer himself is never fully beyond his own follies. But he has learned to act with controlled folly. His acts are sincere, but they are "only the acts of an actor." Once he has learned to see without trying to control his vision with judgmental thoughts, he comes to know that all things are the same. In a sense, nothing really matters, in and of itself, because the importance of being lies in the ways you have learned to think about them.

Learning to Listen

By M. Tamar

Too often we walk around thinking we know less than we do. We believe that if we only had some answer, or even a clue to the answer, or on really hard days even a better understanding of the question, that we'd be richer, braver, happier, smarter, better looking, more successful, or any other attribute that seems in short supply and great demand.

We all strive to hear our inner voice. But sometimes there's a lot of static. The cues are confused, subliminal, even contradictory. We're unsure which to trust. How can we integrate and unify these messages? Consider the aspects of your self: emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical.

When you listen to your heart, what do you hear? If you're lucky you have experienced the deep longing and excitement that comes with love. Perhaps also the sharpness of desire that pushes you to the edge of temptation. The strength of unconditional love, be it with a partner, a friend, your family, or even your pet. Your heart speaks to you of intimacy, of connection, of caring.

Focus on your mind. How often have you felt doubts and confusion when you feel thwarted or pessimistic? Or the acute clarity that comes with true knowing, with understanding exactly the thread that will help you solve some thorny problem? Your mind speaks to you of insight, of imagination, of creativity.

Your spirit is the aspect of you that yearns to comprehend your purpose in the grand design, in the web of life. Whether your focus on an external deity or your own inner light, the question of spirit is always a deep visceral desire to understand why. Your spirit speaks to you of purpose, of goodness, of your essential nature.

And through all these intermingled pieces of motivation and desire, despite all the fretting and second-guessing, you live your life, with a partner, profession, family, chores, hobbies. You live in the material world of responsibilities and achievements, which you pursue with energy and attain with pride. You live wanting to grow, on all levels, from the emotional to the material.

We all a sense of hope about our future. We want our fears to be groundless and our visions to become manifest. We want to love and be loved. We want to believe in our own self-worth. We want to make something of our lives, and to share them with others.

So how can you be ready to take advantage of life's possibilities, to make progress not only in the outer world but on your inner journey?

The best answer is the simplest, though it requires that you give clear attention and that you be honest about your own core values. It means doing a regular check-in about what's happening in your life and how you feel about it.

You can do this in just a few moments, if you are willing to be quiet enough to hear your inner voice. Though the prism of your world is a shifting mirror, and the picture seems in constant flux, you are its focal point. Your evolving sense of connection to, and confidence in, self-knowledge is the key to success, both in the material world and in the evolution of your spirit.

You can learn everything you need to become your own best teacher, if you can:

*Know your heart.

*Hear your mind,

*Trust your spirit.

Don't be afraid to amplify your inner voice. Strive to live with greater awareness and intention. Brighten your psychic mirror. Learn to dance with your own spirit.

About the author: M. Tamar is the spiritual voice of Tarot Cycles, an internet service that helps individuals tap into their own inner strength. Tarot Cycles help subscribers with emotional relationships, career decisions, personal empowerment, expressing creativity, and healing. Tarot Cycles help create motivation, understanding, and resolve. Please visit <http://www.tarotcycles.com>

Questionnaire for Discovering our Lessons - part 1 of 3

By Robert Elias Najemy

Choose a person and specific behaviour that bothers you.

The specific behaviour on the other's behalf which bothers me and which I would like to analyze here is _____.

1. The emotions that I feel when the other behaves in this way or when I think of him or her behaving in this way are:
2. I feel this way because I have the following beliefs, which make feel that way:

These three first questions are designed to help us determine exactly what the stimulus, emotions and beliefs are which are bothering us. We must be careful that our answer concerning the first question is actually a behaviour and not an interpretation of a behaviour. That "the other does not love me" is not a behaviour, it is an interpretation of some behaviour. Those who are not familiar with the fundamentals of self-analysis, in which we learn to determine the stimulus, the emotions and the beliefs, will benefit from reading the book "The Psychology of Happiness".

Now the questionnaire moves forward to determine the possible aspects of our being which might be mirroring, resonating or projecting.

3. Have I ever behaved in this way towards this person or towards others in the past?

We are often annoyed by behaviours, which remind us of aspects of our own behaviour that we do not accept or see in ourselves. Thus we need to confront it in others in order to have a stimulus to recognize it in ourselves and transform it.

In the case that we realize that, yes, in fact, we occasionally behave in this way our lesson could be:

- a. To discover and transform the beliefs, habits and attachments which cause us to behave in that way.
- b. To accept that behaviour in ourselves.

4. Is there a part of myself which might fear something here? What do I fear here? And why do I fear that?

Any behaviour which provokes fear in us will obviously be annoying. We might be tempted to create a list of reasons why the other's behaviour is unethical, unsociable and not proper, but more often the truth is that it annoys us because we fear that this behaviour will have some negative consequences for us or those close to us.

We must remember that all negative feelings are born from fear and give this question serious thought, looking behind our anger, hurt, resentment, and jealousy for the fear which is likely hiding there. The question goes on and on asking why we fear "that", again until we arrive at the basic fear which causes us to be annoyed by that behaviour.

The lesson here might be to free ourselves from the beliefs which cause us to fear these behaviours. The root of these fears lie in our past experiences.

Note: Questions 3 and 4 uncover the vast majority of reflections and projections that create our reality. We attract and are annoyed by those behaviours that reflect our own behaviour and that which we fear.

5. Is there a part of me that has learned to expect this behaviour, which has come to believe that this is the way this person or others will behave?

People often behave towards us in ways that reflect our expectations. If we expect rejection or

indifference, we will attract them by sympathetic resonance. The others are simply reflecting back to us our own beliefs and expectations.

Our lesson in such a case might be to free ourselves from the beliefs which cause us to expect these behaviours, and to adopt new beliefs which lead to more positive expectations.

6. Is there a part of me that believes that, for some reason, I deserve this behaviour?

If a part of us subconsciously believes that we are not worthy and that we deserve to be treated in this way, then we will naturally attract this behaviour. The others may even feel guilty that they are behaving to us in this way, while they are being pushed subconsciously in this direction by our own beliefs about ourselves (Of course they have the free will to overcome our pull in that direction).

Also we will perceive - project this reality even when it does not exist. For example we will perceive rejection, failure or danger where they are not.

Our lesson here is to learn to accept and love ourselves as we are and realize that we deserve each person's love, acceptance and respect - just as they deserve ours.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Questionnaire for Discovering our Lessons - part 2 of 3

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1 of this series first.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/Discovering_our_Lessons-part_1of3.html

7. Is there a part of me that behaves towards my own self in the way that this person behaves to me? We often behave in negative ways towards ourselves, criticizing ourselves, ignoring our needs, putting ourselves down or being ironic with ourselves. Then when others do the same to us, we feel annoyed and hurt. But they are simply reflecting back to us our own behavior towards ourselves, whether they perceive it or not. They do not need to see this behavior in us. These beliefs, attitudes, feelings and behaviors are transmitted subconsciously and silently.

Our lesson in such a case would be to learn to respect and cultivate positive behaviors towards ourselves. We need to behave towards ourselves as we would like others to behave towards us. (An interesting version of an age old truth, "to do others as you would like them to do to you".)

8. Is there a part of me which occasionally would like to act or behave in that way but something stops me?

We sometimes are annoyed by and criticize behaviors, which subconsciously perhaps we would actually like occasionally to be able to adopt. For example, a person who has difficulty in expressing himself might be annoyed by an overly expressive person. A person, who has difficulty being silent, might feel uncomfortable with a silent type. A person who restrains and suppresses himself, in order to be conscientious regarding responsibilities or rules is likely to feel annoyed by and angry with a person who makes no effort to do so. But, perhaps that person who is rejecting and criticizing would actually like to be free to let go once in a while and not be so "responsible". We are also attracting behaviors that reflect our jealousy, lack of understanding and self-restriction. Our lesson here would be to free ourselves in order to behave in a way which represents our beliefs and values. Also to let others to decide for themselves how they want to behave. Others are not required to live their lives according to our morals, standards or limitations.

9. Does this behavior remind me of anything that I experienced as a child?

We are often more vulnerable to behaviors which remind us of situations which we experienced when we were children. If we could get free from the pain or fear we are holding from our childhood years, the behavior which presently bothers us would not affect us so much. We are attracting this behavior because we need to have contact with it until we free ourselves from that baggage from the past. It is our stimulus towards growth and maturity. The lesson is to transform our childhood experiences.

10. Am I perhaps playing some role here which is attracting this behavior from the other?

A. The victim? B. The intimidator C. The teacher D. The parent E. The child F. The intelligent one G. The righteous one H. The rebel I. The strong one - without needs J. The just one K. The good person L. The one responsible for all M. The server N. The weak one O. The spiritual person P. The judge Q. The Aloof R. The critic or Interrogator. S. Some other role?

Each of these roles tends to attract similar or opposite roles from those around us. If we play the parent, the other will behave like a child. If we play the child, the other will behave like a parent, teacher or savior. If we feel responsible for everyone, the others will be irresponsible etc. The lesson here is to discover which of our roles are reflecting in the other's behavior, or is making his or her behavior annoying to us. Once we determine this, we will need to see what adjustments we need to make in the way we are interpreting our role.

11. Which are my needs or attachments that are being intimidated by this behavior?

12. What will I lose if I do not get the behavior I want from that person?

Our needs and attachments are reflected in many ways. Our negative feelings result from our not being able to get what we want or from our fearing that we may not be able to have it, or that we might lose it. When our happiness is dependent on someone or something outside of ourselves, and the time has come for us to transcend that attachment, life offers us behaviors and events which force us to free ourselves from this attachment or else continue to suffer.

When the time has come to overcome the belief that "I must have that ____" some of the following possible situations might occur:

- a. Obstacles appear towards having it.
- b. We obtain it but at the expense of our health.
- c. We have it but it produces conflicts with others.
- d. We have it but it causes us conflict with ourselves.
- e. We have it, but we lose it.
- f. We destroy our health and harmony trying to get it.
- h. Some around us also believe we must have it. They strengthen our beliefs.
- i. Others are against our having it.

One lesson is that we can be happy, safe and satisfied without this attachment. Another might be to become more positive and capable of manifesting what we want.

13. Do I have any feelings of guilt here, which might be being mirrored? Are feelings of guilt or responsibility for the other making me vulnerable to this behavior?

Our feelings of guilt and shame are very easily reflected by those around us. We attract from others what makes us feel guilt or shame until we are able to transform the beliefs that generate those feelings.

Our feelings of guilt or self-doubt are often what which make the other's behavior painful for us, as we are reminded by their behavior of our doubts about our purity, ability and self-worth. Our lesson is to clarify in our minds what our real responsibilities are concerning the others and where our self-worth is based.

14. Am I being critical, judgmental or rejecting here?

We will attract whatever we criticize and condemn until we learn to understand and accept the other. We can disagree with another's behavior, without rejecting the person. As long as we criticize and condemn, we will be confronted over and over again by this same behavior.

Our lesson is to develop understanding, acceptance, forgiveness and love for others and ourselves.

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Questionnaire for Discovering our Lessons - part 3 of 3

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1 & 2 of this series first.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/Discovering_our_Lessons-part_1of3.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/Discovering_our_Lessons-part_2of3.html

15. Do I have any internal conflicts that are being played out here? Is there a part of myself who doubts my own self and agrees with the other?

Our internal conflicts are very often reflected by others who are reflecting one of our conflicting personas. Because we are in conflict with ourselves, the other's behavior annoys us by bringing to the surface a part of ourselves with which we are already in conflict.

For example, if one part of ourselves says we should be making more money, get married, achieve more, work more, eat less, spend more time with the children, have more discipline or lose weight and the other person gives us any of these messages in any way, we are disturbed by his or her behavior, because it reminds us of a conflict we already have with ourselves.

In such a case, we need to apply an inner dialogue technique and clarify internally what we really want and believe. We also need to accept this conflict until it is resolved and then we will be able to share it with others. This work is described in detail in the book "Saram - A Soul Adventure in Persona Reconciliation".

16. Are there any emotions, needs and beliefs that I have not clearly communicated to the other?

Our unexpressed emotions, needs and beliefs are frequently reflected by others. This will happen until we overcome any obstacles to honest and sincere communication with those who behave in ways that annoy us. If we have never expressed clearly to someone without accusation and criticism that his or her behavior bothers us, how do we expect him or her to stop? Our lesson is to learn to make I-messages expressing very clearly what we want, need, feel and believe, without trying to put down or hurt the other.

17. What is my lesson here? What do I need to change in order to stop attracting this behavior and, in the case that it appears, not be bothered by it?

18. What do I need to do to maintain my happiness?

Questions 17 and 18 ask us to look to the answers we have given to the questions above and decide what we need to transform in order to cease attracting the behavior which bothers us and, in the case that it does appear, not be bothered by it. The basis answer in each case is to transform the beliefs, which are creating this reflection and projection.

19. Now imagine that the other person actually changes and behaves exactly as you wish, and becomes a perfect friend respecting your every need, and that this problem has completely disappeared. Notice how you feel with this idea. This visualization and question has been added at the end for two reasons. First, it allows us to imagine this situation as solved and transformed. This is an essential aspect of manifesting the change we desire; i.e. to be able to envision it.

We cannot create what we cannot first believe. If we cannot image the other as being kind and loving it will very likely never happen.

The second reason is for us to see how we feel with the idea of this problem being totally solved and the other behaving in a perfect way. It is interesting that a large number of people have

discovered with this question that something was missing when the problem disappeared. They then realized that, although they complain about this person's behavior, it actually serves some purpose in their lives. For some, being the victim, the abused was their way of establishing their own self-worth. As long as the other was wrong, then they were the good guys and thus worthy. Now without this game, they are no longer affirmed on a daily basis.

In other cases, the problem was an excuse for not to being able to manifest their creativity or productivity, and now they would have no excuse. For still others, it was a reason not to be happy, and now they will have to find another reason, or "risk" being happy.

This questionnaire could also be used to analyze our lessons inherent in situations or events which are annoying us, by simply replacing the word behavior with the words event, circumstance or situation. Also we can, in the same way, analyze what we can learn from our body through problems of health or appearance. But in this book we are focusing on relationships.

About the Author

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The Light of the Mind*

By Colby Dorr Dam

All quotations are from the book "Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle" by Alice a. Bailey.

Intuitional telepathy is one of the developments upon the path of Discipleship. It is one of the fruits of true meditation. The area involved is in the head and throat, and the three centres which will be rendered active in the process are the head centre, which is receptive to impression from higher sources, and the ajna centre which are the recipient of the idealistic intuitional impressions; this ajna centre can then "broadcast" that which is received and recognised, using the throat centre as the creative formulator of thought, and the factor which embodies the sensed or intuited idea. (p.19)

This is the triangle through which the Light of the Mind operates. It is of great importance at a time in world history when the social sciences are moving into a revolution destined to stabilize world peace, economic relations and international government. These three centres synthesize the power to conceive, to love and to speak. As the antahkarana develops, these faculties interact with dynamic effects. The disciple becomes aware that his thought and love act upon the planetary etheric body with universal results.

Such action strikes directly at the specific types of self-ignorance from which all the problems of humanity arise. The light of Mind destroys the personal-sensory-form consciousness which feeds materialism and holds humanity in chains. When science, education and religion understand the etheric body as the link between mind and matter, we shall have a new and powerful discipline for eliminating the power of "things" over men and revolutionary economic changes will result. Thus the "broadcasting" of lighted thought dissipates mass illusion, glamour and maya. This is perhaps the highest form of service available to man.

This telepathic rapport and response is a characteristic of the human soul working from mind to mind and from brain to brain. It is literally a state of consciousness which is sufficiently conditioned by the integrated mental person so that he is aware of and inclusive of the mental state and thought processes of another person. (p.27)

Synthesis of the higher centres opens an area of universal creative faculty which reveals the whole conceptual basis and limitations of personality. It shows us exactly how and why, the specialized intellectual shuts out the Light of the Mind, which is synthesis. The specialist is one who tries to understand special forms per se, either mineral, vegetable, animal or human. He grasps only fragments in the Great Design. To approach synthesis he has first, to transcend forms and then identify himself as the living progressive relationships between the Great Lives which generate forms. Because nothing in the universe exists separately, synthesis is necessarily formless, except on intuitive levels. This is why the Light of the Mind cannot penetrate any personal frame of reference; this is why telepathic rapport, either with individuals or groups, requires a sense of universal identity stabilized in the Light of the Mind. The light does not touch the lower mental and astral levels of man which may be dangerous and destructive. Thus only the innocent heart and pure mind can approach synthesis. For others the Fire means disaster. To include means to transcend.

The key to humanity's trouble (focusing, as it has, in the economic troubles of the past two hundred years, and in the theological impasse of the orthodox churches) has been to take and not to give, to accept and not to share This is the breaking of the Law which has placed humanity in the position of guilt. The war is the desire penalty which humanity has had to pay for this great sin of separateness. (p.45)

This interesting statement holds a basic clue to the current dilemma of the United States as leader of

the free world against communist aggression and slavery. In this struggle which involves the destiny of the race, we Americans have been able to contribute, thus far, only money, materials and the blood of our youth. We have done this partly to save our own skins and protect our standard of living. We have learned that we inhabit one economic world; we have not learned that we inhabit one moral, intellectual and spiritual world. Materialism has taught us that freedom means freedom to make money; and we tend to think that money and military might will eventually destroy communist ideology. This is perhaps the major illusion of our time. As Russia is enslaved by force and fear, so we are enslaved by money. Before we can release the Russian people we must first free ourselves psychologically. The price may well be our precious American standard of living. Our historic situation demands world spiritual leaders; but they are not manufactured out of national resources.

It is this new Science of Impression which forms the subjective basis and the uniting element which binds together the entire realm of knowledge, of science and of religion. The fundamental ideas which underlie these great areas of human thought all emanate from intuitional levels This Science of Impression is the mode of life of the subjective world which lies between the world of life of the subjective world which lies between the world of external happenings and the inner world of reality. This is a point which should be most carefully taken into the calculation of the occult investigators. (p.47)

As the intellect understands personal, fact-value relationships, so does the intuition understand the larger life-energy relationships, within and between the Four Kingdoms of Nature and the Hierarchy. Impression operates at all levels; and what we know as public opinion is mostly solar-plexus mass impression. Intuitional impression requires a mind lighted by synthesis which embraces the living, energy relationships between man and the lower Kingdoms on hand and the Hierarchy on the other. This means that our awareness of God Immanent and God transcendent must advance along parallel, integrated lines. It means that intuitive sensitiveness to human need must balance the knowledge impressed upon us by the Hierarchy. This balance assures harmonious, rhythmical unfoldment of the centres. Therefore the major work of education and religion in the world struggle, is to study and define the intuition as the creative source of the coming social sciences. This will lead to discovery of the etheric body as the link between the mind and the nervous system and the revolutionize the present inverted relations between the physical and the social sciences, This organic energy will be known as the agent and instrument of the psychic energy and the intellectual basis of the current blind materialism will be destroyed.

This science [of impression] is, in fact, the basis of the theory of relationships and will lead to the expansion of the idea of right human relations which has hitherto as a phrase been confined to an idea desire for correct interplay between man and man, group and group, and nation and nation; it has also hitherto been restricted to the human society and interplay, and remains as yet a hope and a wish. (p.48)

Discovery of the etheric body will introduce wide study of economic and social problems in terms of the self-concepts which control human thought and action and determine human qualities. Then we shall know for the first time what various groups and nations can understand and how to teach them. Today no one bothers to ask what man is really is, what he needs or knows. He is known and treated as an economic, but not as a psychological entity. His moral, intellectual and spiritual functions therefore are servants of his bank account, his house, his automobile. Economic, military and political pressures are now forcing him to discover and adjust psychological relationships. He is learning human interdependence on a worldwide scale.

This power to use the ray energies to attract and impress the constantly expanding revelation is the clue to all the work going forward today, and to this activity we give the name of the Science of

Impression. (p.92)

The personality is always striving to adjust itself to the "world" and its environment; the disciple on the other hand attunes his aura to Hierarchical vibration or his own soul, and soon discovers that there isn't any "world" in the human sense of the word. The "world" is replaced in his consciousness by the "constantly expanding revelation". As the disciple deals with himself the "world" becomes illusion, glamour, maya. When the "world" is emptied out of his consciousness, then space is created to make room for the "revelation". Clarity of thought replaces the personal muddle; both impression and expression are greatly facilitated. "The world is too much with us; getting and spending we lay waste our powers." Thus synthesis involves a drastic process of elimination; the Fire will not tolerate the trivialities or petty concerns of personal existence.

The problem of the transmitter today is the density of human consciousness. Even our intellectuals, educators and churchmen with some exceptions, do not recognise the etheric body either in man or nature. Without this essential link between mind and matter the senses rather than the soul remain the measure of reality. Therefore impression, for many of the New Group, is far less difficult than expression in the present environment. However, the wide intellectual activity enforced by the world struggle between the free and slave states is preparing the way for wider impression of the New Group by the Hierarchy. This will help them to answer the big question arising around the earth "What is the real purpose of our freedoms economic, social, political, intellectual and religious? Freedom for what?"

The centres below the diaphragm, i.e., the solar plexus centre, are sacral centre and the centre at the base of the spine, are controlled by the four ethers of the planetary physical plane; the centres above the diaphragm, i.e., the heart centre, the throat centre, the ajna centre and the head centre, are controlled by the four cosmic ethers, to which we give the names of the energies of the buddhic plane, the energies at the atmic plane, the energies of the monadic plane and the energies of the logoic plane Little has as yet been given out anent the relation of the four physical ethers and the four cosmic ethers; there is nevertheless a direct relation between them, and this the initiatory process reveals. (pp.167-8)

Here, in the relation between the higher and lower centres of man, is hidden one of the major mysteries of the solar system the relation between life and form between the three Aspects of the Trinity, or the Seven Rays. Here lies also the secret of man's capacity to transform animal into human nature, and human nature into Christ Consciousness. The ethers might be called the Operating Agents of the Solar Logos Who integrate the smallest atom and the highest Beings into one Dynamic Synthesis of Life, Quality and Appearance. Thus the ethers are omnipresent in space (they are in aggregate the Entity, Space), omniscient in knowledge and omnipotent in power at the various levels of manifestation. They are storehouses from which major Rays draw their creative materials for the evolutionary process.

Forget not that the etheric body is a material and substantial body, and is therefore an integral part of the physical plane; forget not that it is intended, first of all, to carry the energies of the emotional and of the mental plane in the unconscious experimental stage of incarnation; that it is also intended to carry the threefold energies of the soul in the stage of consciously gaining experience; and that also, as the antahkarana is built, it is intended to carry the energies of the Monad in the stage of consciously expressed divinity. (p.176)

As the cosmic ethers are invoked to replace the physical ones in the disciple and initiate, the physical body is refined, purified and strengthened to withstand the higher fires. Here lies the secret of that amazing correlation between body and spirit which has mystified so many thinkers through the centuries. As the psychic faculties develop the great differences between the physical bodies of

animal man and the Master, will become apparent. Then we shall know more than is possible at present about the spiritual aspects of the medical sciences. Thought and feeling will be understood as factors in diseases; and the etheric body will be treated, as well as the physical. These developments are inherent in any understanding of the etheric body as the essence of organic life.

There is no possible separateness in our manifested planetary life . . . The concept of separateness, of individual isolation, is an illusion of the unilluminated human mind. Every form, every organisation . . . is intimately related each to each through the planetary etheric body which sustains all that is . . . The table at which you write, the flower you hold in your hand, the horse at which you ride, the man to whom you talk, are sharing with you the vast circulating life of the planet as it streams into, through and out of every aspect of the form nature. (p.148)

The Tibetan points out that the four physical ethers which generate the forms of the Kingdoms of Nature are employed to build man's body and sustain his organic processes. In the spiritually developed man the four physical ethers are gradually replaced by the four higher ethers: logioic, monadic, atmic and buddhic. Thus the physical body of man is slowly transmuted from a simple personal mechanism into a "divine temple" equipped to receive planetary and solar impressions.

When medical science recognizes the human body as an etheric device, the long cleavage between physical and metaphysical thought, between science and religion will be closed. The social sciences will then be infused with new spiritual meaning and direction. The energy release which has begun at the bottom with atomic power, will be extended into areas of human relations and faculties. The illusions and glamours of materialism including money, economic nationalism and sex, will be destroyed on the etheric levels where they exist. The atomic revolution in the physical sciences is preparing the way for the psychological revolution in the social sciences which must occur before peace, goodwill and international order can be stabilized.

The Art of Good Listening:

3 STEPS to DOING IT WELL

By Uzi Weingarten

Good listening is one of the best and most loving gifts that we can offer to another person. This is especially true when somebody is hurt or upset about something and shares it with us.

All too often, in spite of our good intentions, we find ourselves responding to others in ways that are not effective. Here are three principles that help us to respond with compassion and effectiveness when people share their feelings with us.

1. Listen with openness, not judgment. The first thing that people need when they share something that hurts or upsets them is a sense that it is safe to talk. That means that when they tell us what happened or how they are feeling, we will not judge, criticize, shame or blame them. This is what allows them to trust us and feel safe opening up.

That we don't judge does not mean that we have no sense of right and wrong. What it does mean is that we put that aside and listen with compassionate ears. It is to focus on the heart that is sharing its hurt with us, rather than on our sense of right/wrong.

2. The key is the feelings and needs. The second thing that people want, after a sense of safety, is for their experience, and especially their feelings, to be understood. This is because the key to any situation is how the person feels about it. This attempt to understand how another is feeling in a given situation, and doing so with no criticism or judgment, is called "empathy."

One excellent way to express empathy is to reflect back to the person what we imagine the experience was like. There is an art to doing this that is hard to convey in a short article; in my Communicating with Compassion course we spend the first four sessions on this. (You can find an excellent introduction to empathy in "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People," by Stephen Covey, pages 236-260.)

That having been said, here is a simple example:

If somebody is sharing with us a story about how she was ridiculed for asking a certain question, we might ask ourselves how we feel when we are ridiculed. We would then reflect that feeling back and see if this indeed is how she felt. We might say, "So you felt embarrassed and humiliated." It is of course important to say this in a gentle tone and a caring way.

It is remarkable how often a simple reflection of feelings, when done with no judgment or criticism, creates an initial sense of relief. It also tends to open the speaker's heart to share more of the experience. She might add that she was going to be with these people for the next 10 hours, and was concerned that they might ridicule her again. To which we might respond, "So you were feeling unsafe."

This might go on for a few rounds. If we stay with reflecting feelings, with no judgment or criticism, and only a desire to understand the other's experience, the result will often be a sense of deep relief and the ability to arrive at a sense of resolution.

3. Wait before offering advice. We often have ideas and information that might be helpful to the other. And yet, it is very important to first understand and reflect the feelings, and only then to offer advice. When people are upset, what they need first, before anything else, is empathy. Only after the feelings have been heard and acknowledged are people ready for advice. Offering advice before that point might be well intentioned but is in fact misguided. It could easily result in people being

irritated or hurt.

When people are ready for advice, there are some keys to how to offer it. I discussed this in the last article, which you can access by visiting my website: www.uziteaches.com, and clicking on the Articles link.

Putting these three principles to work will make a significant difference in your relationships. Try it and you'll see!

About the Author

Uzi Weingarten has studied and taught the art of human communication for many years. He is an ordained rabbi with a Masters degree in the field of Education, and is presently pursuing a Masters degree program in Spiritual Psychology. Uzi teaches "Communicating with Compassion," a 12-session course offered by phone conference. In addition, he is available for individual counselling.

The Longest Stride of Soul, Man Ever Took

By Eileen Noakes

From Mind Body and Spirit (Edited by Peter and Bets Parker Albright)

Who can doubt that the world is undergoing some major upheaval, with war, strikes, oppression and murder so common as to be commonplace? And yet, there is an unreasonable exhilaration, of feeling of preparation for a great leap forward. We seem to be aware of a great inner energy shaping events. I want to suggest the paradox that, despite the turmoil, on the one hand "not a grain of sand is out of place" and "the everlasting arms are underneath"; yet, on the other, our efforts, individual and collective, are essential to the emergence from this crisis of the kind of world we dream of for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.

There is a Divine Plan which underlines the manifested world, but it can only emerge as its various aspects find centres of reception in us. No astute political formulas, no clever economic juggling, will provide the answer, for it lies within us. Many people long only for a return to stability, order, security and personal comfort, but this will no longer do. A new world is being unveiled, and much new energy is pouring into the planet, but, the blueprint exists, the building is our task. It is wise to cooperate with the forces of change, so that we shall not be swept away along and possibly submerged by the tidal wave of irresistible energy. We are here at this time for a purpose. We have elected to incarnate at what must be one of the most dramatic and challenging periods in the history of the planet, and we must not miss the opportunity to play our destined part.

This might be called a crisis of consciousness. Richard Bucke postulates the theory of a gradual evolution of consciousness, punctuated by periodic giant leaps, such as those which characterised the birth of simple and self-consciousness. We are now, he believes, engaged in another giant leap into Cosmic Consciousness.

The coming civilisation, we are assured, carries the promise of beauty, love, creativity and brotherhood beyond our wildest imaginings, but we need to stand firm, strongly centred between the Earthly Mother and the Heavenly Father. We are the mediators between the inner and outer worlds, and it is our task to anchor these energies and express them in form, both by constructive thinking and planning on every level - community, national, worldwide - and, as Alice Bailey says in *Rays and Initiations*, by "demonstrating in our environment the qualities which will establish right human relations, and show on a small scale the behaviour which will some day characterise enlightened humanity".

The Aquarian Age is the age of the group impulse, of the stimulation of cooperation and group endeavour in the place of competition and personal ambition. Yet, we need to recognise that the negative application of this energy could lead to totalitarianism and the crushing of individuality. In response to this impulse, many groups have begun to form, both on inner levels and on outer levels and on outer physical levels. Many feel an urgent need to express this impulse in a creative, constructive life-style which will vibrate in tune with the higher energies and will bring healing to humanity and the planet, for wholeness is to be found not in the curing of symptoms, but in the practice of holistic living.

A group of people, working and meditating together can generate power which is greater than the sum total of their individual energy. This might take the form of a return to village life, but a return on a higher turn of the spiral, with a conscious feeling of community, and a commitment to the expression of the spiritual on every level and on every activity. So much of the responsibility for ushering in the New Age is ours, and we need to provide efficient vehicles for the work that has to be done. We are sparks of Divine life, individualising through souls which inhabit a threefold personality, the physical/etheric body, the astral or emotional body, and the mental body; all these

levels need to be active, developed, and aligned for the task ahead.

First of all, the physical body merits our care and respect, both as a gift from the Earthly Mother and as the Temple of the Spirit. The Ageless Wisdom and the Essence suggest that it is possible for higher knowledge and guidance to be transmitted through a coarse physical body, and we are given clear and practical advice for its refinement.

We have a fundamental need to be in touch with the rhythms and cycles of nature. One way of answering this need is to be in close touch with the soil by growing our own vegetables organically, and being relatively self-sufficient. This puts us more in charge of our own lives, provides us with living, unadulterated food supply, and makes a contribution to the food supply. Diet is an important factor in our well-being, and many people are beginning to accept that the healthiest diet consists largely of fruit and raw vegetables living food.

The Essenes, whose practice of community living could hardly be improved upon, ate simple meals of uncooked food only twice a day. They also demonstrated that understanding natural laws and living in harmony with nature forces enabled them to produce sufficient food for their needs and a surplus for distribution to the poor in only four hours a day, leaving ample time for other creative activities. We could revolutionise our consumption of food and fuel if we adopted this practise. Shortages are created, at least partly, by our artificial demands, and our demands for artificiality. These would be less need for healing from other sources if simplicity were implicit in our life-styles, in a rhythm of good constructive work, alternating with relaxation and mental and spiritual stimulation, in an atmosphere of caring and concerning; the study and application of total physical relaxation; the exploration of the inner world of myth and symbol, and the acceptance of responsibility for our own lives. We also need the opportunity to develop creative skills and talents, and to express ourselves through drama and dance.

I don't believe that the true cause of inflation and the proliferation of strikes is material need, I feel that people are really trying to express the frustration of uncreative work, lack of involvement, and unbalanced, stultified life-styles; but nobody in public life seems to challenge the underlying assumption that an ever-spiralling standard of living is a life-enhancing goal. Certainly, basic needs must be met before the higher satisfactions can be enjoyed, but they are not in themselves a source of fulfilment.

A large proportion of ill health has its origin in the astral or emotional body. A free flow of energy is vital from the astral body to the endocrine glands, and thence to the organs of the body, but many blockages are caused by the destructive emotions, especially by suppressed emotion and rejection of pain. Our emotional health depends on taking responsibility for our own lives, and accepting every situation, every contract, every relationship, as expressly designed by the soul to stimulate growth and the removal the removal of blockages. Every rejected experience is pushed down into the subconscious, creating a vacuum into which is sucked an exact reflection of that energy. The outer world reflects with uncanny accuracy our inner projections, and there is no one we can, or have any right to, change, except ourselves. All is God, and we are surrounded by the moving through those aspects of God that we have drawn to ourselves, like magnets creating a pattern with iron filings. It is not easy to see the Face of God in the plight of starving children, homeless refugees and oppressed peoples except by recognising that, on a different level of truth and reality, these sufferings have both dignity and meaning, and cease to be. Just beyond our vision, the world is shining with love, and if we see this truth and hold firmly to it, we shall help to dissolve the veils that enshroud us in the world of form and matter. This is not at all the same as saying that we should view these things with complacency, or fail to everything we can to alleviate distress.

In our search for the key to the good life, we keep coming back to the word Love, which seems to

be the glue of the Universe, a reflection in quantum physics of the particle "charm" which holds everything together. If we live in love, we live in harmony; if we hate, we harm everything we touch, but mostly ourselves. Our emotions do not evaporate without trace; they coalesce with other similar emotions to form clouds of anger, hatred, or joy, which we both expand and attract to us, so that a mood of irritation can quickly and unaccountably escalate into uncontrollable rage. On the other hand, love is equally infectious, so that to "love one's neighbour as oneself" was the best psychology and the most practical advice ever given. It is so often mistaken as an injunction to be pious or inoffensive, but in fact, to love is sheer magic, a dynamic force that is which is totally irresistible, and which can transform any situation. It packs tremendous power, not in an abstract way, or on some far-distant level, but here and now literally. Projecting love is as real as watering plants with fertilizer, and much more potent, because the effect is often instantaneous.

Practicing love means practicing "harmlessness", which, although it requires that our thoughts, words and deeds be harmless, it is not negative or mere abstention from evil, but a very positive application of goodwill. It may require firmness and the ability to say no, but it will be compassionate and uncritical, though not necessarily lacking in discrimination. It will not be sentimental, and it will not be weak for the sake of popularity or peace. The practice of love is an excellent method of clearing clogged channels so that higher energies can flow in. Blockages in the emotional body can be compared to cholesterol in the arteries of the physical body, and many techniques have been developed to help us "clear the channels".

To touch briefly on a few:

1. The use of physical relaxation to help break the pattern of response to anger or fear by the ancient "flight or fight" mechanism.
2. The use of the "evening review", which is a survey of the days actions and reactions last thing at night, from the angle of an objective observer, apportioning neither praise or blame, but simply noting dispassionately. It is thought this acts as a clearing process and frees our dreams for more creative work.
3. The use of the creative imagination
 - a. By making the morning resolve tuning into the days program and seeing it directed by ones higher self.
 - b. By contacting ones inner guide, using such methods as transpersonal psychology, guided daydreams, or meditations.

We so often believe ourselves to be alone. Never for one moment is this true. It is an illusion contained in our descent into matter, but we are now on the evolutionary arc, and the veil between the visible and the invisible is beginning to dissolve. "The Elder Brothers of the race who have guided humanity through the long centuries are now preparing people for the next great step. This step will bring in a continuity of consciousness which will do away with the fear of death, and link the physical and the astral planes in such close relationship that they will in reality constitute one plane".

It takes a long time for a development in consciousness to be attained by the whole human race. Some people are still moving from simple to self-consciousness, but gradually idealistic man is emerging, the world server, detached from personal interests, cooperative, unpossessive, wishing to understand the plan of creation, and to serve God.

This is what lies ahead of us, just a blink away. But again, here is the paradox. Yes, it is coming, we're experiencing the birth pangs of a New Age with a higher consciousness, but it is our

responsibility to usher it in, through our meditations and the quality of our loving.

Having developed the intellect, we then need to silence it to develop this higher form of knowing, using the creative imagination to build the Rainbow Bridge firstly between the little self and the soul, and then between the soul and the spirit, where guidance and inspiration are to be found, which then need to be translated into action in a practical and efficient way.

We will even eventually discover that, after we have made this "longest stride of Soul", the New Age will come, not as a result of reaching upward or straining outward, but of seeing what was there all the time!

Loving Symbiosis*

By K. Murray Scott

*(Biological the living together in more or less intimate association, in even close union of two dissimilar organisms. The Greek root means living together.)

We seem to live to day in a world of cutthroat tactics, in which the individual, group, nation or group of nations, is trying to get the better of the opposing groups and units. Disharmony, mistrust and antagonism reign, and in their wake follow confusion. Individual against individual, group against group, ideology against ideology beat the other side down, force him to accept your way of thinking, exercise the weight of your superior arms or your superior financial position, suppress his individuality, poison his mind, dull his thinking, undermine his integrity with false propaganda, deprive him of free-will to make his own decisions and his own mistakes, enslave his mind, enthrall his Soul.

All such activities, even though they may be undertaken with the purported idea of improving the material lot of the individual against whom they are directed, thwart his basic human right for self-expression and evolution, and contribute to the holding back of the race.

Men cannot be forced into good, beaten into right thinking, whipped into correct attitudes. They must evolve into these states. Evolution is a painful and perilous process which started in the long dark night of pre-antiquity and will continue ever onward to the full light of the day. It is prolonged and rendered much more difficult by the isolationist tactics of the units of the race towards each other on the Path which they must all tread together. To reduce exaggerated tensions, to release a greater flow of the Life Force, to cushion the force of the impacts that must strike us from all sides, it is imperative that we carry out the Principle of Loving Symbiosis.

To do this, it is necessary that we realize that all forms of Life contribute to all other forms of Life in the manifested world. We must learn to live together to mutual advantage - not just in mutual tolerance, but in active mutual co-operation, in practical harmony; in short, to practise Loving Symbiosis. There exists the harmony; in short, to practise Loving Symbiosis. There exists the unconscious Symbiosis in the realms of Nature, controlled from without, but in the Human Kingdom, that is not sufficient. Man must learn to achieve with his conscious. Will and Fiery Heart the Loving Symbiosis of the Spirit. Men must learn to live together for the mutual benefit of all sides, for that is the secret of adjustment, and we must learn to understand that not to do this leads to disruption, pain, frustration, poverty on all planes and the repeated blows of Destiny.

But the practice of a Loving Symbiosis is more than merely a way of escaping the severest blows of a cruel Fate. It is the surest method of so co-operating with the Forces of Evolution as to render them no longer full of pain and dread. By practicing the Principles of Loving Symbiosis, the individual will mould his desires and harness his personality to co-operate consciously with what heretofore seemed a blind, destructive and cruel force. Now, with conscious and understanding co-operation, it becomes the benign force which provides tensions, yes, but the constructive, balanced tensions which supply the opportunities for evolution, and that fuller knowledge and broader horizon, without which there would be no evolution. Balance Tension and Loving Symbiosis open up the Path to a rapid and harmonious Evolution for the individual who will practise their achievement.

What is Love ? Part 1 of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

- * Love is our greatest need. Is it our highest most fulfilling state.
- * Do we really love or are we simply attached to, identified with or dependent upon the persons we "love"?
- * Is our love free and unconditional, or is it mixed with various needs, conditions and demands?
- * What is unconditional love? Is it possible for us to cultivate it?
- * What is the difference between love and attachment?
- * How can we determine whether what we feel is love or attachment?
- * How can we purify our love and move into a higher level of consciousness?
- * These are some of the many questions that we need to answer in order to create happiness.

Defining Love

Love is a very difficult word to define, perhaps because its reality approaches spiritual dimensions, which are beyond time and space, and thus, our comprehension.

Love is perhaps more easily described by what it is not. Love is not fear, hurt, pain, jealousy, bitterness, hate, separateness, lust, attachment, aggressiveness, ego-centeredness, indifference, possessiveness, suppression - the list goes on.

Love, like God, peace and other spiritual realities, can be perceived more easily through the effects that it creates. We cannot see the wind, but we can see its effects, such as the leaves moving, branches swaying, or the sound of air rushing. We know wind exists by its various side effects. We know there is a Creator because we perceive its effect - creation itself.

What then are the effects of love? Love creates feelings of unity. We feel toward others as we feel towards ourselves. We are as interested in their welfare, happiness, success, health and spiritual growth as much as we are about our own.

Loving others means wanting them to be happy in whatever ways they are guided to their happiness. It breeds understanding, compassion, forgiveness, happiness, excitement, peace, joy, fulfillment and a desire to be helpful in any way we can.

Love is expansion beyond our ego limitations. It is the ability to identify with the other, to let go of our self-interest and personal needs enough to really hear and understand the other's needs and interests. It means caring enough to sacrifice, when necessary, our own pleasures and desires when the other's needs are obviously more important.

Love is the force that brings about unity and harmony. It is the "glue" of the universe. It helps persons with different egos, desires, programmings and needs to overcome all those potentially repelling forces and unite.

Love needs not so much to be learned or cultivated, but rather released or brought from within us to

the surface. We are love. Our basic nature is love. However, our ignorance, fear and attachment have buried it so deeply within us that it is sometimes difficult to summon or maintain. Loving others steadily, independently of their behavior, is not an easy achievement.

Love versus Need

The power of attraction which we call love is expressed on many levels and in countless ways. The most basic level is that of need. We often use the word love when we really mean, "need".

We say, "I love you." But, if we analyze ourselves deeply, we will realize learn we really mean, "I need you." This is the basic message of most love songs. They lament with sadness, pain, agony and cry out "you left me, I cannot live without you. I need you."

This is not the highest form of love. It is love mixed with need, attachment and addiction. If it were pure love and the other was happier by leaving us or even happier with someone else, we would be happy for him or her, not full of sadness for ourselves. Loving others means wanting them to be happy, healthy and successful in the ways that they are guided to be.

Love does not create the pain we feel when someone leaves us or rejects us. That pain is generated by our dependency upon that person for our security, pleasure or affirmation.

Needs and attachments create fear, pain and suffering.

Love creates happiness, fulfillment and the experience of our True Selves.

Be sure to look for the remaining the parts of this series:

1. What is Love ?
2. Love or Need for Security ?
3. Love, Pleasure or Affirmation?
4. Selfless Love
5. Spiritual Universal Love

About the Author

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What is Love? Part 2 of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1 of this series.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/what_is_Love.html

What is Love? Part 2 of 5 by Robert Elias Najemy

Part 2 - Love or Need for Security ?

Our Love is Mixed With Need. Our love is still mixed with a considerable amount of need. Love wants to give. Need wants to take. Sometimes what we are seeking to take is very subtle and requires deep inner inquiry.

Whenever we feel pain, fear or anger in our relationships, it is because we believe that our needs are in "danger" of not being satisfied. When this happens, our "love" turns to hurt, disappointment, fear, loneliness, inferiority, or bitterness, and sometimes, anger, hate, rage and desire for revenge.

How can love become all these negative emotions? It cannot. The simple truth is that our emotion never was pure love to begin with. It was an "attraction" based to some degree also on need.

This does not mean that we should reject ourselves because we have seldom really loved purely. As we are not yet enlightened spiritual beings, how could we? It would be like rejecting ourselves because we do not yet have a university diploma when we are still in the first grade or because we are a flower bud, which has not yet blossomed. It is only natural that we cannot yet love unconditionally. This is our stage of evolution.

Freeing our Love from Need

The first step towards opening our hearts to real love is to accept and love ourselves exactly as we are with all our weaknesses and faults. Only then can we proceed effectively.

The second step is to begin observing the feelings that are stimulated in our transpersonal. Through objective self-observation, we can determine in which situations we love unconditionally and in which we are feeling "loving" with specific conditions. Following are some examples that will help.

Needing Those Who Make Us Feel Secure

We look to others for security. We might seek security from our parents, spouses, siblings, children, employers, friends, ministers, spiritual teachers or others.

We do feel love toward these beings, but often that love is based on the fact that they offer us a sense of security. If they start behaving in ways that obstruct our feelings of security or if they decide to leave or ignore us, will we still love them?

If our employer fires us, will we still love him or her? If our parents throw us out onto the street, will we still love them? Or is our love tightly woven with the need for security?

If as parents we dream that our children will become economically well off and socially accepted professionals, will we love them the same if they become street artists, beggars or anarchists? Some parents will be able to; others will not.

The basic question is whether or not our feelings of love are steady and consistent regardless of the various changing behaviors of those we "love". In each case where we perceive our heart closing, we need to discover what we fear in that situation. What might we believe is in danger? Most frequently we lose our love when we fear that our security, self-worth, freedom or pleasure are in danger.

Only when we have realized total inner security, perhaps based on an inner spiritual awakening or on our faith in the Divine, will we be able to love without security attachments.

Only when we know that we can live without others can we really love them steadily.

Society has caused us to completely confuse this matter. We believe that if we love others, then we must be totally dependent on them and should fear that our world would fall apart if something happens to them. This is insecurity.

This is a lack of awareness of our inner spiritual nature and our ability to deal with life. It has nothing to do with love.

Perhaps this is why the Apostle John wrote, "Where there is perfect love, there can be no fear".

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What is Love? Part 3 of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1& 2 of this series.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/what_is_Love.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part2of5.html

Love, Pleasure or Affirmation ? Part 3 of a 5 part series.

Needing Others for Pleasure

Let us examine how our needs for pleasure and affirmation can limit and distort our experience of love.

We create relationships that give us pleasure and affirmation as well as security. We may be dependent upon the other for money, shelter, sex, travel, clothing, encouragement, compliments, humor, tasty food, a clean house, comforts, or even his or her beauty.

Yet, if he or she stops providing these for us, or decides to provide them for someone else, do we continue loving that person or do we feel hurt, disillusioned, and overcome with feelings of injustice, anger and perhaps revenge?

The condition here is that "I love as long as you provide me pleasure, happiness or excitement. If you stop, my feelings change." It is conditional love.

Needing Others for Affirmation

We may also depend on someone for affirmation. This may take various forms.

1. We are affirmed when others obey us. "You listen to me and do what I say. I can control you. That makes me feel powerful and worthy. If, however, you stop doing whatever I say, I will stop feeling love and unity with you."

This becomes a problem for parents when their children move into adolescence. This can also occur between spouses. In many countries a wife might be suppressed at first, and thus, the husband feels powerful and affirmed. If, however, she begins to think and act for herself, he begins to panic and can become angry and sometimes aggressive. The roles may also be reversed where the woman controls and feels affirmed.

2. We also feel affirmation when someone needs us or is dependent on us. This could occur between parent and child, teacher and student, friends, or between the "savior" and the "needy."

In these cases, the "needed" feels affirmed by and perhaps superior to the "needy". This is one aspect of codependency. Some of us find meaning in life because someone needs us or depends on us. If however, the other doesn't want to be the child, the student or the needy one anymore, do we feel the same attraction and love? If not, our love is mixed with our need to be "needed".

In such a case, we need to give, offer, and sacrifice in order to feel useful, worthy or boost our self-image. If this is the case, then all that we offer in these situations, all our sacrifices, are actually for ourselves and not for the others.

That does not negate the fact that others may actually need us, or that we also simultaneously have

feelings of altruistic love. We are often motivated by two or three motives simultaneously

3. A third aspect of this attraction for affirmation is the situation in which we "love" those "who affirm our rightness", either verbally by telling us we are right, or simply by belonging to the same social, political, religious or spiritual group and thus embrace a similar belief system.

"I love you because you agree with me, you are like me, you affirm me". If they change beliefs and convert to another political party, religion, or spiritual group, will we feel the same closeness and "love?" Perhaps yes, perhaps no.

A fourth aspect of this affirmation principle is infatuation - called "Eros" (in Greek "erotas") or "falling in love". In this case there is a mutual (occasionally only one-sided) infatuation on the physical, sexual, emotional and sometimes mental level. This is a special attraction between two persons who excite, bring joy to and stimulate each other positively. This positive stimulation often has to do with the needs for security, pleasure and affirmation.

This intensity of these feelings seldom lasts more than a few years. The couple then has the possibility of transforming their "Eros" into a steady form of unconditional love, or facing the sadness of conflict and / or separation. Sooner or later, we will come face to face with the other's various negative aspects, and if we cannot love them as they are, the relationship suffers.

Until we are able to love unconditionally, we will be unhappy, insecure and frequently in conflict with those around us. We will be able to do this only when we have matured sufficiently so as to experience inner security, inner satisfaction, inner freedom and a steady feeling of self-worth.

In other words, we can love purely only those who we do not need.

When we need others, we cannot love them unconditionally. This might be difficult to comprehend at first, but deep thought and observation will prove it to be true. Being able to love without conditions is a basic prerequisite for both a happy life and spiritual evolution.

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What is Love? Part 4 of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1,2 & 3 of this series.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/what_is_Love.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part2of5.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part3of5.html

Selfless Love - Part 4 of 5

Selfless Love for a Specific Person

An essential stage in the evolution of love is being able to love others regardless of their behavior. Probably the closest most of us have come to experiencing such love is towards our children.

There are some parents who have totally selfless love for their children. They maintain steady love for "their child" even if he or she does not live up to the parents' expectations, even if he or she rejects and abuses the parents, and even if he or she becomes a dangerous criminal.

This love is not universal nor is it totally unconditional because there is one condition, that the other is "my child" and not someone else's.

We might also experience this type of selfless love for a specific person when he or she is "our student" or under "our care or responsibility." This type of love often has to do with the role of protector or feeling responsibility for someone. It enables us to accept all types of behavior from others and continue accepting and loving them with understanding and compassion.

In some cases, we may also feel such love for persons who belong to the same grouping, i.e. nationality, religion or social class.

In these cases, we do not gain something tangible from these individuals. We do not require anything from them. Our love is not dependent upon their abiding by a certain type of behavior or even reciprocating our love. Our love is more selfless but still specific and not universal.

Universal Selfless Love

The next stage is to expand our feelings of unconditional love and acceptance to a wider circle of people and eventually to all beings - including animals, plants and insects. This love, however, is still directed toward form.

We are focused on the temporary form being occupied by these beings; thus we feel a sense of sadness when they experience suffering or unhappiness, or if and when we lose them.

We perceive their form as reality. We feel love and acceptance for that person, but we still live within the illusion that the form is the reality. We forget that behind that form there is an immortal ever-blissful consciousness, which is just temporarily projecting that form toward the earth plane level. Universal consciousness is never in pain, never suffers, is never unhappy and can never die. That consciousness is the ultimate reality of the being or beings whom we love.

Those who experience this universal selfless love often choose careers or lifestyles that allow them to serve the whole in some way. They may join service groups such as the Peace Corps or other voluntary service organizations. They feel a need to express that love through actions which better

the quality of life for those around them, especially for those who are suffering, lonely or unhappy.

Their interest expands beyond the limits of themselves and their immediate family. They begin to realize that all beings are brothers and sisters in one spiritual family of all humanity. As their awareness grows, they perceive even animals, plants and insects as belonging to "their family."

They seek to express this love through acts of service and care.

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What is Love? Part 5 of 5

By Robert Elias Najemy

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http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part2of5.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part3of5.html

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/What_is_Love_Part4of5.html

Selfless Love - Part 5 of 5

Spiritual Universal Love - Part 5 of 5

A later stage in our spiritual maturation process is the development of spiritual universal love where wisdom or spiritual discrimination is now added to our love. We now perceive all forms as various manifestations of one unchanging, ever blissful, divine consciousness.

In this state we experience pure love in which we cannot distinguish between the other and ourselves. Christ referred to this state saying, "I am in you and you are in me."

Although, as in the previous stage, we continue to help and serve wherever we can, we are not so affected by the pain and suffering we encounter. We realize that the real spiritual consciousness expressing itself through that form has chosen to pass through that experience because it is exactly the next stimulus, which he or she needs for his or her spiritual growth process. We are now aware that we are all passing through the precise experiences, pleasant and unpleasant, which we need in order to wake up from our dream of this illusory material reality.

Although we are not affected by the suffering we see, we are even more wholly dedicated toward eliminating it. Thus, we love and accept all beings as they are while we direct our energies toward facilitating this process of our mutual spiritual unfoldment. Each of us moves forward in his or her own unique way.

Previously we may have tried to solve people's problems for them. Now we realize that the most effective way we can help others is to love and accept them as they are and empower them to find their own inner wisdom and strength in order to overcome their problems.

We now realize that the main solution for the world's economic, political and social problems is education.

We experience such "wise love" or "loving wisdom" from the highest spiritual teachers. It is sometimes difficult to understand their love and caring, which at times to the beginner, may seem like indifference, especially when we pass through tests and expect sympathy and emotional reactions.

It is difficult for some to realize that it is sometimes more loving to allow someone to suffer a little more so he or she can find the solution him or herself and grow stronger and freer from ignorance. Only a realized being can know, however, when "not to help" externally because this would be the most loving act for a specific person.

Many parents would do well to learn this form of wise love. They might help their children far more if they refrain from solving their problems every time they are in trouble.

No one should, however, misconceive that this text is suggesting that we should not help those who are in need. We must help, but we must also ask ourselves what the most appropriate help would be in each situation.

The greatest and most precious help we can offer to those we love, is to help them get in touch with their inner power and wisdom. This, at times, means helping, and at others, means letting them struggle by themselves while we mentally pray for them and visualize them in light.

For an awakened spiritual being to see someone cry about some unhappy event in his or her life or fear some future possibility, might be like our watching a small child cry about a toy that has broken or express fear of the "boogie man." We sympathize with and understand the child's feelings. We love it and we want to help it, but we cannot really be worried.

Those who experience this level of love sometimes do not exhibit the emotional display which others may be used to interpreting as indications of love. As we grow spiritually, we begin to understand, however, that real love is a love for the soul within the other, which is seeking to free itself from ignorance and the illusion of weakness and fear.

These spiritually awakened beings offer help on other levels through their positive thought forms, prayers or sometimes, direct contact on the astral level, usually in dreams.

In this way, help is given without undermining the others' self-confidence.

Loving the Wave or the Ocean

Part 6 of a 6 part series on the "The Stages of Love"

By Robert Elias Najemy

When we limit our love to a specific person (we do not mean sexually, but rather emotionally, mentally and spiritually), it is difficult to experience love in its highest expression. We love this person and not others. We tend to focus on a specific person, "loving" them often because they offer us security, pleasure or affirmation; or because we consider them to be "ours."

Pure love is universal. It can express itself toward any particular being, but it cannot limit itself to that being or group of beings. If it does, then it is love mixed with conditions. Each individual is one of the countless waves on an ocean of consciousness. The ocean is the One Universal Consciousness, which is temporarily taking the form of those specific waves and then disappearing into the formlessness of the ocean again before reappearing as billions of others. All waves are expressions of the one ocean.

When we single out one specific wave from the ocean of beings and limit our love to that, we are, in essence, loving an illusion. That being which we love is just a temporary manifestation of the one Universal Being, which manifests as all the other beings simultaneously.

That form on which we focus is a temporary physical, emotional, mental manifestation that will dissolve back into the ocean. When we love the water in that wave, that is, its spiritual essence, the spirit within, we begin to love all waves. The same water is in all the waves. The same spiritual essence is in all beings.

Then we love the spiritual essence in others and not only their form or the specific benefits that we receive from them. We love the spirit within.

Our love now becomes both unconditional and universal. It is unconditional because it does not depend on what others do or do not do, and universal because we start to love more and more people independent of their appearance, character and other superficial factors. We love the spirit within them. We as spirit are one with the spirit, which is within them.

So we can love the wave or we can love the ocean and thus all the waves. This is our choice.

Love is like the gold ore that is brought up from the earth; it is mixed with other metals (emotions, needs). Our job is to purify that gold through our efforts to love unconditionally in all of our relationships, no matter what the other does or does not do.

Only then will we truly be happy.
Only then will we experience our true Self.

Be sure to look for the remaining the parts of this series:

1. What is Love ?
2. Love or Need for Security ?
3. Love, Pleasure or Affirmation?
4. Selfless Love
5. Spiritual Universal Love

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Man, Conquer thyself

By John Wayfarer and a Guide

From Why am I here?

Certain aspects of the environment in which we live can be changed for the better.

For example we can, through participation in public life, play a leadership role in improving the economy in which we live and thereby improve the quality of life for ourselves and our all our fellow citizens. We can, likewise, improve the physical characteristics of our city or region, and certainly we can improve those of the home in which we live. Able people can educate and apply themselves and thereby rise out of a lowly socio-economic environment in which they live

However, the environment in which we live goes further than the physical and socio-economic conditions EXTERNAL to our bodies.

As seen in the chapter on man's constitution, the soul clothes itself in a number of bodies (the higher and lower mental bodies, the astral or emotional body, the etheric body and the physical body), none of which is reincarnated. It will thus be understood that it is the soul alone (the indwelling point of the Planetary Spirit's Light, individualised through being clothes in its shell of karma) which lives on from incarnation to incarnation, AND WHICH IS THE MAN HIMSELF.

His earthly life is affected by the clever (or slow) mind he is given for the current incarnation; by his calm (or passionate) astral or emotional body in which he lives, as much as by the family, community, city, nation, climate and socio-economic circumstances that form his wider environment.

Consequently it will be understood that since, in each incarnation, a man receives a new set of bodies from highest to lowest, these bodies - which he uses as vehicles and tools - also form part of the environment in which the man must live and gain experience. This is so important that it bears repeating in different words, personalised for the reader: Your physical body, your emotions and your mind are not YOU - they are a part of the environment in which YOU live!

They are, in effect, part of the path - the obstacle-strewn path - which you must tread on the way back to spirit!

This lends meaning to the Eastern injunction: "Don't only tread the path of return; become that path yourself!" We become that path by becoming aware that what we had thought of as "ourselves" is in fact part of the path to be trodden. The reader is enjoined to go back and re-read the above four paragraphs to make sure their import is fully grasped and appreciated.

The import of this astonishing discovery about what we had always taken to be ourselves is that, just as we have the opportunity and indeed the injunction to work for the improvement of our wider environment, in the interests of humanity, so too are we able and indeed obliged to improve the intimate environment formed by the mind, emotions and physical body through which we relate to the world and the people encountered during our successive incarnations.

It is widely appreciated that the Western injunction "man, conquer thyself" is far more difficult to obey than is the task of conquering and improving the wider environment in which we live. Indeed, some of the people who have achieved the greatest success in the wider world, in the sense that they have built political, financial, commercial or industrial empires, have failed dismally to control their own emotions!

Some might ask how it is possible to "conquer myself". "I was born with a lack of mental

concentration (or slothful, or with a fiery temper or a natural predilection for drugs, excessive intake of food or alcohol ect)."

Two observations may be made to help such folk.

The first is that most people recognise instinctively (i.e. with the wisdom acquired through observation of successful personalities in the present and past incarnation), that superior people are self-controlled. They are mentally well organised, have their emotions under control, and do not abuse their bodies through the unwise intake of food, liquids, drugs ect, or through otherwise foolish ways of life.

The second observation is that it is easier to "conquer thyself" if you bear in mind that that bundle of unruly thoughts (your mind), that irritable nature or wandering eye (your emotions) and that "natural" slothfulness combined with a gluttonous nature, ect, are NOT YOU.

Think of your mind, emotions and physical body as vehicles and tools, and of YOURSELF - the real, inner you - as the "driver" of those vehicle, the "workman owner" of those tools. Then just as you would in your workaday life, set about using your tools to improve the condition of your vehicles.

Take conscious, intelligent decision to start controlling your mind and bringing order into your life. Use your controlled mind to recognise emotional flab, and set about a programme of controlling slack or unruly emotions; and do the same about physical flab and gluttony ect. You might have to seek help from others, such as by taking a course in mental control; embarking upon a diet programme with other people or joining a gym to get yourself into physical shape; perhaps, in serious cases, even seek professional help such as Alcoholics Anonymous or an anti-drug programme to curb addictive problems, or a counsellor to resolve the many emotional and stress problems that afflict people. This book does not pretend to solve your personal problems. Only you yourselves can do that. All that the above strategy seeks is tell you, if you did not already know it, is

that YOU are the DRIVER and WORKMAN (and that you are NOT the mind, emotions and body with which you have been equipped for this particular incarnation and which have not yet been brought under control); and that you CAN and SHOULD take control of them rather than let THEM continue to control YOU.

How you set about this programme of self-development is part of the test lying before you in the present incarnation! Your programme might occupy your energies for the remainder of your present incarnation, and there will be setbacks. However, if you persevere, the first results will become apparent very soon, and will continue to manifest themselves commensurately with the effort which you expend. Within a few years your life will have improved out of all recognition.

When your time comes to depart the manifested plane you will do so a measurably better person than you are now. Your term on the unmanifested plane will be pleasurable in that you will recognise the progress made; and when you return to manifestation in your next incarnation, you will do so in a progressive environment created by yourself in the present incarnation, and build on the foundations thus laid. Further, by taking a conscious decision to embark upon a personal improvement programme, and persevering with it, you will become an example to others in the same situation as that in which your formerly wallowed. This, in itself, is a form of service to humanity.

The rewards for consciously undertaking a programme of self-development are unspeakably profound. To recap, in the words of the West: "man, conquer thyself!" In the words of the East: "don't only tread the path of return; become that path yourself!"

Man and the Macrocosm

From The Measure of the Universe

By John Hopkins

It is probably impossible for the finite mind to grasp, except perhaps theoretically, the full significance of infinity, because as fast as we attempt to circumscribe anything imaginable, we realise that there must always be something more beyond the limits we have just circumscribed.

Thus it is when we come to consider the limits in time and space of the universe. Esotericism is an extremely abstruse philosophy; if it were not so it would be exoteric and not esoteric. Nevertheless there is no need to be unduly vague or confused if we can learn to recognise such aspects, and there are many, which are beyond our present our present capacity to understand, and to put these on one side until we find that through perseverance and realistic imagination we have acquired an increased degree of awareness.

Sooner or later a man asks himself three questions: Who am I? What is the purpose of life and of mine in particular? Where am I going? Through religion and philosophy he seeks the answers to these age-old questions. Once a man discovers for himself for nobody can teach him this the futility of material things, and even though he stills remains attracted by them, an increased awareness of the inner Self starts him on a the long homeward journey back to his spiritual source, wiser for the experience he has gained. When this happens, and it happens to all men sooner or later, over the many lives, he instinctively seeks knowledge of his relationship with that greater whole of which he know himself to be a part.

Some may find the answers in the orthodox religions, and if this is so it is well and good. Yet still the Ageless Wisdom teaching, accompanied by meditation, and the knowledge of who we are, the purpose of our lives, and where we are heading.

A great many people hesitate to embark upon these rather abstruse philosophical concepts because they fear they may become confused in the process and so lose their simple faith in God. But what does this 'simple' faith really amount to? Some, though dedicated Church goers, have never given the subject a great deal of thought, and if you ask them what they understand by the biblical expression 'God', many will say something like 'oh' I don't know, God is to me simply, well you know 'God'. Others, particularly theologians, may explain that God is our maker and that He is a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. As God the Father He is transcendent, meaning of a power which entirely transcends all things of this world. As god the Son he will speak of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Of God the Holy Ghost he will refer to the Spirit that is manifest and immanent in all things.

The esotericist would agree with all of this, but he might express it rather differently. We start on familiar ground in the recognition that all things, visible or invisible, tangible or intangible, are the direct or indirect result of creative activity on the part of the Creator, meaning The Absolute and Supreme Being Who is both transcendent and also immanent in all creation, Ordinary mortals can have no real comprehension of the Absolute, which is why, in the Wisdom teaching, we refer to The One about Whom naught may be said.

Monotheism is the belief in one God; pantheism is defined as the doctrine that the universe in its totality id God: the first of these is the basis of Christian Doctrine. Many an esoterist would speak of God as the Solar Logos, whilst others would have in mind the Planetary Logos the Lord of the World, Sanat Kumara referred to in the Bible as the Ancient of Days. Whether we think of God as the Absolute, or as the Solar Logos, or as the planetary Spirit or Logos, it makes little difference to ordinary mortals like ourselves. He is transcendent and also immanent in all that can possibly

concern humanity at any conceivable level of consciousness, including those higher planes which we are destined eventually to know as we evolve over aeons of time, always within the limits, within the ring-pass-not, of our planet earth wherein we live and die and live again, and where are to be found our Heaven and our hell in addition to the environment of our mortal existence.

So the man who will go no further at present than to say that for him God is God, and that is that, is in a way quite right because God cannot be defined. But sooner or later the higher mind within each human being begins to assert itself, and the man is prompted to seek a clearer understanding of what he really does believe. He is approaching what the esotericist call the Path.

Every act by means of which energy is made manifest in form is an act of creation. As we develop this thought, and bear in mind that man is essentially a soul, and that he, this soul, creates a body of etheric, astral and mental energy for the purpose of each re-incarnation in physical form, we can see that this particular act of creation is a human, or soul activity. But, as all souls are part of the One Soul, the purpose is subordinate to that of the Planetary Logos. The Planetary Logos has likewise created His etheric body out of the Solar Logos. Thus all is God's creation for the manifestation of His purpose, the expression of Love-Wisdom and Intelligence in form.

Peculiar to man in this scheme of creation is his role of intermediary between the sub-human kingdoms of nature and the kingdom which is above the human plane of existence, the Kingdom of Souls.

This divine purpose is described in The Aquarian Gospel Of Jesus The Christ in a passage which is said to be a direct transcription from an ancient source:

"Perfection is the ultimate of life. A seed is perfect in its embryonic life, but it is destined to unfold, to grow. Into the soil of every plane these seeds, which were the Thoughts of God, were cast - the seeds of protoplast, of earth, of plant, of beast, of man, of angel and of cherubim; and they who sowed the seeds, though Christ, ordained that they should grow, and should return at last, by effort of un-numbered years, to the great granary of thought, and each be a perfection of its kind.

And in the boundless blessedness of Love the man was made the Lord of protoplast, of earth, of plant, of beast: and Christ proclaimed: man shall have full dominion over everything that is upon these planes of life; and it was so.

And He who gave the lordship unto man declared that he must rule by Love.

But men grew cruel and they lost their power to rule, and protoplast, and earth, and plant and beast became at enmity with man: he lost his heritage, but Christ was present to redeem.

But man had lost his consciousness of right; he could no longer comprehend the boundlessness of Love; he could see naught but self, and things of self: but Christ was there to seek the lost and save.

So that He might be close to man in all the ways of life, that man might comprehend the mighty spirit of the Love, the Christ of earth made manifest to human eyes and ears by taking His abode in some pure person, well prepared by many lives to be a fit abiding place of love.

Thus Christ made manifest Love's power to save; but men forgot too soon, and so Christ must manifest again, and then again.

And ever since man took his place in form of flesh, the Christ has been manifest in flesh at first of every age."

The Magic of Serendipity

By William Cottringer

The goal of spiritual growth is to become the best you can be. This process can be greatly accelerated when you learn to tune into and take advantage of the magical moments of serendipity. These are the special moments when life whispers important clues that have to do with you and your journey.

When you pay attention to these clues you make progress at becoming content and successful in what you are doing. When you miss or ignore the clues you continue to loiter, move in the wrong direction or wander around aimlessly. You fail and remain unhappy. Below are some important moments of serendipity that offer valuable clues to help you become happier and more successful in your journey toward becoming the best you can be.

MAKING A TRANSFORMATION

At some point in your life you will sense a nagging gap between who you are and who you want to be. When you have the courage to start exploring the shadows of this gap, you discover many little gaps making up this big one. If you are lucky an important transformation occurs that enables you to shift your focus from external things to internal ones. This transformation enables you to understand the futility of trying to control things and change others and see the wisdom of changing yourself and making real progress.

This shift also helps you become acutely aware of the important distinction between what your mind thinks you want to what your soul knows you need. This is the beginning of your sorting through chaos in order to restore order in closing all the little gaps that keep you from being who you want to be. Who you want to be comes from all the clues that have been trying to tell you who you are meant to be.

DISCOVERING THE POWER OF CHOICE

One of the most powerful moments of serendipity for many people is the one that allows them to slow down long enough to finally see the intimate connection between the choices they make and the consequences they get. Many times this important clue shows up as a déjà vu experience, where you get the vague notion that you finally need to get it right this time around. You may be running out of chances.

This sudden Karma insight helps you uncover your true power in making choices each new moment. Time seems to stand still to allow you to make a difference in the future. Using this power to make the right choices from here on out is what can help you become who you want to be, closing one small gap at a time but feeling enormous satisfaction from immediate results. The difficulty in life is the choice.

REMEMBERING YOUR CONTRACT

One of the most deeply hidden secrets is why you are here. Some think that we each make a sacred contract to accomplish some unique purpose in exchange for the opportunity to live our lives. This notion is a difficult one to dismiss. It is just too intriguing, without any apparent downside. Genuine happiness, success and contentment do seem to elude us until we find out what our purpose is and then start making progress to fulfill it. That is one of those "connections" that are waiting to be discovered by serendipity.

The clues to discovering this secret contract are extremely subtle and the hiding place may be the best of all- right under your nose. After all, the obscure takes a while to notice, while the obvious may take even longer. Of course there are lots of people trying to hand out clues, such as parents, teachers, family and friends. In a way it is a shame that we are convinced that we have to figure out everything all by ourselves. But there is another serendipity moment just waiting to change that idea.

DISCOVERING YOUR GIFT

Along with the idea that we each have a unique mission here in life, many feel we are also blessed with a special gift or talent for carrying out our mission effectively. Again, this notion is a difficult one to dismiss easily. It has many positive implications and no negative ones. We are all truly different from one another in regards to our abilities, knowledge, personalities, learning styles, characteristics, motivations, strengths and weaknesses. Somehow that gift may be hidden among those things.

Until you take the time to see what it is you seem to do the best and enjoy the most, this talent may stay dormant. However, there are clues to help, just like with remembering your contract. We all have a tiny piece of the puzzle and when we start sharing our pieces with each other, we get a much bigger and clearer picture.

REALIZING MEANINGFUL COINCIDENCES

This may be one of those hindsight realizations. I know it has been for me. The more I look back over my life, the more people I think about who were trying to tell me something important, but I didn't always listen to their whispers. I was too busy creating chaos in trying to become who I wanted to be, on my own.

Meaningful encounters with important other people with whom we have valuable information to exchange, happen all the time. They are not random or chance encounters. It is unfortunate when we miss these opportunities or mistake them for something else. The way to approach these moments is to follow your intuitive hunches. What have you got to lose? My own understanding of serendipity came from many reoccurring meaningful coincidences I have had. Sharing secrets and suspicions is a serendipitous way to close the gap between who you are and who you want to be.

RECONCILING OPPOSITES

A particularly wonderful and awesome moment of serendipity is the instantaneous, profound understanding of the underlying unity of all illusory opposites. This is a truth that eludes us for what seems to be an eternity. Unfortunately, the two different sides of the same coin often happen so far apart in time or distance that you can't see the connection. During much of the time we are stuck with 180-degree vision, so to speak.

Many of us also have this strange obsession of focusing mostly on differences rather than similarities. The clues are there in the similarities though, we just aren't looking close enough. Night does turn into day and good does emerge from the worst of tragedies. Putting things back together that we took apart earlier, is one of the gaps we need to close to feel the sense of "wholeness" we crave in making real progress in our journey.

BECOMING A STUDENT AGAIN

The most important moment of serendipity for me was a humble realization about what little I

actually knew compared to all that is available to know. I am also proud to say that all I think I know may not necessarily be so. This flash of humility set me free to become a student again and start learning what I don't know in order to make progress at closing the gap in becoming who I want to be.

Without the need to feel insecure or be defensive about the correctness of all my precious beliefs and knowledge, I can now ask questions to find out what I need to know. This openness also allows me to pay more attention to listening to all the clues offered by others during the frequent meaningful coincidences to which I am becoming more sensitive. Oddly, my piece of the puzzle seems to be getting bigger.

Serendipity is a natural and graceful style of life. You are not really sure whether you are actually exercising your free will for the first time or finally just accepting your destiny. For some strange reason they both seem to be the same thing. This might be the ultimate moment of serendipity we are all searching for. That is my suspicion.

About the Author

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4 Little Known Meditation Secrets

By Matt Clarkson

Secret #1: The True Purpose of Meditation

Many people feel a sense of fascination when confronted with the possibility of mystic visions, psychic intuition and heightened mental functioning. While meditators often report these sorts of improvements, these experiences should not be the primary reason for practice. The purpose of meditation is to bring us back to ourselves.

As we become healthier, happier and realize greater self-awareness, the other benefits of meditation begin to follow naturally -- improved mental functioning, greater intuition as well as greater access to unconscious resources and abilities.

Secret #2: Distraction Does Not Equal Failure

Meditation is not work in the sense that you have to "force" yourself to concentrate completely for long periods of time. If we consciously try to prevent thinking, it's going to have a negative impact on the meditation.

Instead, whenever we become lost in thought or confusion, we simply acknowledge those thoughts and then gently return the attention to the object of the meditation. We do this as many times as distraction or thought occurs. Eventually, the mind becomes calmer and discursive thought begins to slow.

Secret #3: Insight Alone Is Not Enough

Insight alone will not transform our lives. Meditation is likely to help us by giving us larger perspectives and increasing clarity of thought. But although our sense of inner guidance might become stronger, unless we ACT on that guidance, we will never manifest the changes we truly want in our lives.

This doesn't just mean we need to take action in our outer world, for example, having an honest conversation with a friend or paying a bill.

It also means we must actively request the assistance of the unconscious in a clear and persistent way. When you do that, as I teach in "Secrets of Meditation, Energy and Manifestation," you find yourself magnetically drawn toward your dreams with an irresistible impulse.

Secret #4: Learn To Let Go

Once you have made your request, it's important that you let go. Don't be concerned with HOW you're going to get what you truly want in your life. Needing to know how can hamper the process of making it manifest in the outer world. Learn to trust your unconscious.

Some changes -- perhaps all of them -- will happen automatically. I have personally found that many of my destructive habits simply dropped away with minimal conscious effort.

For me, this was achieved not by self-discipline and will power, but rather a "letting go" and a realization that spiritual growth is a natural process powered by parts of ourselves that know more than we can understand consciously.

As we let go consciously and receive more input from these parts, we learn to trust this feeling, this feeling that we are in safe hands and that something amazing is about to happen.

About the Author

Matt Clarkson has created a no cost e-course teaching simple meditation exercises for busy people. Each "Daily Meditation" is an exercise, inspirational message or tip to help you calm the mind and reduce stress. If your health is important to you, go here now: ==>

<http://www.SecretsofMeditation.com>

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From Meditation to Contemplation

From The Mental Body

By Arthur E. Powell

In Meditation we discover what the object is as compared with other things, and in relation to them. We go on with this process of reasoning and argument until we can reason and argue no more about the object: then we suppress the process, stopping all comparing and arguing, with the attention fixed actively upon the object, trying to penetrate the indefiniteness which for us appears to surround it. This is contemplation.

The beginner should bear in mind that meditation is a science of a lifetime, so that he should not expect to attain to the stage of pure contemplation in his earlier efforts.

Contemplation may be described also as keeping the consciousness on one thing and drawing it into oneself so that the thinker and it becomes one. When a well-trained mind can maintain its one-pointedness or concentration for some time, and can then drop the object, maintaining the fixed attention, but without the attention being directed to anything, then the stage of contemplation is reached. In this state the mental body shows no image; its own materials are held steady and firm, receiving no impressions, perfectly calm, like still water. This state cannot last for more than a very brief period, being like the "critical" state of a chemist, the point between two states of matter. Expressed in another way, as the mental body is stilled, the consciousness escapes from it and passes into and out of the "laya centre," the neutral points of contact between the mental and the casual body.

This passage is accompanied by a momentary swoon, or loss of consciousness, the inevitable result of the disappearance of objects of consciousness, followed by consciousness in the higher body. The dropping out of objects of consciousness belonging to the lower worlds is thus followed by the appearance of objects of consciousness in the higher world. Then the ego can shape the mental body according to his own lofty thoughts, and permeate it with his own vibrations. He can mould it after the visions he has obtained of planes even higher than his own, and can thus convey to the lower consciousness ideas to which the mental body would otherwise be unable to respond.

These are the inspirations of genius, that flash down into the mind with dazzling light and illuminate a world. The very man himself who gives them to the world can scarcely tell, in his ordinary mental state, how they have reached him; but he knows that in some strange way ". . . . the power within me peeling Lives on my lip and beckons with my hand."

Of this nature also are the ecstasy and visions of Saints, of all creeds and in all ages; in these cases, prolonged and absorbing and absorbing prayer, or contemplation, has produced the necessary brain-condition. The avenues of the senses have become closed by the intensity of the inner concentration, and the same state is reached, spasmodically and involuntarily, which the Raja Yogi seeks deliberately to attain.

The transition from meditation to contemplation has been described as passing from meditation "with seed" to meditation "without seed." Having steadied the mind, it is held poised on the highest point of the reasoning, the last link in the chain of argument, or on the central thought or figure of the whole process; that is meditation with seed. Then the student should let everything go, but still keeping the mind in the position gained, the highest point reached, vigorous and alert. That is meditation without seed. Remaining poised, waiting in the silence and the void, the man is in the "cloud." Then suddenly, there will be a change, a change unmistakable, stupendous, incredible. This is contemplation, leading to illumination. Thus, for example, practising contemplation on the ideal man, on a Master, having formed an image of the Master, the student contemplates it with ecstasy, filling himself with its glory and its beauty, and then straining upwards towards Him, he endeavours to raise his consciousness to the ideal, to merge himself in it, to become one with it.

The momentary swoon mentioned above is called in Sanskrit the Dharma-Megha, the cloud of righteousness; Western mystics speak of the it as the "Cloud on the Mount," the "Cloud on the Sanctuary," the "Cloud on the Mercy-Seat." The man feels as though surrounded by a dense mist, conscious that he is not alone, but unable to see. Presently the cloud thins, and then the consciousness of the higher plane dawns. But before it does so it seems to the man that his very life is draining away, that he is hanging in a void of great darkness, unspeakably lonely. But, "Be still, and know that I am God." In that silence and stillness the Voice of the Self shall be heard, the glory of the Self shall be seen. The cloud vanishes and the Self is made manifest.

Before it is possible to pass from meditation to contemplation, wishing and hoping must be entirely given up, at least during the period of practice: in other words, Kama must be perfectly under control. The mind can never be single while wishes occupy it; every wish is a seed from which may spring anger, untruthfulness, impurity, resentment, greed, carelessness, discontent, sloth, ignorance, ect. While one wish or hope remains, these violations of the law are possible. So long as there are wishes, non-satisfactions, they will call one aside; the stream of thought is ever seeking to flow aside into the little gullies and channels left open by unsatisfied desires and indecisive thought. Every unsatisfied desire, every un-thought-out problem, will present a hungry mouth ever calling aside the attention; when the train of thought meets a difficulty it will swing aside to attend to these calls. Tracing out in interrupted chains of thought, it will be found that they have their source in unsatisfied desires and unsettled problems.

The process of contemplation commences when the conscious activity begins to run, as it were, at right angles to the usual activity, which endeavours to understand a thing in reference to other things of its own nature and plane; such movement cuts across the planes of its existence and penetrates into its subtler inner nature. When the attention is no longer divided into parts by the activities of comparing, the mind will move as a whole, and will seem quite still, just as a spinning top may appear to stand still when it is in most rapid motion.

In contemplation one no longer thinks about the object; it is better even not to start with any idea of the self and the object as two different things in relation to one another, because to do so will tend to colour the idea with feeling. The endeavour should be made to reach such a point of self-detachment that the contemplation can start from inside the object itself, the mental enthusiasm and energy being at the same time kept up all along the line of thought. The consciousness is to be held, poised like a bird on the wing, looking forward and never thinking of turning back.

In contemplation the thought is carried inwards until it can go no further; it is held in that position without going back or turning aside, knowing that there is something there, although it is unable to grasp clearly what it is. In this contemplation there is, of course, nothing in the nature of sleep or mental inactivity, but an intense search, a prolonged effort to see in the indefiniteness something definite, without descending to the ordinary lower regions of conscious activity in which the vision is normally clear and precise.

A devotee would practise contemplation in a similar manner, but in his case the activity would be mainly feeling rather than thought.

In contemplation on his own inner nature, the student repudiates his identity with the outer bodies and with the mind. In this process he is not divesting himself of attributes, but of limitations. The mind is swifter and freer than the body, and beyond the mind is the spirit, which is freer and swifter still. Love is more possible in the quietude of the heart than in any outer expression, but in the spirit beyond the mind it is divinely certain. Reason and judgment ever correct the halting evidence of the senses; the vision of the spirit discerns the truth without organs and without mind.

The key to success at every step of these practises may be stated thus: obstruct the lower activities, while maintaining the full flow of conscious energy. First, the lower mind must be, made vigorous and alert; then its activity must be obstructed while the impetus gained is used to exercise and develop the higher faculties within.

As the ancient science of Yoga teaches, when the processes of the thinking mind are repressed by the active will, the man finds himself in a new state of consciousness which transcends and selects among desires, and just as desires prompt to particular actions and efforts. Such a superior state of consciousness cannot be described in terms of the lower mind, but its attainment means that the man is conscious that he is something above mind and though even though mental activity may be going on, just as all cultured people recognise that they are not the physical body, even while that body may be acting.

There is thus another state of existence, or rather another living conception of life, beyond the mind with its laboured processes of discernment, of comparisons and casual relations between things. That higher state is to be realised only when the activities of consciousness are carried, in all their earthly fervour and vigour, beyond the groping cave-life in which they normally dwell. The higher consciousness will come to all men sooner or later; and when it comes all life will suddenly appear changed.

As the student by his meditation grows richer in spiritual experience, he will thus find New phases of consciousness gradually opening up within him. Fixed in aspiration upon his ideal, he will presently aware of the influence of that ideal raying down upon him, and as he makes a desperate effort to reach the object of his devotion, for a brief moment the flood-gates of heaven itself will be opened and he will find himself made one with his ideal and suffused with the glory of its realisation. Having transcended and more formal figures of the mind, an intense effort is made to reach upwards. Then will come the attainment of that state of ecstasy of spirit, when the limits of the personality have fallen away and all shadow of separateness has vanished in the perfect union of object and the seeker.

As is said in The Voice of the Silence: " Thou canst not travel the Path before thou hast become that Path itself . . . Behold ! thou has become the light, thou hast become the sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art thyself the object of thy search: the voice unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds I one."

The Meaning of Life

By Jason Light

The Meaning of Life is one of the great mysteries that philosophers and seekers of truth have been searching for over the centuries, the problem being is that the tendency has been to look externally for the answer when all that is needed is to look within.

All the answers that you seek are within you, only clues to these answers will be found outside, each one in its own special way specifically designed to make you question yourself and look within. But unless we recognise these clues for what they truly are, we will follow them like a signpost and head off in another external direction looking for answers that aren't out there and blindly ignoring the truth that the answers that we are seeking are within us all.

The Universe is very simple in its structure, circles within circles wheels within wheels each one turning in precise precision to allow the next movement to take place. From the cycles of seasons to the orbits of the planets to the perpetual cycle of birth, death & rebirth, each circle must be completed before the next can begin.

As the universe is simple in its structure, so is the Meaning of Life. Unfortunately we humans tend to think that the answer must be long and complicated because the question seems to us to be so complex, and as such we tend to overlook the simplistic answers, disregarding them as trivial and irrelevant.

We tend to think too much, over analysing every single thought and process for faults and so called reason. Our logical mind overriding our innate natural ability to feel as we try to control our emotions with our mental thought process, instead of letting our core feelings guide us to where we naturally want and need to be.

Our feelings are the most important part of our lives, for without them how would we experience, learn, develop or grow?

How would we know the sun was shining on our skin if we didn't feel its warmth?

How could we experience the connection between beings if we didn't feel love?

Love isn't rational, it's not logical, it can't be measured, weighed or wrapped but without its life giving properties, people, like plants without water would wither.

Love itself can't be touched but people can be touched by it, it can be freely given and received but is not physical in form. It touches the heart when it's given and opens the heart when it's received; it reaches our spiritual side and awakens us to the wonders of the universe, love is the ultimate emotion.

Our emotions make us who we are; they make us human, they allow us to feel, to experience, to love. Only by allowing ourselves to feel these emotions do we start to open ourselves to the meaning of life, which is: Awaken to your Spiritual Heart.

Your Spiritual Heart is not to be confused with your physical heart which pumps blood around your body, nor is it to be mistaken for the heart chakra which acts as the gateway that connects us to our outgoing emotions and incoming universal love.

Our Spiritual Heart is the one true centre of our spiritual being, the heart of our higher self; it is from our spiritual heart that pure unconditional love flows out into the world. It resides deep within our light body and draws part of its energy from the universal love that flows through the heart chakra, the rest it creates through pure divine intent.

To start to awaken to your Spiritual Heart and thus understand the meaning of life, you must first learn to switch off and calm the thought process within your logical, rational and structured mind, for it is this part of your mind that has been programmed by the society in which we live and thus blocks you from opening your spiritual heart.

Society isn't happy unless it can put everything and everyone into a pigeon hole with some type of label on it to explain itself and its actions. But some things in life like love don't fit into boxes and therefore can't be rationally explained but they still exist within the universe and do hold sway over our experiences and lives on a daily basis.

There are many ways in which to calm the mind, meditation, yoga, tai chi or any of the numerous other forms of self relaxation techniques available today will help. It doesn't matter which form you prefer as long as it relaxes you enough to calm the logical mind, enabling you to feel your Spiritual Heart as it begins the process of awakening.

Only by learning to calm the mind and open to the feelings within the body can you expect to reach the heights of pure pleasure and oneness that comes from opening to the Spiritual Heart. You will know that you have achieved the awakening of the Spiritual Heart when you feel a wave of overwhelming compassion and pure unconditional love flow through your being, lifting and linking you to a higher purpose in life that you ever thought possible.

You are all singular sole travellers, beings of light filled with love, you came to this world alone and you will leave alone, whilst you are here you will interact with other beings to learn, develop and grow through the experiences that you are drawn to along the pathway of your journey. These experiences are the clues that you need to start the process of awakening to your Spiritual Heart.

We are our own worst enemy's and yet at the same time we are our own best friends, all we need do is recognise the clues that are given to us throughout of lives, directing us to look inside and awaken our Spiritual Hearts to find the answers that we seek and discover that the Meaning of Life was with us all along. Copyright © 1997 ~ 2004
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About the Author

Jason is a unique healer, writer and spiritual teacher who uses his natural affinity with the universe to help improve people's health, well being and lifestyle by explaining and demonstrating how to open their spiritual hearts and minds to the wonders of the universe. He has written, recorded and created many development tools over the years which have been used to treat and educated people from all over the world to not only improve their health and general well being but to also help them find their true spiritual pathway.

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The Middle Way

By Christmas Humphreys

From The Way of Action

There is a Middle Way, O Bhikkhus, discovered by the Tathagata, a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana . . .

This is the 'doctrine of the mean', avoiding all extremes of every kind, eschewing dogmatism, fanaticism and all intolerance, was described in the first recorded sermon of the Buddha, and is one of the basic principles of Buddhism. Here we are only concerned with it as an ingredient in Right Action, for no act is ideally right that swerves by a hair's breadth from the middle way between all the pairs of opposites which collectively portray the indivisible unity of the One, and still more falsely the Non- duality which lies beyond One and Two.

First we must face it, the dual fact that the right way lies between all extremes and that a million pairs of the opposites divide our interest every moment of the waking day. The duality is inevitable, and inherent in the manifestation in the universe of THAT. It is therefore useless to proclaim in any argument, 'There is no difference. It's all the same thing, really.' True, the opposites are as the two sides of the coin, complementary, but the two sides of a coin are different, as are male and female, night and day. Some tension between the opposites is equally inevitable. This twin polarity of the magnetic field, the positive and the negative terminals of that form of life we call electricity, the desire of the male and female for each other, these create tension which will never die until the two become one in a higher state in which both, though separate, are merged in a higher unity. In the same way, in-breathing and out breathing, work and rest are alternating states, and the presence of the one implies the existence, earlier or later in the illusion of time, of the other.

The 'Higher Third'

Meanwhile the human mind, dimly but deeply aware of its oneness with All-Mind, forever seeks the union. It will not find it either opposite, nor in both, and still less in attempt at compromise. God and Mammon are truly alternatives, and it has been interestingly said that compromise is the devil. Right can never be a mixture of right and wrong, and at any one moment we either create or destroy. The solution of the problem, the integration of the pairs, the release from the tension, is to be found in what I have elsewhere called a Higher Third, a point which makes a triangle with any pair, yet is not between them on their plane. As Jung pointed out in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, no problem is ever solved on its own plane. Only when consciousness is raised to a higher level does the tension fade, and the problem, being seen in a new light, is no longer a problem. The faculty by which the opposites are finally transcended is the intuition, the instrument in man for the awareness of Prajna, the supreme Wisdom which, with supreme Compassion is one of the ultimate two. 'The Prajna-eye ', says Dr Suzuki, 'placing itself on the boundary-line of Oneness and Manyness . . . of Enlightenment and Ignorance, takes in these two worlds at a glance as one Reality. The Prajna is not on this side, nor on that side nor in the middle; when it is subjected to discrimination it is lost, it is no more there.'

In his Supreme Doctrine, Benoit calls this Higher Third the Superior Principle which reconciles the two inferior principles, and he adds a further point of importance. Man, he says, is apt to see them collaborating in this struggle. Yet the pairs are truly in collaboration to produce that which transcends them, and they can only die as duality in the arms of that which gave them birth.

There is a Buddhist scripture immensely popular in China and Japan which is variously translated, for the Chinese ideographs are highly compressed in meaning. In Dr Suzuki's translation we read,

'Pursue not the outer entanglements,
Dwell not in the inner void;
When the mind rests serene in the oneness of things,
The dualism vanishes by itself.'

In this serenity of mind or heart,
The pairs coalesce.

To set up what you like against what you dislike,
This is the disease of the mind:
When the deep meaning (of the Way) is not understood
Peace of mind is disturbed and nothing is gained.

But, When dualism no more obtains
Even oneness itself remains not as such.

The joy of flow

One way to achieve this peace of mind is to let go of either bank of the river and to be content, and it is a deep content, to flow with the stream. So long as a man walks on, or flows, or perceives his substance to exist of motion alone as modern scientists are bold enough to declare, much will happen. All flows; to stop illusion, and to stop on either bank of the river of flow is a cause of pain. The man who keeps moving, not in aggressive action but in full serenity of mind, has nothing to fear from anything in the world. He is impregnable, for he has no possessions to lose, no goal to attain. He has no feelings where he has no self to be hurt; balanced, he cannot fall, and he sees the field of action in its entirety. Thus his is one with that 'Power divine which moves to Good', the principle of Enlightenment which dwells in everything, and he knows, beyond all reasoning, that all is as it should be, that things indeed work well. If this is a hard saying it will seem less hard at a later stage of the of the journey. But the Middle way is a knife edge, to achieve and to maintain. 'A tenth of an inch's difference, and heaven and earth are set apart.' It moves between all extremes, 'between the carelessness of the average sensual man and the strained overeagerness of the zealot for salvation. To achieve it one must walk delicately, and to maintain it, must learn to combine the most intense alertness with a tranquil and self-denying passivity, the most indomitable determination with a perfect submission to the leadings of the spirit.' Yet even the knife-edge must not be sought too strenuously, for such effort might be may be born of self.

The Mind/Body Connection

By Sibyl McLendon

The strong connection between what we think, what we believe and our health is no longer relegated to being "mumbo-jumbo" by many professionals. Doctors like Andrew Weil have popularised the idea that what we think creates how we feel. Modern society is finally catching up with what aboriginal cultures have always known: Your mind controls your health.

I was taught this fundamentally many years ago. I was in an incredibly difficult time of my life, and I was very depressed. Every day, I would silently say to myself, "I just can't live like this anymore. I would be better off dead." Well, much to my amazement, I ended up in an emergency room in the middle of the night, with a doctor standing over me, telling me, "You need to understand how dangerous this is. You can easily die. If this infection goes to your brain, you will drop dead in your tracks. If it goes to your heart, you will need a heart transplant."

My brain had been constantly telling my body that I didn't want to live, and my body responded by creating an infection called Facial Cellulitis. On that table, right then and there, I realized that I did NOT want to die; I very much wanted to live and recreate my life. Obviously I did live, and I did recreate my life into one that worked. I am very, very careful of what I tell my body now!

We are all sending subtle and subconscious signals to our bodies every day. These signals are heard loud and clear by our bodies! Is it time for you to re-think what you are telling your body right now?

Here is another, less dramatic signal that many people send to their bodies: I have no support in my life. No one supports me in the things that need to be done. This can be job-related (my boss does not appreciate me, my co-workers are taking advantage of me...); they can be family-related (my mother is always criticizing me, my spouse never helps around the house...). This thought/belief easily leads to lower back problems! Your back can't differentiate between outside support and spinal support.

Hanging on to anger can manifest in a variety of ways as physical ailments. It can cause anything from sinus infections to life-threatening illnesses such as MS. Holding on to old hurts can create heart problems. Fear is closely related to breathing problems such as asthma. Are you carrying around the weight of the world? I suspect your shoulders hurt. Is someone around you a constant source of annoyance? Then I bet your neck hurts.

It may be very difficult for you to see how you are manifesting health problems in your life by your thoughts. You may need some professional help to sort things out. If you need help, I encourage you to get it. The mind/body connection can be a vicious cycle; you are depressed, you get sick, then, being sick makes you even more depressed, which makes you even sicker. If you can break the cycle, everything will get better.

Begin to really listen to what you say to yourself. Really feel your feelings! Become aware and mindful of what you are telling your body. Changes in what you say/what you believe can lead to dramatic changes in how you feel.

There is an excellent book that shows the mind connection to just about every physical ailment there is. It is called You Can Heal Your Life

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1561706280/circleofgrace-20>

and was written by a remarkable woman named Louise Hay. It is short, simple and to the point.

If you are sick and tired of feeling sick and tired, before you spend a lot of money on things that affect your outsides, try working on your insides. It really is just as easy to create health as it is to create disease. Tell your body what you want it to do for you. Be fearless and faithful. The rewards are unimaginable.

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About the Author

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Get her new book, The Garden Of The Free Spirit!

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The Two Ways - Mysticism and Occultism

By Betty Irene Miller

The true mystic is always searching for light, for a sense of the Presence of God, for a realization of that higher power which he knows exists and with which he would become One. But he is also eager for the Divine Presence to recognize him, which keeps him in the realm of the self. He is a see-er of visions, disciple of Christ and a devotee. Nevertheless he is often fearful and seldom feels that he has reached the beloved Presence.

But when the mystic finally reaches and accepts an understanding of occultism, he sees that which always moved him to his endeavours as a mystic, was actually the Real Self. Following this he sees that union with the Real Self or "impersonalness", frees him from duality and helps him to see that he is now what he always wanted to be a Son of God and One and one with all other Sons and that this brings him into a consciousness of that One in whom we live and move and have our being.

The occultist is one who, in pursuing occult study and practice, finds that "coarse matter and crude immature physical bodies" are a real menace to him. They make "the threat of disruption too great" and "disintegration too awful" (Cosmic Fire, p108).

"The true occultist is a scientist and a devotee". If the two are not merge then we have the mystic and a man in danger of black magic, governed by intellect instead of self-less-ness. The occultist deals with the facts and always does away with mystery when he can. The mystic loves the element of mystery and does not easily give it up. The " occult student is one who is in search of the hidden". He is in search of that integrating thread which will enable him to blend the three bodies and thus become a real personality. Then he is ready to go on to further fusions. While mysticism is the urge to union with the divine. Hence the tendency of the mystic to overlook facts in searching to understand the mysteries of this union.

"The occultist does not concern himself with effects but only with causes". The mystic is more likely to believe in effects and watch for them, for thus he proves his theories and gets the reward. But the occultist stands on scientific fact.

Usually the mystic is subject to those diseases which block the free life and inpouring energy of the soul. He brings this blockage about by succumbing to his own thought forms which have been created through his growing aspiration. These then become barriers between him and the free life of the soul and block his contact with soul energy. But the occultist falls a victim to the generally increased flow of soul energy and the energy flowing to him from the group, his Ashram, his master and the Hierarchy. All of these affect him accordingly to his ray and polarisation, often causing excessive, localized trouble. The mystic does not find himself subjective to the same conditions, unless he is rapidly becoming an occultist. (These statements however, do not apply after the third initiation.)

Triadal Wisdom which is part of the fiery path, exists for personality use, but the barriers of the lower mind prevent the transfer of this Wisdom until the lights of the Triad, soul and the lower mind, merge and serve as one. Then the Wisdom of the Triad flows freely and gives of itself to the personality as a channel for expression. This the occultist presumable knows. The mystic too, knows something of Triadal Wisdom but at the same time is so engrossed with working on self desires, even although of a higher nature, that he misses the service of the three fires that would in turn serve others. The time does come when the initiate (occultist and mystic), can and does work with the three energies of life, personality and soul. Then he becomes an expression or manifestation consciously of the three aspects of the Trinity and is on the fiery path.

The occult student is taught early that he must be able to tread the fiery way and at the same time serve truly his fellowmen in his own environment wherever that may be. The mystic is often so engrossed in meditation for his personal salvation or the salvation of others, that he withdraws from his fellowmen in order to work out that salvation. The occultist is taught how to use energies and forces so as to sweep away the concentration on lower grade matter and so have an avenue for higher vibrations. The mystic may and often does receive higher vibrations but without training such as the occultist has, much of the power of these vibrations is lost. One can easily see that each type needs the other and how in time they must synthesize.

The mystic goes quite a distance on the way. He learns to control the astral body, he recognises and walks in the Light of the Soul, but often is bowed down by the burdens which that very Light discloses and while he does believe in God unfalteringly he often cannot explain the 'why' of appearances and so is led to condemn them. Nevertheless his unswerving loyalty to God-Spirit is something the occultist must learn too. The mystic, in spite of what has been said above, finds it often difficult to differentiate between the astral and mental worlds. This he learns from occult teachings. It is easy, however, for the mystic to enter the inner world and reside there. The occultist does not find this so easy. But the occultist can face facts much easier than the mystic. The mystic finds it easy to meditate and loves the life of meditation, understanding the service that meditation can give. The occultist understands this fact without finding meditation so easy. Perhaps this is because the two need to synthesize their abilities, or the lower mind becomes the barrier for the occultist.

The mystic finds it comparatively easy to understand the realm of the heart and its qualities which he is always trying to express. But he does not often appreciate the mental plane and is indeed taught not to view things from the mental plane but from the aspirational-soul plane. Perhaps this is because the mystic is unconsciously trying to lift his consciousness above the consciousness of the little self. The occultist is taught from the beginning to focus his consciousness on the mental plane and work from there. Hence his view is not so restricted. The mystic knows little of the higher world except to him it is God and His Presence of Light that make this world. The occultist learns that there are many worlds of expression in any of which, or all, he may express.

The mystic knows love which he calls the Love of God but the distinction between love and Love is not always clear. Here again the occult student is taught the difference but he finds it more difficult to practise compassion and that kind of understanding which allows of heart service.

It seems, although this may be personal, that the mystic does not understand how to free the Self from the bonds of illusion and glamour as the occultist is taught to do. However, this does not mean that the occultist always does it, although both mystic and occultist will have to achieve this freedom.

It seems that both mystic and occultist are taught by the power of the "third eye" and that it is possible to see Light everywhere through the use of this eye. But is the occultist who knows "the soul is the eye of the monad enabling the monad, which is pure being, to work, to contact, to know and to see. The mystic learns this from the occultist". It is believed also that both mystic and occultist learn that by using the power of the third eye, the astral body can be rebuilt and held steady through focussed attention in meditation.

Because of the mystic's emphasis on the Will-of-God, which is more or less dictatorial according to man's attitude, he is not apt to understand the varying aspects of Will or the rays and how his life is influenced thereby. The occult student is taught these truths as a necessary part of his education-understanding-practice.

Both the occultist and the mystic are used to suffering, but the mystic - perhaps more than the occultist, at least in the beginning of his study-work realizes that all suffering has a definite goal. The mystic seems to strain after the meaning of the world about him, by trying to attain the consciousness of the inner world, where that meaning is made clear. But the occultist is taught that the world of meaning is revealed through everything he contacts, sees, touches for the true meaning of all is veiled only by our illusions and glamour's.

The mystic, through feelings that reach out like antennae, is aware of and sensitive to the subtle world. Often this seems a highly satisfying experience and he seeks more time for its repetition. The hierarchy sometimes finds it possible to use mystics and send through them their own illuminated thoughts, for the mystic is usually a good teacher and can thus aid in world service.

In many respects the mystic purifies the lower self without then understanding how to make use of it. But when ready he is brought into contact with occult teachings on what often seems like fiery and war-like ground. Here perhaps the mystic and the occultist can meet and merge understanding the mystic learning to make new clothes for his ideas, the clothes of factual evidence; the occultist learning to control the fire by love and loving service, rather than by the too abrupt and too assured ways that he often uses.

Both occultist and mystic must learn "the way of the cross". The occultist is taught much sooner and more definitely the meaning of the cross than is the mystic but the mystic easily understands the suffering that goes along with the cross experience for he has had much of it in all forms. When fiery and subtle worlds merge then both learn through ordinary daily experiences and the attitudes that must be maintained, that it is through suffering that the life of the self is raised on the cross. The building of the antahkarana is an illustration of this for as one by one the old and limiting beliefs are discarded, the cross is mounted and the antahkarana flows forward.

The following quotation from Esoteric Astrology, p 307 states briefly and concisely what is asked of man if he wishes to achieve initiation "Before individual man can achieve initiation, he must be fully self-conscious, mystically oriented and occultly developed. He must be aware of himself as he essentially is a soul involved in form which is itself developed and unfolded through soul activity; he must be a developed mystic capable of pure vision, motivated by spiritual intent and able to perceive the uses of inherent sensitivity; he must also be a trained occultist, mentally polarized and profoundly aware of the realities, forces and energies, of existence and, therefore, free from the ordinary glamour's and illusions which colour the reactions and life of the average man".

The Power of Negative Thinking

By Remez Sasson

For some reason, most people find it easier to think in a negative way than in a positive manner. It seems that some effort is needed to think positive thoughts, whereas negative thoughts come easily and uninvited. This has much to do with education and the environment one has been living in.

In order to understand how positive thinking works, and how to use it efficiently, it is important to understand the power of negative thinking.

If you have been brought up in a happy and positive atmosphere, where people value success and self-improvement, then it will be easier for you to think positively and expect success. If you have been brought up under poor or difficult situations, you will probably go on expecting difficulties and failure.

From an early age people let outside influences shape their minds. They view everything through their predominant mental attitude. If their thoughts are positive, that is fine, but if they are negative, their lives and circumstances will probably mirror these thoughts.

If you believe that you are going to fail, you will unconsciously sabotage every opportunity to succeed. If you are afraid of meeting new people or having close relationships, you will do everything to avoid people and relationships, and then complain that you are lonely and nobody loves you.

Do you often think about difficulties, failure and disasters? Do you keep thinking about the negative news you have seen on the TV or read in the newspapers?

Do you see yourself stuck and unable to improve your life or your health? Do you frequently think that you do not deserve happiness or money, or that it is too difficult to get them? If you do, then you will close your mind, see no opportunities, and behave and react in such ways, as to repel people and opportunities. You let the power of negative thinking rule your life.

The mind does not usually judge or examine thoughts and opinions before accepting them. If what it hears, sees and reads is always negative, it accepts this as the standard way of thinking and behavior.

The media constantly bombards the mind with a lot of information about disasters, catastrophes, wars and other negative happenings. This information sinks into the subconscious mind, and let the power of negative thinking grow. By occupying the mind with negative thoughts and expectations one radiate negative energy into the surrounding world, thus creating and recreating more negativity, failures and disasters.

The mind can be directed towards positive thinking or negative thinking. The power of thoughts is a neutral power. The way one thinks determines whether the results are positive and beneficial or negative and harmful. It is the same of energy acting in different ways.

Persistent inner work can change habits of thoughts. You must be willing to put energy and time to avoid negative thinking and pursue positive thinking, in order to change your mental attitude.

Each time you catch yourself thinking a negative thought, change it into a positive one.
If you catch yourself visualizing failure, switch to visualizing success.
If you hear yourself repeating negative words, switch to positive ones.

If you hear yourself saying, "I cannot", say to yourself, "I can".

Do you repeat useless and unnecessary negative words and phrases in your mind? Change them to positive ones.

Open your mind to positive attitude, happenings and events. Expect them and think about them, and soon you life will change for the better. Decide that from today, from this very moment, you are leaving negative thinking behind, and starting on the way towards positive thinking and behavior. It is never too late. Soon your life will turn into a fascinating, wonderful journey.

About the Author

Remez Sasson writes and teaches about self-improvement, spiritual growth, meditation, positive thinking, creative visualization, success and mind power. He is the author of several books, and the publisher of the biweekly ezine, "Consciousness and Success".

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The Power of Non Resistance

By William Frank Diedrich

When you are non-resistant toward the vision of what you want, your vision runs to meet you. You seldom win until you become willing to do without the prize. Unity writer, Imelda Shanklin, said in her book, *WHAT ARE YOU*: "Say to whatever seems worth having: 'If you do not want me as much as I want you, I do not want you at all. I can do without you and sorrow not; but I will welcome you if you come. Take your choice. It does not matter to me.'"

This may sound strange after you have spent time and energy creating your life vision. Our world seems to focus on doing and on making it happen. We believe that we have to fight for what we want. The details of your vision are effects. The cause of your effects is in your mind. If you are thinking and feeling that you must have something in order to be joyful, then you are looking to that something as your source. You are thinking that certain details in your life will make you happy. If you focus on the effects you push them away. If you focus on the cause--your true Source, your joy, your inner prosperity and well being--you attract your material desires.

Material things come and go. They are transient. Your connection to your Source is forever. It will serve you now; it will serve you always. Therefore, the details really don't matter. What matters is how you feel. Are you feeling joy? Are you feeling connected to your Source? Are you feeling in the flow? You may be tempted to think that things must be a certain way in order for you to be happy. You really don't know. You don't know how things should work out. You know how you feel and you know how you want to feel. Take your mind off what you want and place it on feeling good. Place it on loving yourself, your God, and your life. Allow yourself to be at peace.

Other people do not have to be a certain way for you to be happy. Certain deals don't have to go through in order for you to feel joy. Nothing has to happen outside of you. It all happens inside of you. Respond to life with acceptance and love. Let go of any attachment to specific results. This is the strength we call non-resistance. Non-resistance means that when the deal falls through, you are happy for the experience. Non-resistance means that when another vehicle smashes your car, you let go of anger and upset. Instead you are looking at what opportunities this "accident" presents for you. You are grateful for the new lives you get to touch as a result. Non-resistance is when you refuse to personalize the insults flung at you by another. Since you didn't "catch" them, they really aren't insults at all.

Non-resistance means that you really don't care if this customer buys your product. You care about the customer and how you can serve. If he walks away, you are grateful you did not sell him something he can't use. If he buys, you are grateful you helped another human being. Non-resistance doesn't mean pretending you don't care about the results. Non-resistance means not attaching your well-being to results. Your well-being comes from within you. Know it and feel it. This is cause. Sooner or later you will see positive results in your world. This is the effect.

The Law of Cause and Effect operates with or without your approval. God, or Creative Intelligence is your Source, whether or not you believe it. Give up your job as manager of the world. Stop criticizing others. Stop criticizing yourself. Stop wishing people or situations would be different. Focus on feeling good, on having a sense of well-being, on generating joy. Envision what you want and how you want to feel, practice feeling it, then back off on trying to control any other aspect of your vision.

If you planted seeds you would put them in the ground, cover them with soil, and water them. You would make sure they get watered until they germinate. You would not keep digging them up to see how they were doing. You would not break the seeds open to speed up germination. These things

would destroy your seeds. Visions are destroyed in the same way. We create them, and pepper them with doubt. We dig them up by trying to force situations to be what we want them to be. We worry about when it will happen, or wonder if it will happen. These thoughts can destroy your vision. Create it; care for it; and protect it from the ravages of doubt and fear. If things aren't happening fast enough for you, be non-resistant to what is.

Resistance requires the use of force. Force creates counterforce. When you push on life, life pushes back. When you try to change people they resist you. Many people make money by force. This is not prosperity. A drug dealer in Colombia is not prosperous. He may have money, but he does not have well-being. He lives in fear for his life and the lives of his family members. His lifestyle is dependent upon harming others. He may experience pleasure and feelings of control, but he does not experience true well-being. As he spends his life taking advantage of others, others wait in line to take advantage of him.

True power comes from within. Non-resistance is power. It is unshakable, because there is nothing to shake. If I am non-resistant in a negotiation, it means I am willing to do without the prize. If I am willing to walk away, I am strong and cannot be manipulated. The willingness to let go, to walk away, to do without, is powerful. It says that you trust in the Source of your power, and you are not fooled by the suggestion that anything else has power over you. What you resist has power over you. Power is a gift you give to yourself through your non-resistance to what is. The result of this gift is peace and well-being.

About the author

William Frank Diedrich is a speaker, executive coach and the author of three books, including *The Road Home: The Journey Beyond the Spiritual Quick Fix*, *30 Days to Prosperity*, and *Beyond Blaming*. To learn more about his books, services, and free gifts go to <http://transformativepress.com>

Nurturing Your Inner Guidance

By Wendy Kay

It's comforting to know that all answers to your life issues are found within yourself. You don't need external confirmation of your decisions if you learn to trust your Inner Guidance. Often however, it is easier and safer to be influenced by others (society, family, or friends), rather than to trust what you feel or know to be "true" and "right" for you. You must keep in mind that what society, family, or friends feel is best for you and your life path might not be best for you at all.

Your Inner Guidance originates from Spirit. It is composed of the same senses that exist in the Material or Physical World. The five senses you experience in Physical correlate directly to the senses in Spirit in the following manner:

Sight is the ability to see things that exist in Physical.

Clairvoyance is the ability to see things that exist in Spirit.

Hearing is the ability to hear sounds in Physical.

Clairaudience is the ability to hear vibrations and thoughts in Spirit.

Touch is the ability to feel or touch things that exist in Physical.

Clairsentience is the ability to feel energies in Spirit.

Taste is the ability to take food/items into the mouth to determine which tastes are good for you or bring you pleasure (sweet, sour, salty, bitter).

Intuition is the ability to take in and evaluate the energy in Spirit to determine what is good for you.

Scent is the ability to smell aromas or scent in Physical.

Scent is the ability to smell aromas or scent in Spirit.

Normally, the senses of Spirit are lumped together and called ESP or Extrasensory Perception. However, in reality there are at least five different "Inner Guidance Skills" hard at work giving you information about your life path from an entirely different perspective – a higher perspective. Each of those Inner Guidance Skills exists within each and every one of us. It is only your level of awareness and understanding that prevents you from using your abilities more often in your life. One of your senses might be stronger than another one. In the same way that your hearing may be impaired in Physical, it may be impaired in Spirit. Your abilities depend on what you are in Physical to do (i.e. your life's purpose).

Why is it that so many choose to ignore or suppress the messages of Spirit? One reason might be that Inner Guidance is not logical and these skills cannot be scientifically explained. In Physical, it is easier to accept what is logical or "right in front of your eyes" rather than trust a feeling, a vision, or a voice that comes from Spirit. Another reason why you might ignore or suppress your Inner Guidance is that there is a certain amount of fear associated with delving into new ideas or concepts. The fear level is different in each person. Any new experience can make you afraid, but once you repeat the experience many times, the fear disappears. It's a good idea to remember this as you nurture your abilities.

Instead of suppressing or ignoring your Inner Guidance, you should be trying to develop these skills. We need to nurture these sensitivities and understand how to take care of them just as you take care of your physical self. In the same way that you feed your physical body, experience positive activity and rest your physical body, you must feed, experience positive activity and rest your spiritual self.

Feeding, experiencing positive activity and resting of the spiritual body are a bit different from what you do to maintain your physical body. When you feed your physical body, you take food into your body, which gives you nourishment. Feeding your spiritual body is done through personal growth (life challenges) and helping people. Practicing positive activity (exercise, pleasant hobbies, socializing etc.) is pleasurable. Positive activity in Spirit is done through building a relationship with that particular reality which includes trusting what you feel or know to be true (your intuition). You rest your physical body through sleep or doing something where you don't need to think and can relieve yourself from the pressures of day-to-day living. In Spirit, you meditate to refresh the spiritual self.

When you can merge your Inner Guidance with your physical self, you will attain a state of inner peace. You will live your life based on what you are supposed to do as opposed to doing what others think is right for you.

It's time for you to start nurturing your Inner Guidance so you can achieve this desired state. Nurturing your Inner Guidance is the beginning of the beginning for your spiritual self. Although this path can be challenging at times, it is the next step in the development of mankind.

Wendy Kay is the Founder of the Oralin Centre. She has been teaching people to develop their Inner Guidance abilities for over 10 years and studying and researching the Metaphysical World for over 20 years. She offers free online courses and support for Inner Guidance development at her web site www.oralin.com

The Outer Space of the Mind: Exploring the Far Reaches of the Interior Universe

By Swami Radha

Spiritual practice is like a science. You start with a hypothesis: "This is where I think I'm heading." In the same way, if you were going into outer space you would know your mission and would have what you need to survive. Space flights are just another manifestation of our desire to break through previously accepted limitations. We explore outer space to find our place in the universe. But what is the outer space of the mind? To discover this unknown territory, our senses must be trained for greater perception. And only courageous people who passionately want to know will venture into this vastness. For some, the outer space of the mind is too intriguing to ignore. How can the mind extend beyond its present limitations? Through concentration. The concentrated mind can extend much further than the undirected mind. When you try to direct your thoughts and other thoughts intrude, energy is divided: "Here is what I want to think, and here is what actually comes through." If you can stop the influx of "other" thoughts, energy can be directed.

When you chant a mantra, for example, the sounds are vibrations. But unless you maintain your focus, the vibrations will not take you where they could. If your focus is on the physical-trying to make your voice sound just right-thoughts of self-criticism can slip in and steal part of the energy. If having a great voice was all it takes, every opera singer would have attained higher consciousness. So there is something else involved-the right focus and the ability to prevent intruding thoughts from diverting attention away from the goal.

What can be described is only the process the practices set out by those who have achieved their goal. When you become aware that others have attained extraordinary results, you may be inspired to try the same methods. Can you get the same results? When you want to duplicate an experiment, you need to observe all of the intricate single steps and take them. You can't skip some or change the order to suit yourself. Once you have attained results, you may discover a way to speed up the process. Speeding up is only possible when there is no more resistance. When resistance is dissipated that energy becomes available to you.

What this really means, in terms of spiritual practice, is to persist. Keep a close record and you will see many repeating patterns. In time you will learn to master your states of mind, just as you can wake up from a fearful dream. Each time you move one increment closer until finally you move past your intellect's defences. Then you will become aware that the intellect, although it has quite some power, does not have unlimited power. If it did, it wouldn't need to fight. So the next step is to decide to use the intellect for discrimination. Question the doubt itself: Why am I doubting? When you go past resistance, doubt, pride and the emotional impact of egocentricity, you may reach a place in your own mind that was up until now a secret. You didn't know it existed. Many things in life exist, but they have yet to be discovered. You have to discover the existence of the "hidden place of the mind." And as you do, you will strip away the mystery and diminish fear and resistance, which eat up energy. You will become much more aware of how you use energy.

Imagine the exhilaration of going into outer space for the first time. Wouldn't you just watch and absorb? You would be overwhelmed and in awe because you had not known exactly what to expect. You had speculated, but you didn't know for sure. You had many assumptions, based on imagination. Now you might find that some of what you imagined or thought possible has proven true, while you have to totally discard other preconceptions.

The journey to the outer space of the mind is actually the very same: you have heard about higher states of consciousness and people who had attained them, so you drew conclusions wrongly or rightly and created your own hypothesis. Now you find out.

The mind is like space with all the stars and planets: everything exists and is waiting to be discovered, but we can only go so far in our first explorations. Just as the first major voyages in space were to the moon, our first exploration is to the hidden place in our own mind. Just as the moon is able to reflect the light of the sun, we can discover in the mind the place that reflects and absorbs the Light of Divine Wisdom. We cannot take all the Light at once. We must take it in degrees. We may have a great flash, but it is a flash, and does not stay.

The more you overcome the resistance of the intellect, the more often you can travel to the place of Light. As you make repeated visits, you may discover new laws or circumstances that you need to become aware of, like physicists who discover the laws of the physical world or biologists who understand the laws of nature. You may not have given this cosmic law a name or defined it, but it's there. Then you will experience the repercussions of your discovery, which will reshape your entire perspective.

But you can't stop there, just as astronomers can't stop at exploring the moon but want to know about the sun and other stars, and beyond the known stars into previously unseen galaxies. What are the possibilities within the outer space of the mind? You can always discover more, and a little more, and a little more. But it is like the study of space: you can never discover it all. However, the journey of discovery alone will expand your perspective and change your view of your capabilities.

About the author

Swami Radha (1911-1995) is considered one of this century's foremost women yoginis. She is the author of many books on Yoga and other forms of spiritual practice.

Pain As A Message

By Shannon Walbran

Have you ever been struck by a headache like a lightning bolt? Succumbed to a wave of exhaustion that practically threw you down on the sofa? Or have you had more subtle but insistent pains come up out of nowhere, seemingly disconnected from any physical cause?

There is a chance that these pains might actually be messages from your spirit guides.

Your guides really want you to hear what they have to say. Although human beings can receive messages through lovely cloud patterns or a song heard on the radio, the guides know that human beings snap to attention when their bodies feel sudden sharp twinges. Remember that guides are energy and they can play with any energy system.

Pain makes you stop in your tracks and sort through your day, asking, "What might be causing this?" Fatigue could compel you to nap, in which case you might dream and receive the intended communication.

Though effective, pain is not an enjoyable way to receive a message. You can learn how to negotiate with your spirit guides, saying, "If you send me such-and-such a signal, I will take time out and meditate and receive your communication." Another option is to schedule an hour every day to focus on your guides, leaving the rest of your day to interact freely with people on the physical plane.

Although it can be said that all bodily pains have their origins in emotional states, sometimes there's a direct line between "playing tennis without warming up properly" and sore knees.

To discover whether your sudden symptom is "medical" or "spiritual" in nature, take a moment in silence, ground yourself, and ask yourself and your guides for a "yes" or a "no." You can hear this yes/no reply in one of several ways. Some people assign a very high note to a yes and a very low tone to a no and then concentrate on listening. Some people make the "OK" sign with their thumb and first finger, and then try to flick their finger past their thumb. A held circle means yes, a loose flick means no...

You can practice by asking yourself questions to which you know the answer: Was I born in this city? Do I have two sisters? In fact, every time you are about to ask yourself the important question, you can run a quick yes/no test on an obvious question to make sure you're hearing it right. Kinesiologists do this by saying, 'Give me a yes, give me a no.'

Once you've determined that your sudden symptom (fatigue or headache or other muscle pain) is indeed spiritual, then what?

Pain enters the physical sphere only when an issue has not been resolved at an energetic level. If you can identify which emotional issue is at stake, you have a better shot at figuring out what to do next.

Using your preferred yes/no technique, you can scroll through a list of emotions to see if the pain means you need to address one or more of them. A familiar list comes with the Bach flower remedies, and a more in-depth list comes with the South African Flower Essences.

When you find the emotional state you need to deal with, try not to get hung up on where it came from. For example, if you have a sharp pain in your shoulder and you strike a yes on Envy, you

don't necessarily have to figure out if you are indeed deeply envious of the lifeguard you saw at the beach yesterday. This could lead to some progress, or maybe it might be only a superficial and passing association.

Instead, just accept without labelling. "This pain is associated with the state of envy." Check in with your body. If you are right, you might feel a lessening of the pain, or it might throb once to let you know you are on track.

Promise yourself out loud that you will sit with the emotion of envy and take on what needs to be done to work on envy in your life. Next, try to find an emotional state that is the opposite of "envy" and choose one way you will integrate a positive antidote. For example, envy can mean dissatisfaction with one's present situation. You could say with conviction, "I am happy with the way things are right now."

Remember that these exercises will serve four purposes:

1. determining which sudden pains are actually spiritual messages
2. identifying the emotional state behind the pain
3. guiding you toward resolving the issues that caused you pain in the first place
4. giving you clearer communication channels with your spirit guides

Good luck!

About the Author

Shannon Walbran is a spirit interpreter and intuitive healer who channels a group of beings called "The Guides." She invites you to visit www.spiritguidance.net to read spirit messages for everyone, learn techniques for contacting your guides, and obtain personalized readings. Shannon is currently based in Cape Town, South Africa and can be contacted on shannon@spiritguidance.net, or telephoned on: +27 (72) 488-1810. Local callers dial (072) 488-1810.

Five Pathways to Listening to Your Inner Voice

By Claudette Rowley

- Is your life out of sync with your priorities?
- Do you feel like you're a hamster running on a wheel?
- Have you forgotten who you are?
- If you answered YES to any of these questions, read on. Learn to listen to your inner voice - the essence of who you are - by following these five steps:

Check in with your heart.

Social conditioning teaches us to be logical and "use our heads". When you only use your head, your experience of yourself and the world is limited. You miss out on the vital information the rest of your body, heart and soul is giving you.

Benefits: The same neurological tissue found in the brain is found in the heart. The heart is a second "brain" and our emotional centre. Listening to your head and your heart is crucial to good decision-making about your life, your business and your relationships.

New Focus: Put your hand over your heart and focus there - what is it telling you?

Connect with your body.

Your body gives you a tremendous amount of useful information that you may not be conscious of. For example, when your mother-in-law visits, does your stomach tie up in knots? When your boss yells at you, do your shoulders turn into stone? When you feel passionate and alive, does your chest feel warm and open? When we ignore the body's message, we lose out on valuable information designed to let us what works for us and what doesn't.

Benefits: For many people, fear manifests as a tightness in their chest. This is valuable information, especially if you aren't aware that you are afraid. Your body alerts you to what makes feels passionate and what doesn't. The body is a fount of wisdom designed to tell you when you're on the right path and when you aren't.

New Focus: Notice the messages your body is giving you right now. Try a self-massage to find areas in your back, neck or shoulders that are tense or knotted. What other areas of your body feel tight? Which ones feel relaxed and loose? Use this information as another key to listening to your inner wisdom.

Listen to your intuition.

Intuition is simply knowing something without knowing exactly how you know it. Connect back to a time that you had a "gut feeling" about something - the job that you knew you shouldn't take, even though it looked good on the surface or the relationship that just felt right for you. That's your intuition talking to you.

Benefits: Gut feelings are a wealth of information. Remember, your intuition is never wrong, although your interpretation of it may be incorrect. When your intuition calls to you, trust it. Practice makes perfect when it comes to using your intuition effectively.

New Focus: The next time you need to make a decision, check in with your intuition. Experiment with trusting it. When you follow your intuition, what happens? When you hear it and disregard it,

what's the outcome?

Notice your self-saboteur*.

Each of us has our very own special saboteur. The saboteur is the voice in your head that says, "You are not good enough." "Who do you think you are?" "If you take this new job, everyone will find out what a fraud you are." The saboteur's job is to "protect" you from taking risks and making changes.

Benefits: Learn to distinguish between your voice and the saboteur's mumbo-jumbo. Notice how the inner critic drives the choices and decisions you make.

New Focus: Simply notice the negative voices playing in your head. Notice the times when they crop up. Recognize that the voices aren't you and they aren't true. Learning to separate your own voice from that of the saboteur is a powerful and life changing tool.

Identify limiting beliefs.

We each carry a set of beliefs that we live by. Certain beliefs you hold consciously, while others are mainly unconscious. Beliefs develop out of past experiences and our interpretations of those experiences. Some of the conscious and unconscious beliefs that you develop limit your ability to grow and move forward in your life. For example: One of your goals as a successful entrepreneur is to make a lot of money. You discover that you have a belief - a limiting one - that it's wrong to make a lot of money. Until you begin to alter your beliefs about money, it will be more difficult for you to achieve that financial success you desire.

Benefits: Learning to notice a limiting belief allows you to become conscious of it, and then change it. Releasing a belief that limits you puts you back in the driver's seat of your life. You, rather than an old belief, make the choices that are right for you and allow you to fulfil your potential

Ways to spot a limiting belief:

You tell yourself that you only have one or two choices in a situation, or "no choice" at all. Your inner critic expresses his or her opinion. The inner critic's opinion is generally based in a limiting belief.

A decision may appear to be black and white to you, or an either/or situation.

You have decided that "this is the way the world is."

You make a decision based on fear.

You feel constricted and notice that you lack clarity about a specific situation.

New Focus: How does a particular belief allow you to attract what you really want in life? How does it prevent you from attaining your goals? When you reach an obstacle in your path, make sure that it's not an old belief in your way.

When important questions like "What do I want?" or "What's the right choice for me to make?" surface in your mind, consult your inner voice. You possess the answers you need to live a life that feels successful and fulfilling. Listening to your inner voice can lead you on a path that feels deeply satisfying. Your business and personal lives will flourish with this new level of trust in yourself.

*Based on the work of Richard Carson in Taming Your Gremlin.

About the Author

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A Guide To Getting It: A Clear, Compelling Vision

Sign up for my FREE newsletter Insights for the Savvy at <http://www.metavoice.org/newsletters/>
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Finding Peace: A Taste of Mindfulness

By Deva Ratnakara

When we are ill and don't know it, we are in a state of ignorance or delusion. We don't view ourselves as sick, so we don't believe it's necessary to go to a doctor or take any medication. We fail to recognize our own need for care and support.

The same is true of someone suffering from afflictions of the mind—ill will, ego, doubt, and frustration due to unfulfilled desires. We rarely recognize the symptoms, and if we do, we don't know how to change in order to live with greater harmony and personal power. In order to understand what is limiting us, we must learn how to see, isolate and intentionally respond to these mental obstacles.

In Sri Lanka, people frequently talk about peace. For more than 21 years, our country has been struggling for peace in a process complicated by politics, religion, economics and ethnicity. We dream of living without conflict. We long for peace to bloom in our nation.

But sometimes I feel this peace is only a dream. How can we overcome the tremendous obstacles in order to live in harmony here?

During one of my spiritual travels in northeastern Sri Lanka, I happened to stop at a tiny rural village. While eating a simple meal, I met a very poor, innocent-looking girl. She was about 16, and had spent her entire life in this war-torn area of poverty and despair.

In our conversation, it became clear that she had no concept of life without violence. She had lost her relatives, feared for her own life, and experienced the ravages of hunger and homelessness on a daily basis. I was struck by her suffering. Her appearance conveyed only a hint of what she had endured. She looked calm and peaceful, but underneath that serene countenance was a bubbling cauldron of pain, fear, hopelessness, and despair.

Most striking of all was that she was completely unaware of the effects of her chronic mental anguish. She had not even a vague understanding that her suffering created such insurmountable obstacles to peace and harmony in her own mind. She knew nothing other than what her life had shown her, and was so completely immersed in her suffering that she could not see the toll it had taken.

A few days later, I was in the bustling city of Colombo. I saw many people going about their business, and noticed that same innocent, eerily peaceful look that I'd first noticed about the young girl. I had to wonder what kind of suffering they were experiencing under their own smiling masks.

We always sympathize with the unhappiness and sorrow of others. We help people all the time, and this is good and kind of us. But we fail to realize that we ourselves are suffering. Everything that happens in the world affects us all. The relentless desire for more of everything is a driving factor that leaves behind unhappiness and discontentment.

We know this. We feel it in our hearts.

In order to relieve ourselves of this suffering, we must first learn how to still our minds. There are many special mindfulness meditation techniques that have been practiced by thousands of people with tremendous benefits. The key is to remember that you are your own master. When you start practicing mindfulness, little by little you will be able to clear your mind of your continuous racing thoughts. You must attain this stillness in order to clearly see and understand your limiting thoughts

and self-constructed obstacles to peace and harmony. With practice, you will be able to come to this still and clear state of mind and overcome your mental ailments completely.

Here's a simple exercise that will give you a taste of mindfulness meditation, which is often called vipassana meditation. Find a peaceful place—your bedroom, veranda, garden, or even your office. Sit in a comfortable position keeping your spine erect so that you can breathe easily. Close your eyes if you like, or simply allow them to develop a soft, unfocused gaze.

Now, breathe deeply and completely for a few minutes, focusing your mind on the flow of your breath. Allow your body to relax while keeping your back straight. Watch your breath as it goes in and out, in and out. As you concentrate on your breath, you will notice that your mind becomes more settled. Your breath will become smooth and even. Continue in this state for several minutes, and finish your meditation with several deep breaths.

By practicing this simple exercise, you will train your mind to become still. Continuous sessions of mental calm will bring you deeper clarity and a greater understanding of the source of your mental suffering.

See it. Recognize it. Focus on releasing it.

Finding peace in your nation begins with finding peace in yourself. Let's work on peace as individuals, and create greater harmony together. We could all benefit from a taste of mindfulness.

About the Author

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Techniques For Accelerating Personal Growth

By Saleem Rana

The most fascinating theme in any movie is the transformation of the main character, who evolves from a lower state of awareness to a higher one. Although this theme is repeated with minor variations in one movie after another, people do not tire of it because it represents their own story.

The meaning of life may itself be entirely about personal growth. Enlightenment is the final vision, where you see everything in a whole new light, with the universe and your neighbors as part of a massive conspiracy of beauty, elegance, love, and wisdom.

Personal growth happens by default.

Life itself forces it to happen.

The more stimulating the environment, the more it challenges you to accelerate your personal growth.

Personal growth can be defined as the evolution of awareness, a journey from a narrow, dysfunction perspective to a broader, functional one. It is an expansion of perception.

The reason why it can be thought of as an evolutionary force is because it is the result of adaptation to a stressor. All problems are due to an error in perception; a challenge is posed by the environment for you to adapt or suffer the consequences of failure.

For example, a poor state of health is due to a physical challenge, a rocky relationship is due to an interaction challenge, and a scarcity of finances is due to an economic challenge. The reason it is a challenge is because it threatens your sense of well-being, and failure to respond in a more adaptive way is to experience the collapse of what you need.

In a nutshell, personal growth happens when your inner map of how the world works is incorrect. You discover that your perception is inaccurate because your experience is misaligned with your desire.

What is needed is more information, an upgrade of your inner map. New streets need to be drawn in, new paths need to be discovered.

Every problem is an evolutionary taunt.

For example, if you are being financially challenged, what is needed is a new model on how to earn more and manage your money better. A bill that you do not have the means to pay is a financial challenge.

Adaptation occurs when new information is learned. This information changes the structure of the challenge. The result of your mental upgrade about what works now becomes your new model. Using the money example, new information may come in the form of learning how to make more money. This information is then available for you to respond to the world in a more functional way.

Life is constantly posing challenges like this and we are constantly learning how to adapt to these pressures. Each successfully resolved challenge is soon followed by another challenge at the next level. Each unsuccessfully resolved challenge results in your staying at your current level. It's called "feeling stuck" or "in a rut."

This is the process of personal growth.

The growth proceeds along two trajectories: vertical and horizontal.

Vertical growth is learning something new and the new knowledge then fashions a new reality. Our college years, with its academic challenges, is probably the time of the most accelerated personal growth. Similarly, starting a new business or raising a new family are all vertical growth experiences.

Horizontal growth is integrating this new information. You are adjusting to the changes stimulated by vertical growth.

Furthermore, this growth also advances on three levels: ego-centric, ethno-centric, and world-centric. Each is a developmental stage.

In the ego-centric stage, your focus is on improving your own personal experience. In the ethno-centric stage, your focus is on improving your group. This could be an ethnic group, a religious group, or a national group; in other words, any particular tribe that makes you feel that you are one of its members. In the world-centric stage, your focus is on improving things for everyone.

Each stage is not necessarily clearly delineated. The higher stage may incorporate some features of the lower stage. In addition, each stage is broken up into further developmental stages.

The more challenges you overcome, the more you evolve to inhabit a higher stage. In addition, each stage has sub-stages which have to be transcended.

Factoring in the idea of incarnation, most people may spend their whole life in only one sub-stage or may move through several sub-stages but not leave their main stage. Other people may evolve from one stage to another. A few, rare individuals move through all the stages. Those who hit the final sub-stage of the final stage are considered enlightened and do not need to stay on the karmic wheel.

These growth stages also apply to cultures and civilizations.

While growth happens by default; it can also be engineered, or artificially stimulated.

This process is called learning.

Throughout history, those who choose to be self-evolving, do it using two specific methods.

One is using the imagistic aspect of mind and the other is through the linguistic aspect of mind. One can, of course, use both aspects of mind. Usually, however, most people have a predominant and favorite method. It is similar to how most people make one hand more dominant than the other, while only a few are ambidextrous.

Using the imagistic method, or visual thinking, remarkable progress can be made. Those with a scientific bent appear to favor this method. Kekule dropped off to sleep by a fireplace, had a dream about a snake swallowing its own tail, and developed the basis of all organic chemistry, the benzene ring. Einstein precipitated the biggest leap in Science since Newton by day dreaming about a train ride on a beam of light.

In terms of the Jungian model of the mind: this would incorporate intellect, intuition, feeling, and sensation. For example, Kekule had a dream, which includes intuition, emotion and a tactile sense. Upon awakening, he then used intellect to define the benzene ring.

This method of visual thinking is as powerful as the transition between Roman numerals and Arabic numerals. Using Roman numerals, for example, the mathematics needed to create String theory in Physics would have been impossible. Since, to date, String theory is neither empirical nor observable, it could not exist without mathematics. Considering that this may very well end up being a complete theory of everything, you will appreciate the value of the use of Arabic numerals.

Another method is the Socratic Method, which is about 2,300 years old.

The Socratic method is essentially asking and answering questions. Questions probe consciousness and stimulate a search for answers.

This method is not to be confused with the didactic teaching that is referred to as modern education.

The Socratic method was used during the era of Classical Greece and the Renaissance, two epochs that produced more highly intelligent people than has ever been known.

The reason these two methods are so powerful is because they disrupt "neuronal habituation" the phenomenon that with a constant signal, nerves and brain fall asleep. Changing the stimulation causes the brain to start working in a new and unusual way.

Ironically, our current educational methods across the globe stimulate only a limited amount of personal growth because they result in the stabilization of signals, creating neuronal habituation. Subjectively, people claim to fall asleep or drift into a day dream during a class session. They miss the lesson because the repeated signal created boredom and disassociation. It did not provoke them to move beyond passivity.

With these two methods, learning becomes interactive and stimulating, resulting in a quantum leap in personal growth.

You don't have to wait for all the right conditions before you can experience vertical growth; you can invite it to happen through choosing immersion in new, stimulating, life-affirming information.

About the Author

Saleem Rana would love to share his inspiring ideas His book Never Ever Give Up tells you how. It is offered at no cost as a way to help YOU succeed.

Website: <http://www.theempowered soul.com/enter.html>

The Power of Expectations

By: Kathy Gates

You can sit around and wait on FedEx to drop off a big box of happiness on your doorstep if you want to. But that's not likely to happen anytime soon. Or you can get up, create an action plan, and get on with your life. It's 100% up to you.

Expectations are a part of the universe that makes things happen, both negatively and positively. Like

atomic particles, universal forces cannot be explained, but plugging into them creates some kind of energy. You don't have to be able to see it or understand it to use it.

Do you understand radio waves or computer chips (ok, so some people do, but I don't and I have a lot of company in that boat!). I can't see how this arrives from my computer to yours, and I don't understand it, but I sure use it. You only have to be willing to let it happen.

If you were not given the power of positive expectations early in life, you now have to create it for yourself. You can live up or down to your own expectations and the expectations of others. 98% of people in prisons report that they were told by their parents or others in their lives that they would end up in prison. They lived "down" to those expectations. What if the same people had told them that they would end up as a successful writer, or a great inventor, or a top sports figure?

You have this same power. You have the power to be creative and resourceful, or you also have the power to be miserable the rest of your life. You have that choice. You have that free will. You pick out an attitude each day the same way you pick out your clothes.

Positive actions are much more powerful than positive thinking. My mother had a great southern saying: "Wish in one hand, pour peas in the other, and see which fills up faster." She meant, of course, that tangible action brings results, whereas just wishing for something doesn't. Wishing that FedEx would drop off a box of happiness on your doorstep will have you waiting a very long time. Creating your happiness, one day at a time, will bring that big box of happiness much quicker.

To transform your attitude and maintain positive actions, try the following things:

- Don't expect it to happen overnight, but always expect it to happen
- Align yourself with people who also have goals; they'll support you and encourage you when you're tired and frustrated. Step out of your comfort zone; do one thing different
- Operate from the standpoint "as if" it had already happened

No, you can't simply "will" a goal to materialize, but you can make a commitment to do whatever it takes, including consistent exercise, setting time to clean up your environment, or investing your money in a program instead of buying a new outfit. What do you want so badly that you are willing to put aside other things until a later time?

Your expectations of positive things is your best resource. YOU can make that choice. YOU can make it happen.

- Develop the ability to be your own best friend
- Cooperate with life, use what's in front of you
- Remember you are human; give yourself a break

- Get into action every day.

About the Author

Kathy Gates, Professional Life Coach, believes that "Life Rewards Action". She can help you create goals, overcome procrastination, organize your time and money, find your true passion, and learn to love the real you. Visit <http://www.reallifecoach.com>, email Kathy@reallifecoach.com, or call 480.998.5843

PSALMS FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Written and sent in By William A. Cook
cookb@ULV.EDU

"Truly good literature offers the reader not only amusement, but a thought-provoking dialogue that helps the reader find enlightenment. Professor William A. Cook, University of LaVerne, English Department, authored Psalms for the 21st Century, which fits the description and more. Here is poetry in the style of the biblical psalms, but finds divinity in each and every living being and seeks peace in the unity of all peoples." Richard Fuller
Senior Editor www.metarev.com

I.

Happy are the people
Who act as their own guide,

Who tread their own path,

Who sit among their friends,

For the laws for their life will evolve
From meditating on this relationship,
Night and day;
The roots that bind will be seen

And flow like rivers beneath all

And give life to all;

Out of which comes the fruit,

Each in its own season,
That nourishes both the earth and

All humankind.
Not all are like this for they

Follow deceitful voices

Or walk in wayward steps,
So when judgment calls, they cry
Innocence and beg forgiveness
Laying blame at another's feet.

2.

Why are nations in turmoil?
Why do people conspire against each other?

Earthly Princes and Premiers and Presidents

Conspire together against their people,

And turn away from that which binds them.
"Let us chain the people in debt

And exploit them to do our bidding," they cry.
The Oneness which resides all about them,

And is one with all, weeps at their crimes;
And Oneness calls to them in compassion

And holds out her arms in supplication.
To all she says, " I have enthroned each

Of you in my holy earth as divine

And I call upon you to witness this decree.
You are me and I am you, we are father and son,

Mother and daughter, and we are one.

Ask of me what you will

And you ask it of yourself,
For you are the giver of the inheritance

And the receiver, for all belongs

To all; what is, is your possession.
You shall join your brothers and your sisters,

In love shall you join them,
For you will know that life is short,

And Princes and all Powers, like People,

Have but a moment in time
To worship each other, while trembling

Before the finality of existence;
For as the Oneness loves you, you shall love

All who are of the Oneness,
And find refuge in that awareness.

Friends, how we believe our enemies multiply!

Many seem to rise up against us,

Some even say of me as of you

"You cannot succeed."

But you are my success, my friends,

You are my shield and my glory!

You lift me up out of despair,

And call to me when I fall.

Knowing you I lie in comfort

And wake to a new Sun,

Where hope overwhelms fear,

Where all about me are those who are dear.

You raise all, my friends, who cry to you,

You bring love without entanglement

And bring succor to those in need.

You are our victory, my friends,

You are our blessing and our fulfillment.

4.

The people cry to their God to answer their prayers,

And demand of him that they alone be heard.

They cry out for Him to break their enemies

Whilst sheltering them from all affliction.

And they put words into their God's mouth

That He will avenge Himself on all those

Who do not honor Him;

They bewail those who fail to prostrate themselves

Before their God, and blame their failings

On those who do not obey their entreaties.

There are many who say, "If only we might be prosperous again!"

And they blame their God for abandoning them

When they alone are responsible for their lot.
Let them bear their burdens as the donkey does
Struggling against the rocks and wind
Let them go forth unafraid

And blame not a power they can not see
Except as the cause of their own failings.

5.

Hear, my Friends, my words,
Heed what I have to say,

For I cry out to you
On behalf of all who woke this day
To offer succor to all in need,
Especially to those in the morning

Of their life and know not yet
The meaning of it nor its sorrow and joy.

For you alone know life's totality,

You know there is iniquity,

You know there is wickedness,

You know there are those who lie,

You know there is deceitfulness,
You know the nature of human kind;

You know there is justice,

You know there is compassion,

You know there is truthfulness,

You know there is forthrightness,
You know the nature of us all.

So I cry to you in your boundless mercy
To bring to those who do not know
Our talents or infirmities
The days upon days that will ever be
And must be so for evermore.

For there will ever be the twisted smile,

Those who sham the Judas kiss,

The fawning valet, and those who lie.
And there must forever be mercy,
And compassion, and tolerance
To address the reality of whom we are;
And there must be protection for all,
Where justice and judgment ensure
The safety and sustenance of those yet
To reach the noontime and evening

Of their lives.
So let us rejoice in the diversity

Of our beingness,
And protect, and love, and shield all.

6.

My friends, rebuke me not,
Do not make me the object of your wrath.

Have mercy on me for I am weak

And see only my own afflictions.
My soul is troubled and I need your succor.

Rescue my soul, my friends, from its depression,
For I am close to death

Where none can remember me,
And I am sore afraid.
Who is there who praises me
In the abode of the dead?

Who but you, my friends,

Sustain my being beyond the grave
Even as I become one with the universe

For evermore.

I call upon you, my friends, to salve

My weary soul
As ointment on a wound withdraws the pain;

Heed not the pain others have inflicted on you
For in your compassion you will bring them to love,
And unite all in the oneness of our being.

7.

My friends, to you I call in supplication

To save me and deliver me

From those who would do me harm;
But I call to you as well, my friends,

To save me from my anger
Lest it be used against another
And I, like a raging lion, tear my foe
Without mercy, compassion or forgiveness.

For if I have acted so against my brother or sister,
If there be such iniquity in my hands,
If I have turned against my friend,

I am no longer one with all
And I have forgone justice and peace
To take abode in my heart of darkness.

You alone, my friends, can bring me salvation
By restoring me to the world's community,

For in you is all compassion,

And hope, and love, and peace.
Your love alone can save me from being trampled,
And my honor dragged through the dust.

Arise, my friends, not in anger:
Do not unleash your fury against your fellows,

Do not oppress your own,

Do not lay judgment on the innocent,
For you alone can bring peace to all
By recognizing that all are one and equal,
And all have the right to share the glories

Of the earth and the heavens.
Know, my friends, that there is not one
Who resides above all, who judges all
Nor is there a people chosen above all;

We are the one,

We are the friends,
We are the reason and the meaning of life;
We are its fruition and its sustainers,
Now and forevermore.

Let no God become a shield for any one
To justify wickedness in the name
Of righteousness;
Let no one claim judgment over another,
And use them as missiles against his enemy,

For there is no righteous God

Who would inflict His wrath
On those whom He created,
Nor promise salvation to those who destroy.
For we are the God and we are the salvation,
And in us is peace and reconciliation.

8.

My Friends, how admirable that we declare our love

Throughout the earth!
By that declaration we exalt our being
And make us one with the universe.

We must bring forth out of the mouths of infants
Praise for all peoples, and silence thereby

The voices of hate and jealousy
That sows the seeds of vengeance and retaliation.

When I view this earth upon which we walk,
And see the heavens above covering us,

The moon that lights our path
Through the dark, the sun that warms us
Through winter's chill,
I know that we are one and share the glories
That surround us wherever we live.

What is man? What is woman? What is all creation
But the fulfillment of the living world that

Sustains us all and gives us purpose

In the brief moment of our beingness.
This, my friends, is why we must be mindful
Of each other and show concern for everything

Under the heavens.

It is our love for each other that crowns us in glory!
It is our compassion for all that brings us honor!
We have the power to sustain all existence;
It is not ours to destroy,
It is not ours to debase.
All sheep and oxen,
All beasts in the field,
All birds of the air,
All fish in the sea,
Are one with us as voyagers in this life,
And they, too, are sacred and to be cherished.
How admirable are our days and those of us yet to come!

9.

I will praise all the peoples of the earth

With my whole heart;
I will tell all of your marvelous works.
I will be glad and rejoice in you,
And sing your worth before all nations.

I will have no enemies among the nations;
None shall stumble or perish before me.
For I would not judge nor be judged

Nor have a God of judgment
Who would rebuke or destroy the peoples

Of the earth and blot out their lives
To exalt me above all others.

For who am I to be exalted when I am but one of them?
Who am I to judge others when I fear another's judgment?
Who am I to desire the destruction of another's memory?
Who am I to seek a God who would wield His wrath
On those who cannot agree with me?

Who creates a God to be a refuge for himself
Creates a God who becomes the oppressor of others.
But who sees in his neighbor and his neighbor's neighbor
A brother and a sister creates a community of families
Who live together without fear of enmity

All bound together in loving equity.

Sing, then, our hymns of praise throughout the world
That all may know that we are one in unity.
Declare before all, the works of our hands,
That all may rejoice in our achievements.
Proclaim before all, the wonders of our minds,
That all may know the depth of our understanding.
Praise before all, the empathy in our hearts,
That all may feel the fullness of our compassion.

Those peoples who have fallen into the pit of deprivation
Must find recourse in our common communion:
For to share is to bind, to bind is to heal,
To heal is to hope, to hope is to bless,
And, thereby, to recognize
The dignity and divinity of all.

Thus have we made ourselves known before all,
And declared our responsibilities before all.
The poor we will raise up,
The wicked we will straighten,
The sinner we will forgive,
The weak of heart we will strengthen,
The proud we will soften,
The distrustful we will let live,
The lonely will not be forgotten,
That all may know the tolerance that binds,

The compassion that melds,

The love that encompasses.

10.

I flee unto you, my friends, for you are my consolation.
There are those who say I should flee like the bird,

Away to the mountains to hide from
Those who would raise their anger against me
Even as I try to be upright of heart.
What am I to do?

I hear your voice, for you are, indeed, my consolation.
Together we will confront those who assail us,
Together we will find the paths to peace,

For all must know that we are one
And he that would injure one, injures all.

Together we will rain our love on those who

Know no better,
Who find fault with their fellows,
Who foster iniquity,
For to bring vengeance through fire and brimstone
Is to destroy creation and bring devastation
To that which gives us life.
Thus will we march upright together.

11.

My friends, there are those who say,
"The upright are no more,
And among all our children
There are none who are faithful,
For lies, deceit, and insincerity fill their hearts."
And there are those who reply,
"Destroy all those who speak falsely,
Cast them and those who deceive
And are not sincere into Hell's fire."

But, my friends, we have learned from our past,
For to destroy only breeds more destruction
Wrecking havoc on our children
And our children's children.
What once was can be no more!
"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,"
Is the road to extermination for those destroyed
And those who inflict the destruction.

Let us be sincere and clear as the liquid stream.
Let patience, love and compassion guide us
And become the guide to those who lie or deceive.
This alone will preserve us,
For sincerity will conquer
Insincerity, and patience
Will win over those who lie.
This is the path to preservation and to exaltation

For you, my friends,
And the highway to peace for generations yet to come.

12.

I long, my friends, for your comfort and succor

For I feel lonely and afraid;

Do not hide from me in my sorrow;
Bring me peace that I may rest.
You alone can dispel this inner fear that rises

In my soul when I am alone

And doubt the comfort you can bring.

There is a darkness that rises before me,
When I see no power greater than myself,
And I feel weak and helpless as before a void
That has no voice and offers no relief.

But you, my friends, you sympathize
Because you know my fear and you hear my lament
That seeks your warmth and your touch.
Enlighten my eyes that I may dispel the need
For power greater than myself, greater than you,
For we are the power and the glory forever and ever.

Let my heart rejoice in that understanding:

To know you is to know the world,

To feel your love is to live,

To return your love is fulfillment
Of life's desires and puts all fear to rest.

13.

The fool says in his heart, "There is a God,"
For he cannot see nor know a God.
The fool calls out, "Heed my God
Lest He cast you into Hell's fire,"
For he cannot assuage his doubt without fear.
The fool cries, "God looks down from heaven

And sees no good, only evil,"
For he cannot force his will without consequence.
The fool declares, "God has spoken. The fool

Speaks for me, worship him in my name,"
For he can have no place without the word of God.

Consider now who has done us evil in the name of the Lord;
Who devours the people?
Who makes us tremble?

Who is the oppressor?
Who turns us against our fellows?
Where do we turn for our salvation?
Where is the peace that passeth understanding?
Where but in our hearts that finds love in our brother!
Let us rejoice and be glad that we have found each other.

14.

Who, my friends, shall walk with you
And find peace throughout the earth?
Who shall stride the lofty mountains
And glide the purple hills?
Who will wander along the shore
And watch the waves roll in?
Who will fly through the clouds above

And see the fullness of the earth?

All upright of heart, who love all,
Shall find their heaven here,
And they will glory in the spring,

Find nourishment in their lives,
And solace in their fall because of the love

That cherishes all.

15.

Preserve me, my friends, lest I flee from you,
And seek my refuge among some gods who
Dwell and command in some foreign land.
How wonderful these gods are made to appear:

Wondrous in their glory!

Protectors against our enemy!

Jubilant in their mercy!

Triumphant through all eternity!
And all we must do to gain our inheritance,

Sip the cup of everlasting life,

Attain to understanding,
Is to resign ourselves to their judgment,

Forgo our own, and live in everlasting fear.

How we multiply our sorrow when we follow

The promises of the strange gods!
How we deceive ourselves when we seek

Heavenly cities beyond this earth!
How we lose the joy of the child's expectation

When life is suffering and expiation!
How we inflict pain and death on those who

Love another god, not ours,
Believing ours the only true and righteous one!
When all about us there is life, and joy, and peace,
If we but see in each other that which holds all together.

16.

Attend, my friends, to my cry,
Hear the prayer from my lips,
Listen to me without guile,
For I seek your understanding
And your guidance.

Your eyes see what blinds me
For I am sad and lack experience.
Your eyes can search my heart,
You know I do not deceive
Nor will you find in me iniquity.
I come before you as one of you,

As you will come before me.
Together we obey the law
Because we are the law,
And that which binds, binds all.

Guide me through the maze of deception,
Through the narrows that place enemies

Like whirlpools at every turn
And hatred like stones in my path.
I fear that I will be lost and seek some savior
Who can take me through the narrows
And strike terror into my enemies.

But you, my friends, cannot be deceived,
For if we are friends we are not enemies,
No matter who cries against our trust.

Let us gather then, my friends, lift our voice in song,
And dispel doubt, for together we are strong!

17.

I love you, my friends, for you are my strength,
You are the foundation upon which I stand

And upon which I build.
In you I find safety, succor, and salvation;
For you are worthy of all praise when you
Unite all across the earth.

Let me call upon you now, for I fear death;
I see it in torrents of iniquity all about me,

I see it in threats from those who surround me,
I see it in the tears of those who fear me,
I see it in the mysteries that surge within me,
And you, my friends, you can allay all,
For we are bound together in this place and time
Where we must endure mysteries and tears,
Threats and iniquities, during life and unto death.
This you know and can impart to me,

And in your comfort, I will be free.

Don't let me look upon the earth when it
Shakes and trembles,
When the very foundations quake and threaten,
When smoke arises from its mouth and spews forth
The blood of consuming fire,
When the heavens heave with shrouds of death

Sending a pall of darkness over the sun,
When waters rise like cliffs and crash

Against the shores,
When twisted spirals spin along the earth

Upending all in their path,
Don't let me see an angry God venting His rage
Upon His distraught creatures who cringe

Before His almighty anger.
Don't let me see this righteous God speak

Through thunder to His chosen and
Punish detractors with destruction,

As though, in the nature of things, there is
Some force that governs all and to whom

We must bend, for it is not so.

You, my friends, have requited me according to my justice,

Because I have honored you,

Respected you, dignified you,
And saw in you, myself, and found in you, myself,
And we are one, in all things to be equal,
Though not equal in all things, as it should be.
Like the flowers of the field, we are multiple,

And beautiful, and unique, and desirable,
Yet we are one, as the scene is one, more blessed
In its spirit which can be received by all,
Than in its matter which, ultimately in time,
Dissolves into the spirit.

Thus will we reward each other according

To our justice toward each other.
Thus will we recognize each other according

To the mercy we show each other.
Thus will we sanctify each other according

To the love we impart to each other.

In justice, mercy, and love we transform

Ourselves and become like beacons
To light the world ridding it of the darkness
Of deceit,
Of false belief,
Of predators of fear;
Thus do we become a protective shield
Against anger, jealousy, envy, and hate.

I look about the world and see God in you,
For there can be no other.
You have sustained me as I have you,

And your caring has made me great.
You have opened the door for me

That I might enter the households

Of all who live upon the earth;
That I might sit at their table
And offer thanksgiving with them;
That I might drink a toast to their kindness
To bless the dignity with which they received me.
In this sharing we have overcome the fears
That blossom in the vase of ignorance,
And the jealousies that arise with misperception.

You have girt me with circlets of understanding,
And cloaked me in the robes of tolerance.
You have encircled me with the laughter of friends,
And laid before me the road to happiness.
From the warmth of homes has come warmth

Of hearts and fullness of spirit.
In this harmony we find joy in each other
And fill the air with choral song.

You have delivered me from the contentions of people
By bringing me into the fold of the world's family.
I am one now with those I did not know,
And feel now the depth of their soul.
We are no longer strangers in borders,
But friends who share the land and the sea.

I know now that to inflict pain on another
Is to inflict pain on myself,

To insult another is to mock myself,

To find fault with another
Is to find fault with myself.

I seek now no vengeance, for it accomplishes no end,
I sow no anger, for it destroys only me,
I harvest no envy, for it decays my heart,
I crave no retaliation, for it turns on itself.
I desire no crown that would set me apart,
For it achieves no end but separation.
These things I have learned at your knee,
And I sing praises to you who have made me
One with all nations under the sun.

The heavens encompass the glory of the earth, our Mother,
Who nurtures us, generation after generation.
As days pass and multiply and nights follow in succession,

We learn the value of our time.
They speak to us in sunlight and in silence,

And we learn nothing without their passing.

The sun has seen since the beginning of time,

A witness to all we have done.

It declares our actions before all the world;

It rises in magnificence before us each day,

Sustaining our existence, nurturing our soul.

The laws of the heavens are perfect;

They dispel doubt with the balm of certainty.
We bow before the rising sun and kneel at its setting;

We follow its path throughout our life,

Like the flowers of the field through joy and strife,
Until our time makes way for that of another

And we return to the bosom of our mother.

Our knowledge rises like the sun when we become

A student of the sun;
Our wisdom grows with the passing years when night's

Darkness filters through the light;
Our fulfillment overflows when we understand

The Oneness that encompasses all existence;
Our life becomes more precious than gold when it

Is suffused with the spirit of the sun.

Hearken to the message we have learned,

A message passed from father to son,

Mother to daughter

From the beginning of time.

Pay heed and there is great reward;
Fail, and fall headlong into the ditch.

Keep away from the prideful,
For they seek their own glory;

Shun those glorifying power,
For they are the oppressor;

Avoid the deceitful,
For they care nothing for another.

Joy in your neighbor, find solace in your friends;

Let all be a servant to each other
And we have no need for a king or a redeemer.

19.

May you hear me in times of tribulation,
And hear the voices of your children

Yet to be born.
We must come together and share our

Suffering, lest we perish
By raising the engines of war
Against each other.
Generations have wrought havoc on each other,
Laid waste their neighbors, destroyed creation,
And given birth to hatred and vengeance.
Their children and their children's children
Have never known the gentle feel of the

Flowing spring or the touch of the

Autumn breeze or the silence of the

Falling snow.

But we, my friends, can awaken to a new day,
Raise our banners in the victory of peace,

And declare war no more!
We can break the shackles of the strong

Who bound us in bias' chains

Rallied us in the lies of myths,

Marched us to the patriots' tune,
To slaughter our friends, our neighbors,

Mothers, wives, and children
To declare victory and honor through war,
When there is no victory or honor,
If there is war!

Our victory is our friendship, our love for each other;

There is no other.

20.

There was a time in days past

When kings and Emperors ruled the land;

Those days are no more.
Each of us is a king, and we acknowledge
The royalty of our sisters and brothers.
So may we rejoice in our strength and glory.

Let us learn from ancient times the tales of kings

Who bound together to guarantee peace,

Protect the homeland, sustain the people.
So may we bind together kings in every land,

Not against other fiefdoms, but in unity of all
That all may live and thrive in harvest

Of all the earth can provide.

Our glory is great in this salvation,
Our honor and dignity made manifest;

For we trust one another
And find happiness in our sister and mother,

And strength in our father and brother.

We shall have no enemies and seek none;

We shall loose no missiles against other lands;
We shall seek no destruction upon the earth,

For it is sacred as we are sacred.
We shall sing in exaltation the union of our desires,
And the fulfillment of our lives in the fullness of all others.

21.

My Friends, my friends, why do we continue in strife?
Why have we multiplied iniquity upon iniquity,
Wrecked havoc upon the weak, oppressed the poor?
Why have we driven wedges between our neighbors?
Exploited envy and jealousy, fostered anger and hatred?
I hear my neighbors cry for they are held in bondage,
Yet your voices are silent, my cries go unheard.

Do not let me cry in vain, listen to the weeping of
Your friends who suffer the pangs of hunger and want.
I have trusted in you to deliver us from pain
Because you know the anguish of suffering;
Do not disappoint those who cry to you in desperation;
They seek only their share of the earth's fruit,
What we must provide out of the kindness of our hearts
That all may live in peace and happiness.

Do not mock me because I am covered in rags,
Do not belittle me because I am unable to read,
Do not strike me because I am weak,
For, like you, I have flowed within the waters of the womb
And sucked the milk of life from a mother's breast;
I feel the heat of the summer's sun, the chill
Of the winter's wind, the bite of hunger's pain;
I am you and you are me, we are brothers and sisters,
Alive and in need together, now and forever.

I am encircled by the beasts that inhabit the land,
Who sacrifice themselves that we may live;
Let us bless them for they are our sustenance.
Without them I feel the wind upon my bones
And the heat upon my skin.
Without them I am dried up like parchment

And become a brittle and broken stick.
Without them I cannot call to my friends

To share a thanksgiving meal together.
They, too, are friends who sojourn with us

As we journey through this vale of tears.

They encircle us with goodness and give us life.

Let us rejoice that we share this earth with creatures

Who find no fault with us,

Who fear us not,
Whose beauty exceeds our own,
Whose strength provides support for our journey,
Whose loyalty we have come to trust.
Blessed are we to share this life together.

Our fear rests only in the rapacity of humankind,
Who would tear us limb from limb
To wrest our home from our kin
That they might gain what the earth
Provides for the betterment of all.
Deliver me from such greed and wantonness, my friends,
For we need only know that the betterment of all
Brings peace of mind and peace to the earth.
Let us deliver ourselves from those who do evil

Before us, who deceive and destroy;
Let them wander alone in the deserts of humanity

Till they know the joy of Oneness.

When the poor shall eat and have their fill,
When the old find rest and care in their final years,
When the homeless have shelter against the rain,
Then I will declare your name before all the world,
Then will I praise you to the heavens,
For you will provide for all throughout all the earth.

This land is ours to hold as a gift for our children,
We have no dominion over its bounty;
We hold it in trust for those yet to come
After we have gone to sleep in its bosom.
And though we shall turn to dust,
We live forever in the memories of those living,
In the spirit of the wind that wanders over the fields,
In the whispering leaves that rustle in the trees,
In the smile and laughter of our children and our
Children's children who run and skip across the face
Of the lands we have nurtured to provide for them.
And they will raise their hands in silent benediction

And gratitude to us who cared.

My friends are as my father and mother; they have cared for me.
They prepared the earth's bounty as a table of thanksgiving;
They filled my spirit to overflowing; I wanted for nothing.
They restored my soul with the honor they bestowed upon me.
They directed me upon the path of tolerance and compassion.

Though I walk through life in the light of the sun

I fear no evil in death's shadow,
For I know that in death's passing

I prepare the way for another,
And in this joy I find comfort.

My friends have prepared me for life and for death.

They have given me life through their love,

And strength of spirit to confront death.

They have anointed me with honor,

And filled my heart with wisdom.
They have made possible goodness and mercy

All the days of my life,

And I have dwelled peacefully with them,
And shall rest peacefully forever, amen.

23.

The earth and all its fruits is ours to share

With all who dwell upon it.
It is ours to nourish and sustain that our

Children may live in happiness.

Let us climb to the mountaintops that we may see
The glories of the earth and the bounty thereof.
Let those who are pure and generous of heart

Lead us in providing for all in need;
Let those who are strong lift the burdens from the weak

That they may rest and be renewed in spirit;
Let those who understand bring solace to those who fear

That they might find comfort and peace of mind.
Let us seek those who befriend their neighbor, and bless them,
For they bring peace to our world!

Lift your eyes to your friends, bow before them;
Lift your voice in praise, celebrate their presence;
Lift your heart in admiration, acknowledge their dignity;
Lift your mind in recognition, rejoice in their diversity;
Lift your spirit in veneration, respect their existence.
For we are the power and the glory that gives
Meaning and purpose to all that lives and thrives

Upon the earth!

24.

I come before you, my friends, as a child to a teacher.
You must show the way lest I be confounded
And turn down the wrong path,
Where all is darkness and stones block my way.
I put my trust in you and my faith in your judgment.
Guide me as I climb through the crags of fear and doubt,
And struggle through the shoals of envy and vengeance.
Direct me on the paths of tolerance and compassion
That I may see myself in my neighbor and my duty
In providing for all.
Remind me that kindness and mercy are the paths to peace,
And forgiveness the ointment of the soul.

I come to you who are good and upright,
For you have lived long and have witnessed
What havoc greed and hatred and envy can inflict
On the innocent who are the victims squeezed in
The vice of conflict.
Teach all to be humble who rise each day
Unknown to the billions who tread the earth,
Whose voice is but the sound of a sparrow
In the vast forests that cover the land,
Whose will cannot stem the tides of the sea,

Nor curb the dryness in the draught.
Our puny beings endure but a moment in time,
And, though we crush our foes beneath our heel,
Our foot makes no lasting imprint in the sands of time.

So let us turn then to that which ensures salvation:
The spreading of seed across the land,

The desalinization of the sea,

That we may quench the thirst that threatens us,

The caring of the cattle that feed us,

The reforestation of our hills,
That none may want for shelter against the rain,

The giving of love that unites all,

The reformation of our desires
That all may share in the bounty of the earth.

Let us look upon each other as the source

Of our salvation, for there is no other.
Let us see in each other's face the joy
Of the mother with the newborn child.
Let us feel remorse when we see another in pain,

Or another in want, or alone in the world.
Let us find no hatred in our hearts even of those

Who would inflict their wrath upon us.
Let innocence and uprightness protect me,

For I believe in you above all things.

25.

Be kind to me, my friends, as you are kind to all,
For I would walk with you humble of heart

And trusting in my soul.
I will not waver in my belief that we can love

One another and find accord in life.
I have seen your goodness in my own lifetime,
And heard the stories of your forbearance and kindness.
I know you have lived with the wicked,
And offered solace to the innocent.
Your wondrous works must be told
That all can know the power that rests in you.
I would not walk with those who raise their arm against you,

For they bring only chaos and suffering.
But in you is hope, and promise, and everlasting peace.

Now, my friends, let us pray together and for each other,
That we may find comfort and peace in our lives.

Our world is not the world of our fathers and mothers.

Their fears and their desires brought forth

A God of wrath and vengeance

To wreck havoc upon their enemies,
And to provide them with counsel and solace in a world

Of darkness, of wickedness, of travail and pain.
They besought that God to strike terror into their enemies,
To destroy those not chosen,
To break the arm of the sinner,
To unleash His arrow at those who steal,
To put to shame the deceitful,
To bring down the proud and haughty,
To trample in His anger those who do not bow before Him.

Their God divided the world into Good and Evil,
And the people of the world into His people,
And the forces of iniquity aligned against Him.

Thus did they raise their voices in supplication

Seeking safety from their enemies,

Harvests in their fields,

Health for their bodies,
And life everlasting as reward for a life of suffering.

They heard their God in the cry of the wind,

And saw His face in the passing clouds.
They knew His anger in years of drought,

And His compassion in the waving grain.
They read His words in the voice of the prophets,

And heeded His commands under pain of death.
They felt His wrath when they lay sick,

And His love in the warmth of the sun.

Their God touched every moment of their lives,
Guided them down every path,
Nurtured them in the morning
And the evening of their lives,
Lest they falter and fall headlong into the ditch.

They cried to their God for protection,
To shield them from their enemies,
To slaughter those who would obstruct their advance,
To bend His bow and unleash His arrows

Against the unbeliever.
They appealed to him to show no mercy

Against those who oppressed them;
To rise in fury against those who worship another God.
And this to them was a God of mercy, and justice,

And compassion, and righteousness,
A God above all Gods, the Creator, and Judge
Of all humankind forever, and ever, Amen.

27.

There are those who say, "We cannot live

Without a God of Glory,
A God of fear and retribution,
Of judgment and vindication;"
Before such a God we cower as before a Despot's power,
Insignificant, unheralded, peasants before the throne.

But I say, my friends, that they are wrong;
"There is no God of Glory."
But there is a God who does reside within

Our hearts and minds,
A God who whispers in our ear how best to live,

How best to die;
A God who tells us quietly that joy

And peace are near;
A God who knows that we can live

In harmony with all;
A God who knows that we create the way

To peace or to hate;

A God who counsels sympathy and love,

As acts to perform each day;
A God who feels for every living thing,

That treads upon the earth,
And tells us we must share the bounty that is ours,
If we would live as the God we are.

28.

It is time now, my friends, to sing a new song
To greet this new century.
The days of wrath can be no more,
The days of enmity, of father against son,
Brother against brother must not endure.

Now is the time to match the carols of the birds,
To whisper with the wind its joyous sounds,
To listen to the pulse of the aurora lights,
To feel the thunder of the voices in the waves,
To know and to speak the glories of this earth
That sustains us during our sojourn through life.

Raise your voices, my friends, in joyful song

To praise peace before war,

To extol love before hate,

To honor sharing before envy,

To glorify life in all its brevity,

To exult even in the finality of death.

Let us soar on the wings of the eagle
To see the earth spread out below like a quilt,
Boundless in its reach,
Covering all in warmth and beauty.
Let us look to the heavens as a roof
That shelters all in the home
Where we reside, one family
Forever and ever, amen.
Let us see in the flowers of the field
The faces of our family,
Multitudinous in their hues,
Glorious in their beauty.

Let us live without fear of each other
And there will be peace throughout the earth.

Let us live without fear of some strange God
And we will have peace in our soul.
Let us live without fear of want
For there is plenty throughout the lands.
Let us worship at the shrine of our existence,
Within the chapel that is the world,
Let us pray that we provide for all now

And for the lives yet to come.

What glory there is in Oneness!

What peace of soul in unity!
What harmony of voices in love!

What solace in the attention we pay
To even the least of things that are!

29.

Open your eyes each day, my friends, like a child,
And fill your life with wonder and affirmation.

See the sun rise above the mountains, silhouetting
Their splendor against the morning sky;
See it glisten atop the fields of flowing grain,
Like pulsing sheets of shining foil;
See it ride in gold-white strands above
The undulating swells of the far flung sea.
Awake to its brilliance and its warmth that
Bundles you like a mother
Against the morning's chill.

Celebrate with me the wonder of this morn
As I descended from the mountaintop,
And saw below a foam-white sea of heaven's

Clouds lapping at the mountain's feet
That gently dipped into this billowing main,

While islands rose through the white

Like dragons roused from a deep slumber.

The morning sun peeked above the crest
Throwing a pastel hue of the lightest pink
Over the distant waves
And the mountains, salmon streaked, blushed to see.

Celebrate the morning of your lives
As you celebrate the dawning of each new day,
For these are the moments we must cherish
As we open our eyes to the heaven
That is our world.

30.

Be in awe of the earth that is our home,
Our garden, our refuge, and our temple.
Preserve it as we would a cherished heirloom
Passed to us from generation to generation.
Be stewards of its bounty to ensure that all living beings,

And those yet to come, find sustenance and fulfillment.
Praise those who till the land and bring forth its fruit
Free of forces that corrode its purity.
Honor those who husband the harvest of the land
To care for all who depend on its bounty.
Bless those who protect the earth from powers that exploit it

By claiming dominion over all creation

As a right and expectation.
Worship the land that gives us life,

That is the beginning and the end

Of our existence and our purpose,
For we are one with the universe in the

Moment of our being and one with all
Who travel its paths during all the days of our life.

31.

I proclaim to you, my friends, what you have proclaimed to me:
We are no longer strangers in a strange land.
There are no longer borders that seal us off

From our brothers and sisters.
There are no longer churches that exclude a friend

From the unity that blesses all.
There are no longer peoples to enslave who

Become the chattel of another's greed.
There are no longer races that harbor hatred

Against others who inhabit this earth.
There are no longer nations that reign superior

Over those weak and smaller.
There are no longer doctrines that confound

With mystery and authority those

Who cannot understand.
There are no longer beliefs that offer salvation

Only to the chosen, and damnation

To those not of the elect.
There can be no absolute duality
That builds a wall between you and me.

There can be no enmity within our family;
There can only be love and harmony.

32.

Know this, my friends, what binds is innate,
The suckling babe does not know of hate.
Our heaven is manifest within this heart

That beats in rhythm to another's love.

Behold the trust the child brings to the Father's knee,
The warmth the child finds at the Mother's breast,
For in these simple acts reside the peace that

Passeth understanding.

Come, build bridges over chasms of discontent
That we may find refuge in a neighbor's heart.
Place a compass about the folds of the earth
That we may embrace our family everywhere.
Raise a canopy above all nations
That we may protect them from outrageous fortune.
Encircle the horizon with our eyes
That we may know, within ourselves, we contain all things.

I look across the fields of faces that stretch across this earth,
And I see a field of flowers, radiant in beauty,
Waving back at me.
See yourself in that field and feel the beauty of your being,
Then see the beauty that surrounds you
And makes you one in diversity.

Lift your voices to the rhythms of the waves,
Hear in its ebb and flow the pulse of the heart,
And you will know, in all essential ways,

We are one.

33.

Rejoice in the wonders of those who came before:
Sing praises to their will and their endurance,
Extol their monuments that proclaim our divinity,
And express the virtues of our being.
In them we see the spirit of humankind and its potential,
For in them we are united in Oneness with our forefathers
And through them with those yet to come.

At Ur and Saqqara, Giza and Knossos,
At Anyang and Zhengzhou, Boghazkoy and Yazilikaya,
Their glory remains, their spirit endures,
Their search continues in our search for them.
In pain and suffering, in dream and desire even

The lowliest of those who went before

Are manifest in stone.

In stories repeated over eons of time,
In cities lost beneath sweeps of sand,
In temples buried in forest and swamp,
In shrines sunk below the waters of the sea,
We see ourselves mirrored in quest and journey,
A legacy and testament to the unity of being.

Let us give praise to our fathers and mothers
Whose gifts we bare, whose memories we inherit,
That we may pass to our children and they to theirs
The dreams that give hope,
The testaments that give expression,
The monuments that manifest,
And the will that endures.
In this we find the unity that binds all earth's divines.

Pure Potentiality

By Deepak Chopra

The first spiritual law of success is the Law of Pure Potentiality. This law is based on the fact that we are, in our essential state, pure consciousness. Pure consciousness is pure potentiality; it is the field of all possibilities and infinite creativity. Pure consciousness is our spiritual essence. Being infinite and unbounded is also pure joy. Other attributes of consciousness are pure knowledge, infinite silence, perfect balance, invincibility, simplicity, and bliss. This is our essential nature.

When you really understand your true nature — you will never feel guilty, fearful, or insecure about money, or affluence, or fulfilling your desires...

Our essential nature is one of pure potentiality. When you discover your essential nature and know who you really are, in that knowing itself is the ability to fulfill any dream you have, because you are the eternal possibility, the immeasurable potential of all that was, is, and will be. The Law of Pure Potentiality could also be called the Law of Unity, because underlying the infinite diversity of life is the unity of one all pervasive spirit. There is no separation between you and this field of energy. The field of pure potentiality is your own Self. And the more you experience your true nature, the closer you are to the field of pure potentiality.

Put It In Motion

How can we apply the Law of Pure Potentiality, the field of all possibilities, to our lives? If you want to enjoy the benefits of this field, if you want to make full use of the creativity which is inherent in pure consciousness, then you have to have access to it. One way to access the field is through the daily practice of silence, meditation, and non-judgment. Spending time in nature will also give you access to the qualities inherent in the field: infinite creativity, freedom, and bliss.

Practicing silence means making a commitment to take a certain amount of time to simply Be. Experiencing silence means periodically withdrawing from the activity of speech. It also means periodically withdrawing from such activities as watching television, listening to the radio, or reading a book. If you never give yourself the opportunity to experience silence, this creates turbulence in your internal dialogue.

Set aside a little time every once in a while to experience silence.

Or simply make a commitment to maintain silence for a certain period each day. You could do it for two hours, or if that seems a lot, do it for a one hour period. And every once in a while experience silence for an extended period of time, such as a full day, or two days, or even a whole week.

Practicing silence periodically as it is convenient to you is one way to experience the pure potentiality. Spending time each day in meditation is another. Ideally, you should meditate at least thirty minutes in the morning, and thirty minutes in the evening. Through meditation you will learn to experience the field of pure silence and pure awareness. In that field of pure silence is the field of infinite correlation, the field of infinite organizing power, the ultimate ground of creation where everything is inseparably connected with everything else.

Another way to access the field of pure potentiality is through the practice of non-judgment. Judgment is the constant evaluation of things as right or wrong, good or bad. When you are constantly evaluating, classifying, labeling, analyzing, you create a lot of turbulence in your internal dialogue. This turbulence constricts the flow of energy between you and the field of pure potentiality. You literally squeeze the "gap" between thoughts.

The gap is your connection to the field of pure potentiality. It is that state of pure awareness, that silent space between thoughts, that inner stillness that connects you to true power. And when you squeeze the gap, you squeeze your connection to the field of pure potentiality and infinite creativity.

Putting It All Together

Through silence, meditation, and non-judgment, you will access this first law. Once you start doing that, you can add a fourth component to this practice, and that is regularly spending time in direct communion with nature. Spending time in nature enables you to sense the harmonious interaction of all the elements and forces of life, and gives you a sense of unity with all of life. Whether it be a stream, a forest, a mountain, a lake, or the seashore, that connection with nature's intelligence will also help you access the field of pure potentiality.

You must learn to get in touch with the innermost essence of your being. This true essence is beyond the ego. It is fearless; it is free; it is immune to criticism; it does not fear any challenge. It is beneath no one, superior to no one, and full of magic, mystery, and enchantment.

Access to your true essence will also give you insight into the mirror of relationship, because all relationship is a reflection of your relationship with yourself. For example, if you have guilt, fear, and insecurity over money, or success, or anything else, then these are reflections of guilt, fear, and insecurity as basic aspects of your personality. No amount of money or success will solve these basic problems of existence; only intimacy with the Self will bring about true healing.

When you are grounded in the knowledge of your true Self — when you really understand your true nature — you will never feel guilty, fearful, or insecure about money, or affluence, or fulfilling your desires, because you will realize that the essence of all material wealth is life energy, it is pure potentiality. And pure potentiality is your intrinsic nature.

About The Author

Deepak Chopra is the author of numerous books including "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind", "Quantum Healing", and "Creating Affluence". He lectures throughout the U.S., blending venerable Eastern wisdom and cutting edge Western science with dynamic results

The Purpose behind Life's Challenges

By Andrew Schneider

Are you often puzzled by what happens in your life? Do you wonder why you have experiences you do not really want?

The Law of Attraction, a universal law, determines the kind and character of our experiences. And we participate in this law by our very nature.

We attract what we are. What we are is our personality nature. We also attract who we are, and who we are is our soul nature. We need to understand how both of these natures function.

If we are 'reactors' we will attract people and situations that trigger our reactions. If we see ourselves as victims we will attract people and situations that seem to victimize us. If we refuse to take responsibility for our actions we will find someone or something to blame. If we do not accept ourselves we will have relationships in which we experience rejection. If we do not manage our economy we will find plenty of occasions to spend more than is prudent.

These characteristics of our personality describe what we are - reactors, victims, irresponsible, non self-accepting, unwise in our personal economy, and so forth.

Every one of these occasions or situations that we attract is totally determined by what we want to justify or validate in our thinking, feelings and behaviours. In a deeper sense they are opportunities to overcome the limitations of our personality. We need these opportunities to prove to ourselves that re-enforcing limitations does not bring satisfaction or happiness. And we need them to challenge ourselves to understand ourselves and life more, and to free ourselves through making choices for change.

Who we are at essence also attracts the circumstances we need. This essence, in a more profound sense, is soul. As soul, we are beautiful, powerful, wise and loving.

As soul we attract people and opportunities to relate in loving ways without fear of rejection. We recognize needs and respond to them courageously without fear of failure or feelings of inadequacy.

As soul we attract to our awareness the natural inner goodness of all people, despite appearances to the contrary. As soul we are forgiving and compassionate to ourselves as well as others.

When we have experiences in our life that we don't like or don't want, we need to ask ourselves what in our personality is attracting that reality.

Our challenges and difficulties are there to prompt us to express more of who we are so that we attract and experience real quality.

When our challenges are pushing us to gain greater understanding we must do that so that the soul quality of faith can manifest in our lives. Faith puts us in intimate contact with what is real and true. Faith is heart-knowing.

When our challenges are asking us to let go and open up we must release some attachment or restricting thought, belief or behaviour pattern so that hope can manifest in our life. Hope is a trusting attitude and feeling that all is meaningful and everything experienced is useful for creating a better future.

And when our challenges are demanding that we make different choices and act in new and different ways, we have an opportunity to manifest 'caritas' (charity) which is love in action.

Most often, we attract challenges to force us to be more genuinely who we are, authentically expressing beautiful, loving, intelligent and supportive actions and attitudes so that the world may be positively affected.

Our life is purposeful. That purpose involves the meaningful expression of who we are as a contribution to the good of all.

The degree of consciousness we have about who we are determines what we attract and is also the measure of the quality we contribute to the world through our relationships.

Exercises:

1. Identify some of your personality characteristics, and see how you attract that reality in your experiences.

2. Identify some real challenges you experience and ask yourself these questions with regard to the purpose of each challenge:

- What do I need to understand? - What do I need to let go of? - What do I need to open up to? - What choices do I need to make to change?

About the Author

Andrew and Bonnie Schneider offer rich resources for living a soulful life at <http://www.thesouljourney.com>. Take the Soul Journey!

Putting Spirit First: Goals For Your Soul

By Avalon De Witt

If you've ever set very many goals, you've probably had at least one goal that you just can't seem to reach. You can't seem to lose those last, stubborn five pounds. Or you can never seem to get caught up on your bills.

You are passionate about your goal. You read everything the experts say. You follow their advice to the best of your ability. Still, despite all your hard effort, something seems to be blocking your success. What could it be?

If you find yourself spinning your wheels, check to see if Spirit is your Number One Priority. Your relationship with Spirit will set the scene for all other relationships in your life. It may be time to sit down and set some clear goals for your soul.

Perhaps you've felt an urge to deepen your meditations or connect with your angels. Or maybe you've been meaning to learn a skill such as astral travel or aligning your charkas.

Spiritual goals are the most important, most effective, most powerful goals we can make. When you make spiritual goals your first priority in goal setting, it puts the wind in your sails! When you put Spirit first, you are much more likely to succeed at your other goals. Here are 8 empowering thoughts to consider:

1. Spirituality is not in competition with "mundane life." It is the very source of it. You are on a spiritual journey whether you realize it or not. Your mind is the projector of your life movie, and your world is the screen. Not making a conscious decision about your soul - is still a decision. The spiritual world is not divided from the "real world." They are one and the same. We are each, always experiencing God.
2. The soul is a body too. It benefits from food, exercise, cleansing, and rest. Whether you want to start a Bible study group or awaken your kundalini, the key is to make a loving decision to raise your soul's consciousness. If you can find time to brush your teeth and comb your hair, you can find time for basics such as grounding, centering, and shielding.
3. Spiritual development is a very personal and individual experience. Seek the truth of your own experience to decide what is right for you. Who do you truly want to be? What race do you want to run in this life? If you don't decide for yourself, something or someone else will! Just don't forget to set goals for the afterlife as well as this one!
4. Perfection is relative to your frame of reference. Determine your frame of reference. What is heaven on earth to you? Look at where you've been and how far you've come. If you want to get somewhere, you have to know where you are now. Being fully aware of the now can make it a lot easier to avoid becoming attached to results.
5. Achieving any kind of goal requires endurance. A sharp, laser focus on your purpose can cut through the toughest of barriers. Masters know their purpose and have clarity about it. The greatest achievers write their goals down, along with a plan. This transforms a goal into commitment. There are action steps you can take today, this week, this month to bring you one step closer to your ideal.
6. Spiritual goals are not always that easy to measure. How will you know when you've achieved your goal? Spiritual progress tends to move in a circular fashion rather than a linear one. You know you are on the right track when you experience things "coming full circle" in your life. Deja vu,

synchronicity, and a smoother life are signs that your consciousness is expanding.

7. Be sure to review your spiritual goals daily, weekly, or monthly. Whatever works best for you. Just remember to take stock of your accomplishments and give yourself rewards for sticking to your plan.

8. If you have the spark of life within you, which we all do, then you carry divine power within you. How that power is spent is your Divine Responsibility. Only YOU can use and develop your unique gifts! You are an emissary of heavenly light. Steward this light and see how easily the rest of your life falls into place!

Your creator lives within you and you live within your creator. So, don't just live like Heaven is within you, live like you are in Heaven!

About the Author

Avalon De Witt has practiced as a professional psychic and spiritual counsellor for over 12 years and has studied the Tarot and other forms of divination for over 22 years. She has worked successfully with thousands of clients world-wide. Avalon believes that the Light of Divinity resides in us all, and she is devoted to revealing that Light in your life. Her focus is to show you how to tap into that source of unlimited power and knowledge within YOU. Visit www.AskAvalon.com to learn how you can reclaim your light!

An Overlooked Responsibility

By Martha Burleigh

Man and the tortoise have more in common than it appears at first glance. The tortoise is a life that lives within a form that is both house and vehicle. Our physical bodies are both our houses and our vehicles. Without them we could not live or navigate on the physical plane. They are marvellously constructed instruments meant to serve us while we are in incarnation. It is true that they have wills of their own which cause us much trouble, but without them we could not function here. They are our teachers, and our servants, and our children.

Our physical bodies have appetites of their own, which frequently do not coincide with ours. They try to force us into many associations and activities which we do not desire. It is our purpose to learn to control them. They fight our control. It is a case of our will against theirs, until finally we gain complete control. Eternal vigilance, however, is necessary. In this way they are our teachers. They teach us discipline by causing us to need discipline.

Our physical bodies are our instruments of expression. Without them we cannot express on the physical plane. When we have gained control of them, they become our servants. Through them, we have eyes to see, ears to hear, voices to speak. They provide us with the sense mechanism through which we make contact with experience. Through experience we grow. When we have once gained control of them, they become precious possessions. They become the radios and the television sets through which we become aware of life. They are our contact with the world, both seen and unseen. Through the cells of our physical brains we become conscious of abstract ideas. Through the brain mechanism we are able to make those ideas manifest in our world.

An instrument as precious as this needs care. This is a house that cannot be sold when the roof falls in. This is a car that cannot be junked when we run into a tree. At least it cannot if we care to continue to operate on the physical plane. And it is here, on the physical plane, that we gain experience. If we do not do it now, we will do it later. If we do not do it comfortably, we will do it under difficulties. We will find that we have to continue to live in the house with the caved-in roof, or continue to drive the smashed-up car. The limitations of the house and the car will be the limitation we have put on our ability to express.

What does this body need? It needs proper fuel, at proper times. It needs proper rest. It needs a harmonious atmosphere. It needs love and understanding. It needs all these things for us, because we are the life within the form. It also needs these things for the sake of humanity, because it is a cell in the body of humanity. Most of all it needs these things for God, because it is a fragment of God trying to express Himself. Our body is our child. It must be cared for with loving understanding. However, it must not be master of the household.

Proper food is the subject of countless books and articles. There are more fads on food than can possibly learn. One day we are told that we must have a particular food, the next day we may be warned against it. What we must have, is balance and common sense. Variety is our great factor of safety. At certain stages of development the vegetarian diet seems desirable, but it should be used wisely; more protein may be necessary, and greater variety. Vegetarianism should not be an excuse for starvation or malnutrition. Wisdom and discrimination are essential in the matter of diet.

Proper rest is a matter of rhythm; as we breathe in, we must breathe out. The heart beats, it rests, it beats, it rests. A muscle tenses, it relaxes. The body is capable of tremendous effort. If that effort is made in a rhythmic manner, it can be sustained over long periods of time. There must be periods of effort then periods of relaxation. Change brings about relaxation. Walter Russell wrote that intense creative effort on one kind should not be continued more than two hours. However, if he changed

the type of work every two hours he could do intense creative work for eight hours a day without strain. For two hours he would paint, for two hours he would write, for two hours he would work on sculpture.

We ourselves are responsible for the quality of the atmosphere in which we live. We make it harmonious or discontent by the kind of thoughts we think, and by our reaction to our environment. Harmony is a gift we can give to our bodies, for which we will be well repaid.

When the body is ill, it needs proper treatment. Our bodies are like houses. When there is a small leak in the roof, there is first of all a small spot on the ceiling. If we take care of it at once, no great damage is done. But if we wait, the rain pounds on the roof, just as the stress and strain of living pound on our bodies. More and more water seeps in, the plaster soaks, drops of water form and fall on the floor, the floor buckles, and finally the plaster crashes down. The effort and expense of repair are increased, and the comfort of life within the house is impaired. If we take a little time out when we are first warned of trouble, we will not be forced to take out much time for major repairs.

Disciples, who have dedicated themselves to the work of the Plan, need, especially, to heed the care of their bodies. A weak body restricts their ability to serve, it may even distort their instrumentation. They have not the right to ignore it because there is too much work to be done. If they do not care for themselves now they may not be here to serve tomorrow. Balance in all things is important. The body must not be master, it must not be pampered and petted. But it must be cared for so that it is in condition to take the additional strain of discipleship; so that it can give steady, continuous, service for long periods of time.

Quality in the World of Appearances

From A Treatise on the Seven Rays Vol.1

By Alice A. Bailey

We now take up the definition of the word "quality," which embodies the second ray aspect. This second aspect is the determining ray or the second manifesting aspect of divinity. It is the Christ or Vishnu aspect; it is the sentient consciousness aspect of deity in form. I stated also that we would consider its expression in the world of phenomena, meaning by this the world of external appearance and of tangible forms.

The quality that emerges through the process of manifesting, and under the impulse of the divine Life, is love, which functions through the medium of the Law of Attraction, with the aim of producing an ultimate synthesis in consciousness. Let us not forget that the objective of our present evolutionary process is the unfoldment of conscious awareness. The entire process is directed towards that consummation.

Quality, in the last analysis, is neither more nor less than the nature of that awareness, and the response in terms of quality to sentient contact. Through the gradually unfolding mechanism of contact (itself the result of active quality, determining the life of the unit cells which compose the form) the range of contacts extends indefinitely, and the response of the living entity to contact becomes more vital, more understanding in its capacity, and more synthetically comprehended. This response develops in two directions:

1. It leads to a comprehension of the response apparatus and to a wise use of the mechanism of contact.
2. It leads also to an understanding of the response of the individual consciousness to the consciousness contacted. This is brought about through the medium of the response mechanism. This other response apparatus may be either more developed or less developed than the one that does the contacting.

It is this interplay between the consciousness using the mechanisms that confers an understanding of quality. This interplay confers an understanding of the activity underlying the appearance, and motivating it. Exoteric science enables the activity aspect of the phenomenal forms to be apprehended and studied, and all the many manifestations of the many schools of human thought, which enlarge through their researches the range of human knowledge, have the same objective. At the same time, they increase our capacity to grasp the intense activity of every form in every kingdom in nature, and of every atom and cell within those forms. Science has led us on from pinnacle to pinnacle of achievement, till today we are lost in a world of energies. We have been taught to picture to ourselves a world of vibrating points of force which constitute in the aggregate all forms of life, and which present to our astonished and bewildered intellects a planetary life which is the sum total of all known forms. Each form is a universe in itself, and all forms are alive, vibrating with divine activity. We use the word "energy" to express this activity, and beyond that we are as yet unable to pass. Energy is life, and energy is also death. Activity is to be sensed and known in the organic and in the inorganic, - a vast series of atomic lives built up into structure after structure and found to be in ceaseless motion. A vast series of living structures, built up into still greater and more inclusive forms, are all found, again, to be in equally ceaseless motion. These greater structures, in their turn, are found to be vibrant organisms, and so there unfolds before man's conscious vision nothing but life and activity, naught but motion and energy, and always a coherence, an ordered purpose, a growing synthesis, a Plan, and a Will. To this, science sets its seal, for scientific knowledge is the indication of man's response, through the collective response

apparatus of humanity as a whole, to the mechanism of awareness of the great Life in which we live and move and have our being, the planetary Logos of our Earth.

The World of Forces.

The esoteric sciences carry us within the form or forms, and enable us to penetrate to the quality aspect. Students would do well to remember that occultism may be the study of forces, and that the occultist moves in the worlds of force, but these are also the worlds of quality and of those qualifying energies which are seeking to manifest through the world of appearances. As they achieve this, they will dominate the activity of the form units which constitute the phenomenal world. There are energies which lie behind the phenomena produced by the activity of the atomic structures; these are latent and unseen and often unfelt; they are subjective. The esoteric sciences have one purpose in view, and that is to produce the gradual emergence of these energies, so that the skilled occultist can eventually work in a dual yet unified world of force, and be the creative will which guides, blends and utilizes the world of appearances and the realm of qualities. These two types of active creative energies must be controlled by the creating Will or Life aspect so that they function as one.

Therefore the aspirant is taught to turn within; to study motives; to acquaint himself with the qualities which are seeking expression in the outer world through the medium of his outer mechanism. As he learns to do this, the nature of that outer world of mechanisms alters, and he increasingly becomes aware of the qualities struggling for expression behind the outer forms. Thus the range of his conscious contacts extends, and he passes (through scientific research) from an exoteric understanding of the world of phenomenal appearances to an esoteric comprehension of the world of qualities. Never forget, therefore, that this dual apprehension must be emphasized, and that as a man learns to "know himself," he automatically learns to know the quality underlying all appearances. Look therefore for the quality everywhere. This is what we mean when we speak of seeing divinity on every hand, of recognizing the note sounded by all beings, and of registering the hidden motif of all appearing. The unawakened man or woman sees the form, notes its forms of activity, and "judges by appearances." The awakening aspirant begins to sense some of the beauties that lie unrevealed behind all forms; the awakened disciple lays the focus of his attention upon the emerging world of qualities, and becomes steadily aware of colour, of new ranges of sound, of an inner evolving and newer response apparatus which is beginning to enable him to contact the unseen, the intangible, and the unrevealed. He becomes aware of those subjective impulses which condition the quality of the life, and which are slowly and gradually revealing themselves.

It is this unrevealed inner beauty which lies back of the emphasis laid by the churches upon the cultivation of the virtues, and by the occultists upon the use of a seed thought in meditation. These seed thoughts and virtues serve a valuable and constructive purpose. The Biblical truism that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," is based on the same basic realization, and the distinction between the spiritual man and the man of worldly and material purpose consists in the fact that one is attempting to work with the quality aspect of the life, and the other is focusing his attention upon the appearance aspect. He may and does employ certain qualities as he so works, but they are those qualities which have been developed during the evolutionary process of the divine Life as It has cycled through the subhuman and human kingdoms.

The Ten Most Powerful Questions for Your Fulfillment

By Don McAvinchey

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Have you achieved your life's desires -- your fulfillment? If not, you may not be asking the right questions.

You may be wondering, "What could questions have to do with my own fulfillment? I don't want questions, I want answers!!"

That's a great question! I've come to believe that the way to find the best answers is to ask the best questions possible. In that way, we shape our answers to fulfill the nature of the question. You may have witnessed politicians both as they run for office and hold press conferences once in office who never seem to answer the actual question asked. That's a frustrating example of what a powerful question can do, and what an answer that isn't connected to the question does to the listener. But I digress...

A good question actually forms a context for our thinking and guides us to consider a new paradigm in how we answer it...if it's a really good question, that is. Bad questions simply maintain the status quo, and in order to find your fulfillment, I don't recommend maintaining things as they always have been. If that was all you wanted in life, you wouldn't be reading this article, now would you?

So we must shape our questions, even those we ask ourselves, to expand our personal framework. When we do so, we expand our own thinking, expand our ideas, and thus expand our capacity to evolve. That's a good formula for fulfillment in my book!

I've often been told that I ask great questions -- questions that spur you on to really making desired shifts in your life.

I think of questions, really good questions, as the tools I use in my craft as a Spiritual Coach. Like a carpenter uses a hammer and a saw, I use questions.

And this week I was thinking of great questions that have helped me and my coaching clients evolve quicker, with less pain, and more excitement and energy than ever before.

So, here are Coach Don's Top Ten Most Powerful Questions for Your Fulfillment:

1. What is your story about your life that is limiting your happiness?
2. Do you think that you as a person are worth investing in for your fulfillment?
3. Where does irresponsibility lie in your path to your satisfaction?
4. How are you not giving yourself permission to thrive?
5. What has worked in the past, to create those finest moments in your life, that you can repeat now?
6. Who believes in you, or believed in you in the past, who would know that you can succeed? What do they know about you that tells them that?

7. What does your heart of hearts say about your qualities that are precious?
8. What dreams are waiting for you to speak them out loud? How long have they been waiting?
9. If you could have a miracle occur tonight, while you're sleeping, and all of your dreams were true tomorrow, what would you do tomorrow, different from today? And what's stopping you?
10. Are you willing to let your Spirit pull you forward? If not, why not? If so, what would that direction look like?

Here's my suggestion and inspiring request: sit with my list of questions and get a feel for the one that you like the best. It may be the question that makes you smile, or, it may be the question that actually brings on the most discomfort for you. Whatever it does to you, choose the question that stirs you the most, and then write down your answers to that question.

As you write your answers, consider who you'd like to share them with who will be supportive of you finding your way to your fulfillment. Share your answers with them, and get their feedback. Then, I would guess that you'll be led to take action on your answers. If so, do it. Don't hesitate, just do it.

If you'd like, I'd be happy to be a person who is supportive of your fulfillment, so contact me via my website as listed below. I'll look forward to receiving your post!

About the Author

Spiritual Coach Don McAvinchey helps people learn to put their lives first at <http://www.MagicBaldGuy.com> To sign up for more free tips like these and claim your FREE e-course gift, Getting Unstuck and Back on Track, visit his site at <http://www.getunstuck.info>

Why Questions Are The Answer!

By Garry Zancanaro

Asking questions is one of the most basic ways that we all learn and grow. The questions we ask other people, and even more importantly, the questions we ask ourselves, can have a dramatic impact on our self improvement, success and happiness.

There are times when we find ourselves with problems, in difficult situations, or even in a position where we feel completely overwhelmed. It can be very easy to say 'what have I done to deserve this?' or 'why does this always happen to me?'

However, these questions are destructive and only serve to prepare us for future disappointments. In fact, they can actually guarantee it! The questions we ask ourselves reflect our state of mind, reinforce our beliefs and have a huge impact on our results.

We all need to make a concerted effort to ask ourselves empowering questions that encourage and promote positive thoughts, rather than destructive questions that reinforce negative thought patterns and behaviour.

We all experience events that seem just too much for us to deal with, but in almost any situation, no matter how bad it may seem, there is usually something positive that can be found. Actively looking for positives and asking the right questions can make all the difference.

Actually asking the question 'what can I learn from this?' is a great starting point, even if you only learn what not to do in the future. But you can go much further. It has often been said that when one door closes another opens; and that in every setback lies opportunity. Things usually happen for a reason.

When something happens that may seem like the worst possible outcome, very often it turns out to be just the opposite.

Many people have achieved their greatest successes as a direct result of events that seemed like disasters at the time. Don't just stare at the closed door - why not try asking yourself what opportunities are now available, or what doors have just opened for you? Try approaching the situation from a completely different angle and actively look for viewpoints you hadn't considered. You may be amazed what you come up with. At the very least, it will improve your state of mind, start you thinking more positively and creatively, and may just change your life.

"A major stimulant to creative thinking is focused questions. There is something about a well-worded question that often penetrates to the heart of the matter and triggers new ideas and insights."
- Brian Tracy

About the Author: Garry Zancanaro is the founder of <http://www.SelfImprovementDirectory.com> a website dedicated to all aspects of Personal Development, and to helping people live more successful and fulfilling lives. Visit to claim a FREE copy of Napoleon Hill's classic 'Think and Grow Rich'.

The Miracle of Disciplined Questions

By Tim Baird

How Our Mind Works.

Human beings are creatures of selective focus, we don't consciously register everything that exists and occurs in our environment but rather we register only that which we focus on.

Try this simple experiment that demonstrates this principle.

Start by looking around the room you are currently in, and remember everything in the room which is blue....

Don't cheat! Stop and look around..... (and only after you have done that, continue reading)

Now that you have looked around and remembered all the things in your room which are blue....

Without looking around the room again.... List everything in the room which is yellow.....

Did you notice anything yellow while you were looking for blue?

The yellow things are there all along, but because we selectively focusing on the blue, we don't notice the yellow.

Our mind works like this in all things. If we look for the reasons why something is bad, we see lots of reasons why it is bad, and not see all the reasons it is good.

We Choose Our own Reality

When we understand how our mind works selectively, we understand how the exactly same set of circumstances can be good for one person and bad for another, as it is not the circumstances, but rather how we choose to look at the circumstances that determines their positive or negative nature.

It is not what actually objectively occurs that matters, but rather how we choose to look at that occurrence!

The knowledge that we have the direct ability to change the nature of a situation by simply changing how we choose to view the situation is incredibly powerful.

Questions - A Practical Application

When we look at using this knowledge in a practical way, the question that arises is how can we practically and reliably focus our thinking as a means to changing how we interact with the world.

The quality of the answers we find in life is directly dependent on the quality of the questions we ask.

Take for an example early astronomers, why could none of these men calculate an accurate calendar? It was not because they were stupid, it was because they were asking a low quality question.

The question that the early astronomers were trying to answer was "How do the planets and sun

revolve around the earth?" It wasn't until the quality of the question was improved to "How do the earth and other planets revolve around the sun?" that astronomers were able to arrive at a quality answer (ie an accurate calendar).

How does this apply to us? We choose the answers we get in our lives by choosing the questions we ask of ourselves. If we ask ourselves how we can get a good job, we won't be starting a business anytime soon... If we ask ourselves how we can create massive value in the marketplace and have fun doing it, we are well on the way to building a fortune!

Constant Reminders

It is very easy to get all excited by a new idea and practice it for a few days or weeks, and then get distracted by life and let go of the idea which if persisted with could have made a significant change to our life.

A good way of combating this tendency is to commence the habit of regular positive input. Set aside some time every day or two to read something inspirational or educational, listen to audio programs daily whilst driving or on the train.

By making sure you have some positive input every day to remind you to persist with your resolution to discipline the questions you ask yourself, you can make significant changes in your life by using the power of focus.

About the Author

A Veteran of the Afghanistan Campaign and Anti Piracy Operations in South East Asia, Tim is now a online entrepreneur and is actively involved providing life education and positive mentoring to youth in his local community. Copyright 2006 Tim Baird. For FREE success education and positive attitude resources visit <http://www.timbaent.com/free>

The Questioning Traveller

By Torkom Saraydarian

There are two kinds of people living in this world: those who are living mechanically, and those who are living consciously. The first group of people is composed of those who are driven here and there by their unconscious urges and drives, by their glamour's and illusions, and by their post-hypnotic suggestions. The second group is formed of those people who are not subject to their glamour's and illusions, and who live goal-fitting lives through right discrimination.

The most interesting characteristic of this second group is that they ask questions - they go deep within their being and ask questions of themselves which create crises in them. They then find the answers within themselves and solve their crises. They question their actions, emotional reactions, thoughts and words, and try to choose the best way to act, to feel, to think, and to speak so that they can gain control upon their lives. In this way they turn into self-actualised people.

The first major step towards self-actualisation is an attitude in which man confronts himself. This confrontation of oneself is the secret of conscious living. Confrontation is the only way we can start living consciously "Why am I doing these things? Why am I speaking these things? Why am I living this way? Why am I thinking this way? " When you start confronting yourself you start awakening, for no one can awake you except yourself.

You are actually divided into two parts: there is the higher Self within you and there is the lower self. The lower self is the self that is united with your physical, emotional and mental urges, your sleeping self. The higher Self is the One Who is watching you. You are going to identify with that watching Self and say, "Why am I doing these things?" When you start asking questions, no matter how lightly or deeply you answer the questions, you see that you are improving your self.

Sometimes you don't do the things that the Higher Self is telling you to do, then you start feeling some irritation, an uncomfortableness, and you start questioning yourself "Why am I acting this way?" As you begin to answer, the uncomfortableness increases, for your mouth says "Let me answer this way", and your mind says, "Let me answer that way", and then your heart says "Let me answer this way", and then your hypocrisy says "Let me cover all of this and answer this way." And you are in conflict. As you continue asking questions of yourself you will continue to be uncomfortable. Finally you will see that there is no release from the uncomfortability until you improve yourself.

This is a very clear practical way of improving yourself and living consciously. In living consciously no one else is guiding you, no one else is leading you, and no one else is imposing his or her will on you. YOU are asking the questions, and to the best of your knowledge YOU are answering them and improving your direction. Only one thing is required, and that is honesty you are going to be with yourself. If you are going to play hide and seek with yourself do not expect improvement. You are not going to look at yourself in the mirror and say "Oh what a wonderful person I am." Nor are you going to look at your reflection and say, "Yes, I know my nose is crooked but I won't tell anyone", when everyone is seeing it. You are going to watch yourself and observe yourself honestly - physically, emotionally, and mentally.

Reactions to the Spiritual Awakening

From Psychosynthesis

By Roberto Assagioli

The reactions accompanying this phase are manifold and often occur a certain time after the awakening. As has been said, a harmonious inner waking is characterized by a sense of joy and mental illumination that brings with it an insight into the meaning and purpose of life; it dispels many doubts, offers the solution of many problems, and gives a sense of security. At the same time there wells up a realization that life is one, and an outpouring of love flows through the awakening individual towards his fellow beings and the whole of creation. The former personality, with its sharp angles and disagreeable traits, seems to have receded into the background and a new loving and loveable individual smiles at us and the whole world, full of eagerness to please, to serve, and to share his newly acquired spiritual riches, the abundance of which seems almost too much for him to contain.

Such an exalted state last for varying periods, but it is bound to cease. The personal self was only temporarily overpowered but not permanently transformed. The inflow of light and love is rhythmical as is everything in the universe. After a while it diminishes or ceases and the flood is followed by the ebb.

Necessarily this is a very painful experience and is apt in some cases to produce strong reactions and cause serious troubles. The personal ego re-awakens and asserts itself with renewed force. All the rocks and rubbish, which had been covered and concealed at high, emerge again. The man, whose moral conscience has now become more refined and exacting, whose thirst for perfection has become more intense, judges with greater severity and condemns his personality with a new vehemence; he is apt to harbor the false belief of having fallen lower than he was before. Sometimes it even happens that lower propensities and drives, hitherto lying dormant in the unconscious, are vitalized by the inrush of higher energy, or stirred into a fury of opposition by the consecration of the awakening man a fact which constitutes a challenge and a menace to their uncontrolled expression.

At times the reaction becomes intensified to the extent of causing the individual even to deny the value and reality of his recent experience. Doubts and criticism enter his mind and he is tempted to regard the whole thing as an illusion, a fantasy or an emotional intoxication. He becomes bitter and sarcastic, ridicules himself and others, and even turns his back on his higher ideals and inspirations. Yet, try as he may, he cannot return to his old state; he has seen the vision, and its beauty and power to attract remain with him in spite of his efforts to suppress it. He cannot accept everyday life as before, or be satisfied with it. A "divine homesickness" haunts him and leaves him no peace. Sometimes the reaction presents a more pathological aspect and produces a state of depression and even despair, with suicidal impulses. The state bears a close resemblance to psychotic depression or "melancholia" which is characterized by an acute sense of unworthiness, a systematic self-depression, and self-accusation; the impression of going through hell, which may become so vivid as to produce the delusion that one is irretrievably damned; a keen and painful sense of intellectual incompetence; a loss of will power and self-control, indecision and an incapacity and distaste for action. But in the case of those who have had an inner awakening or a measure of spiritual realization the troubles should not be considered as a mere pathological condition; they have specific psychological causes. One of these has been indicated by both Plato and St. John of the Cross with the same analogy. Plato, in the famous allegory contained in the Seventh Book of his Republic, compares unenlightened men to prisoners in a dark cave or den, and says:

At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck around and walk towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be

unable to see the realities of which, in his former state, he had seen the shadows.

St. John of the cross uses words curiously similar in speaking of the condition called "the dark night of the soul":

The self is in the dark because it is blinded by a light greater than it can bear. The more clear the light, the more does it blind the eyes of the owl, and the stronger the sun's rays, the more it blinds the visual organs, overcoming them by reason of their weakness, depriving them of the power of seeing As eyes weakened and clouded suffer pain when the clear light beats upon them, so the soul, by reason of its impurity, suffers exceedingly when the Divine Light really shines upon it. And when the rays of this pure Light shine upon the soul in order to expel impurities, the soul perceives itself to be unclean and miserable that it seems as if God has set Himself against it and itself were set against God. (Quoted by Underhill, 26, p.453.)

Before proceeding further it seems appropriate to point out that crises, less total and drastic, but in many ways similar to those taking place before and after the "awakening," occur in two main types of creative individuals artists and scientists.

Artists have often complained of periods of aridity, frustration, inability to work. At such times they feel depressed and restless and may be affected by many of the psychological symptoms mentioned above. They are apt to make vain attempts at escape or evasion of that painful condition by means such as alcohol or drugs. But when they have reached the depth of despondency or desperation there may come a sudden flow of inspiration inaugurating a period of renewed and intense productive activity.

Often the work of art appears as a virtually finished product elaborated without conscious awareness at some unconscious level or region of the artist's inner being. As Murray (21, p. 107) has stated in his brilliant essay, *Vicissitudes of Creativity*, speaking of the requirements of creation, "there must be sufficient permeability (flexibility) of boundaries, boundaries between categories as well as boundaries between different spheres of interest and most important for certain classes of creation sufficient permeability between conscious and unconscious processes Too much permeability is insanity, too little is ultraconventional rationality." The "frustration" which harasses the scientist at various stages of research and the role they play "in sending the energy inward to richer sources of inspiration" have been ably described by Progoff (22, pp. 223-232).

The proper treatment in this type of crisis consists in conveying to the sufferer an understanding of its true nature and in explaining the only effective way of overcoming it. It should be made clear to him that the exalted state he has experienced could not, by its very nature, last forever and that reaction was inevitable. It is as though he had made a superb flight to the sunlit mountain top, realized its glory and the beauty of the panorama spread below, but had been brought back reluctantly to his starting point with the rueful recognition that the steep path leading to the heights must be climbed step by step. The recognition that this descent or "fall" is a natural happening affords emotional and mental relief and encourages the subject to undertake the arduous task confronting him on the path to Self-realization.

Two Realities: Then & Now

By Evin O'Ryan

Unity is a state of mind. To many, it also represents reality, the reality of the Now. Living in the Now, then, is an important part of being real. When you live in this state you are grounded and awake. You are not at the mercy of your memories or future imaginings. When you are with someone who is present in that way, you feel transparent. They are like mirrors, and the more present they are, the less they distort your image. This is a wonderful service!

Masters throughout the ages have revealed the importance of living in present-time. For instance, Jesus suggested that we take no thought for our lives. The birds do not plant seeds or harvest, yet they live. We should feel the same way and not worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will take care of itself. Instead, we should attend to what is in front of us.

When we consciously live in the Now, we experience present-time reality. The alternative is living in thought-stream reality. Thought-stream reality flourishes in our head and is not directly focused on the reality in front of us. Like memory in action, it represents our mental and emotional understanding about How It Is. By living from memory, parts of our psyche remain immature, and we create unnecessary suffering.

For example, say that Uncle Hubert calls. He is stopping by tomorrow. If given a choice between a visit from him or Dracula, you would quickly pick the Count. Although the visit is tomorrow, you spend hours imagining how unpleasant it will be. You remember how abusive he was the last time. You already picture him drunkenly spilling beer on your living room rug and snorting obnoxiously at his own jokes. Sheesh! The next morning, Hubert phones: He is staying home to watch the game. No visit today. That means you've wasted a whole day worrying. Even if he did stop by, you still have wasted that day. That's a downside of thought-stream reality. You could have, however, explored this situation from the perspective of present-time reality. Instead of worrying, you could have tuned into your body and discovered its view: the fan is spinning. Your nose is stuffy. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is playing on the radio, and so on. Where is the dread and worry? The experiential difference between realities is enormous. For a happier, fuller life, the trick is to experience present-time reality more often. As the force of the thought-stream diminishes, you experience the stillness and peace of the Now. Here, faith takes root and grows into a new lifestyle.

Method for Living in the Now

Here is a two-pronged approach to increase the experience of present-time reality: traditional meditation and meditation-in-action.

Traditional Meditation

Find a technique that works for you and practice it. This promotes single-mindedness and can sharpen your awareness. Traditional meditation also improves how you perform the meditation-in-action techniques.

- **Meditation-In-Action Techniques** Meditation-in-action techniques are simple and effective tools for grounding. They concentrate on four areas: inner sensations, thoughts, the outer world, and emotions (ITOE). Meditating on inner sensations means being aware of what is happening inside your body. For example, be conscious of your breathing a popular practice in Zen or how your ankles feel when you walk. Feel your posture or the tension in your shoulders. Do body checks often.
- Second, pay attention to your thoughts, but don't identify with them. Consciously listen to the monologue as if it were the words of someone else. The thought-stream flows constantly, so you can always hear it.

- Third, meditate on the outer world; be aware of your surroundings. Revive your senses: see, hear, touch, smell, and taste. But don't just looksee. Try to picture the beauty of nature as an artist would. Watch the drama of life like a writer. Feel the texture of fabric or notice the different colours on the computer screen. Enjoy the complex song of a mockingbird. Wherever you are, something is there to experience.
- Lastly, focus on how the body expresses emotion. Instead of being swept away by those feelings, watch their existential effects. Notice how your muscles tighten in response to fear or how worry upsets the stomach area. Sometimes you may feel unpleasant energies in your body: don't define them as anything other than energy.

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We have Will; we can choose our reality. Choosing the mind's version (thought-stream reality) instead of the body's (present-time reality) can prolong suffering.

For instance, say you decide that you are depressed. That's the mind's view. What is the body's perspective? What does it see? The TV is on, your breathing is shallow, and the door is open. Where is the depression hiding? You won't see it anywhere, because your head created it. It was born in the thought-stream. The human tendency is to play in this reality.

Using these techniques

In sum, you can ground your consciousness by meditating on inner sensations, thoughts, the outer world, or emotional reactions. Use these techniques to dissipate anger, disappointment, inappropriate guilt, worry, confusion, or anything else. The trick is to remember to use them when the emotion arises. By switching to present-time reality, we ground our emotions and thoughts into the physical body. And since the body communicates with energy and action rather than words, it offers a fresh way to interpret experiences. We see the raw facts of an event (Now) and ignore as best we can the added interpretations ("I'm sad") of the thought-stream.

Some say that this approach avoids the problem. The alternative, however, is to continue trying to "figure it out" in the thought-stream. While this pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstrap strategy has obvious benefits, we remain in the choppy currents of thought-stream reality.

The point is to cultivate the Now experience into a more continuous state. When you find yourself caught in thought-stream reality, you can always use any of the meditation-in-action tools to "wake up."

Obstacles to the Now

Several barriers can prevent us from living in the Now. One psychological factor is the fear of being spontaneous: "What if I make a fool of myself?" For some, the spontaneity of the Now is threatening, because it exists outside our psychological safe zone.

This reluctance to act instinctively implies either a distrust in our ability to function intelligently in a non-rehearsed way or a fear that someone will punish or humiliate us. This is reasonable. First, according to some of our buried memories, acting freely is potentially dangerous. Second, moving from thought-stream reality into present-time reality is awkward. We are entering a new reality (at least subjectively), and that takes getting used to. Living there requires releasing habitual ways of thinking, behaving, and, eventually, feeling. Present-time reality is the realm of children and the inner child. Another hurdle is this belief: "If I live 'mindlessly' in present-time, then I'll be a robot or a zombie." Although this belief is reasonable, it represents an over-dependency on the rational mind. Mindlessness does not mean that we can no longer discern. Our mental processes continue to operate when we live in the Now. We simply suspend judgment, and this opens us to greater understanding and opportunity. In the Now, we rely on our intuitive or spiritual knowing to guide us.

Yet another obstacle is the belief that the Now is boring, or worse, that we become boring. We fear

its "emptiness." This is ironic, since everything exciting takes place in the Now. Present-time reality is a creative state. Actually, its "emptiness" is peace and stillness, but we don't recognize this at first: we naturally fear the unknown.

We can also interpret the Now as a miracle. If you believe that God created the universe and that creation was a miraculous event, then the universe that resulted was miraculous. Existence, which is happening right now, is a miracle. This is not boring! However, our biological and psychological filters make us miss this. Additionally, many interpret "boring" as a lack of drama. For instance, some enjoy the occasional luxury of feeling sorry for themselves. Jumping into the Now, however, reveals how empty that emotion is. Once you jump, you can't put your heart into that emotion. In this sense, the thought-stream is the empty reality, not present-time.

Perhaps the most difficult barriers to living in the Now are intense, survival fears. These deep running, thought-stream impulses interfere with our intent to evolve. During these inner skirmishes, the will that we exercise the most is the one that becomes stronger.

Not all obstacles to present-time reality are psychological. Brain science has shown that chemicals and neural connections in the brain play major roles in our experience. If nature and culture have wired our brains to experience negative emotions and to live fatedly in thought-stream reality, then our work becomes biological, as well. In this sense, we should welcome negative emotions. We can ground them and study their influence on our body. By understanding this, we have a chance to master them, and this reshapes the wiring and chemistry of our brain.

And then there is sex. Rumour has it that males spend an inordinate amount of time fantasizing about it. This is probably the best example of how biology influences the thought-stream and vice-versa. Sex is a natural function. Fantasizing about it, however, is just another excursion into that mercurial world known as The Thought-Stream Zone.

Pick a Reality

When you notice that you are caught in thought-stream reality, you have a choice: remain with those thoughts or focus on the Now. Often, we choose to stay in the thought-stream. We believe that our ideas are more valuable than present-time reality. This also happens when we meditate. Should we stick to our mantra or pursue that interesting thought?

It's OK to stay with the thought-stream; maybe you are working on a valuable idea. Maybe you are figuring out a wiring problem with your audio system. Many projects need this kind of information. That reality can be both useful and enjoyable. Yet, thought-stream reality is fiendishly subtle; it's so easy to lapse into it. Most live in that reality 98% of their lives. This is not balanced. The other extreme is expecting to live in present-time reality all of the time. This is idealistic. Having a goal of experiencing it 50/50 is realistic. (If you can stay focused in the Now for an hour a day, then you are doing better than most.)

Me-Me-Me

It's helpful to see the thought-stream as collection of "Mini-Me's" that exists in your head. Each Mini-Me has its own opinion about life. Each is a self-image; some are roles. Taken together, they form our personality. For instance, one Me might believe that you should practice unconditional love. Another might believe that justice should be served when someone injures another. Yet another might chime in, saying that you should balance the two views. You can even name them: "Ms. Love," "Ms. Fairness," and "Ms. Diplomacy," respectively. Our present-time self, the "Listener," hears each Mini-Me, but does not intervene or identify with any of them.

Changes

The dramas that we create in thought-stream reality can cause personal and social strife, high blood pressure, and other psychosomatic illnesses. Can living in present-time reality remedy this? If these negative conditions can form only in the thought-stream, then yes it can. This may not prevent all negative results, like those caused by poor diet or lifestyle, or by alcohol or drug abuse. However,

living outside the mind's distortional envelope can promote healing and make us mentally, emotionally, and physically healthier. In addition, living in the Now dissolves non-evolutionary intent, like wanting to dominate others. Dogma within human organizations changes, but change is usually slow. However, an effective revolution can take place on an individual level. If we transcend our mental illusions, then we become more real, more ourselves. "The only person who behaves sensibly is my tailor. He takes my measure anew every time he sees me. All the rest go on with their old measurements." - George Bernard Shaw

Though cultivating the habit of living consciously in present-time reality is difficult, the rewards could be great. You let go of fears and expectations, and you surrender to and investigate the real Mystery of life. Love is reborn in your heart. If this practice can transform individuals and groups, which it can, then it can transform the world. However, this new level of "Now Consciousness" that our species may reach is not the final step. We will then experience even higher levels of awareness, energy, and understanding. New possibilities will appear, many beyond the reach of our current imagination. Maybe this is part of the reason that we are here.

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Receptivity

From Your Innate Power

By Olive L. Brown

The importance of acquiring this faculty cannot be over estimated. It is the basis of all control. Receptivity prepares the mental attitude for concentration and will. It trains the power of attention, withholding judgement until we have the facts. It restores harmony within the organism and puts us in rapport with reality. It teaches us to accept facts and so is the first step towards adaptation.

Conscious awareness and receptivity are independent. As Dr Vittoz explained, receptivity of vibrations from the outer world is complete and sufficient only when it is conscious. Unconscious receptivity is incomplete and sometimes harmful because it becomes distorted.

For receptivity to be perfect the brain must be in a state of repose which is not passive. Dynamic repose, awake, alert, with interest, de-tensed attention is needed for receptivity to be pure and undeformed by other sensations or ideas. So many deformed ideas and sensations are due to false reception. Science has not yet appreciated this fact. We have not yet been taught how to see and hear properly. More research is needed for training in wordless experiencing.

This does not mean that everyone should fit into the same pattern. Each normal individual has his own manner of receiving and reacting, but no one is normal all the time. When we are not, receptivity is untrue and the truth of ideas depends upon the quality of receptivity.

The way to find truth is to be mentally silent. Ideas and emotions are put aside in order to allow us to be purely receptive, to sense what is in the present moment and not to think. Mental health requires us to live in the present. It is the key to understanding which depends upon the truth of receptivity. Do not do anything to understand. Just open up and let meaning come. It is a subtle combination of non-doing and effort - not muscular effort, but a subtle focusing of attention with the body de-tensed. To the degree that you have the sensation of your body is de-tensed. If there is tension, you sense that not the body. To demonstrate stiffen your arm . . . you sense the tension, but it is not the sense of arm. Now relax the arm and you will sense it.

The attitude of receptivity takes tense effort out of what we do. We learn to let the right thing occur instead of tightening up to go after it. The word let is so important! To let instead of get is the rule here. When we stop doing the wrong thing the mechanism will function as nature intended. Remain objective and consciously permit what is to come to you.

This means that one must learn to live with all one's being, to live, feel and breathe through every pore. When receptivity is true you feel as though every cell were nourished and free. It is a feeling of wholeness, of calm, confident awareness. Accustomed agitation, tension and chronic fatigue disappear.

When we have learned to live in this way, we enjoy a sense of well being and happiness undreamed of by most people. There is no place for worry and morbid ideas of the past or the future. They cannot exist in the active state. So do not fight a morbid thought, simply do something to change the functioning of the brain. It has been proved over and over again that anguish of whatever nature or intensity cannot resist five minutes of sincere receptivity. The interest must be in the sensation of the object not in the result, not in what it is doing for you. Stop a moment and think what this means.

Fears and phobias, such as fear of storms or of being alone in the house, cannot be reasoned away but the practice of receptivity in the present moment will calm the agitation. This is done by letting

the whole field of consciousness be filled with, for instance, the sense of touch and movement as one rearranges the cupboard or bookcase. With consciousness in control the brain vibration changes and the fear disappears. This is the way to eliminate all morbid ideas or other symptoms of passivity.

To be conscious of the act as you wash your hands, dress, or walk, rest you. It restores vital force instead of wasting it in dispersion. In this way you can even find pleasure in washing dishes and doing other chores which once seemed arduous and fatiguing.

'Oh, now come, let's not go too far', laughed one pupil. But she tried it and let herself be enriched by the sensation of touch and the play of muscles and joints as she moved. The experience was one of joy. She was delighted to find herself rested and feeling 'wonderful' instead of tired and bored.

The practice of wordless receptivity is to see, hear and touch, like a baby discovering the world. It is to float, to bathe in the pure sensation of the object without praise or blame, without even like or dislike. In the act of receptivity there should be no thought, opinion or judgement; no feeling or emotion except the sensation of what is regarded, heard or touched, ect.

At first it may be very difficult to stop the constant whirl of thinking even for an instant. But with patient persistence, one has more and more frequent flashes of pure sensation, be it the blue of the sky, the sound of traffic, or an object touched. Gradually a new mental attitude becomes established. The pathways are clear. We no longer inject our emotions, opinions, troubles and tensions into every act. To be interested in something outside the self de-tenses.

It is a good thing before undertaking an intellectual work, to devote several minutes to quiet the brain and de-tense through the conscious act; also to make several such pauses during the course of the work, frequent as first then more and more spaced as your control improves. In these pauses do a few conscious acts of sight, touch or movement so as to prevent tension and fatigue. After the work a few more exercise in receptivity will repose the brain. Each act takes just a second or two to register; then easily, quietly go on to the next.

We are all often too accustomed to injecting our emotion into everything. Most of us do not know how to be objectively interested in the 'thatness' of an object or event. This can be demonstrated in very simple acts which are used to train the brain so that we can control our reactions in any situation.

One day a pupil learning receptivity of touch was asked to slide her hand down and up the back of a velvet chair. Sliding down was pleasant, but coming back against the pile she shrieked, backed away and became quite wild in expressing her dislike. She was not interested in the object but in her emotion about it even in such a simple, harmless 'conscious act' exercise. Had she directed her attention out into the act she would have registered incoming sensations of touch, one less pleasant perhaps, but she would not have withdrawn so violently, tightened all her muscles and been shattered instead of calm and detached. Though considered a fairly normal person this was her habitual approach to life.

'Keep these senses in rein', my teacher used to say over and over again. It is not a tight hold but a gentle, sensitive control which prevents nervous instabilities.

The danger of working alone is to become self-hypnotised, instead of reaching a higher level of consciousness. We deceive ourselves and try to pursue our idea of what is right instead of letting truth come to us. By checking the vibration the teacher can help the pupil to recognize the difference between an idea and it. It is the itness, the reality which is important. When one finds

himself facing facts as they are undeformed by ideas, things are simpler.

When the conscious act becomes part of you your receptivity will grow more and more profound. It is absolute when you are in contact with all about you. As receptivity grows the power of giving out is increased and you are prepared to meet any situation. A moral force develops from this control. It is more than a personal satisfaction for we all have an influence in this world, radiating kindness, energy and joy, or trouble, discouragement and evil. We never know how far the repercussions of an act or a word may reach.

Reconciliation of Inner Conflicts - Part 1

By Robert Elias Najemy

We occasionally experience internally conflicting needs, desires or beliefs. In such inner conflicts, when our "sub-personalities" or "personas" have conflicting needs, we are not sure what to do or which decision to make.

Some examples of those conflicts are listed below. As you read through them, consider whether or not you have any similar conflicts.

SOME SAMPLE CONFLICTS

Let us look at some examples of the inner conflicts that may disturb our peace.

1. One part of ourselves may feel we need to spend more time on our professional life while another part may believe we should spend more time with our family.
2. A part of ourselves may want to open up to a conscious love relationship, while another part fears being abandoned, hurt, suppressed, manipulated, or being unable to be ourselves in that relationship.
3. One part of ourselves may want to give those around us (children, spouses, friends) total freedom to pursue their happiness in their own ways, while another part fears losing control.
4. The part of ourselves that wants to please others may come into direct conflict with our desire to satisfy our own needs.
5. Part of ourselves may want others to support us, while the other feels restricted by their support or advice.
6. One part of ourselves may want spiritual growth, while another may feel the need for material security.
7. One part of ourselves may want to help loved ones or friends, but the other may feel that perhaps we are doing them harm by continuously bailing them out and not letting them solve their own problems.
8. One part of ourselves may feel a need to protect the planet by living a simple life with very little consumption of energy and products, while another part may want to enjoy all the comforts of an energy consuming, pollution producing lifestyle.
9. One part of ourselves may want to take a new job or leave a job that we have, while another part wants the opposite for different reasons.
10. One part of ourselves may believe in cooperating with others, while another finds that difficult.
11. One part of ourselves may have a desire for various objects or situations as a source of pleasure, while another part may feel, this is a sin, or that we are not spiritual if we partake of such pleasures. It may feel this type of pleasure seeking is a waste of time and energy considering our spiritual goals.
12. One part of ourselves may feel the need to have an exclusive relationship in which our happiness and security depend upon another person (usually a mate). Another part may find this an

obstacle toward its need for independence, self-sufficiency, and freedom.

13. Our need for personal love may conflict with our need to develop universal love.

14. Our need to forgive may conflict with our need to hold on to negative feelings toward someone.

15. Our need to employ various disciplines may conflict with our need to feel free to do whatever we please whenever we choose.

16. Our need to follow our inner voice may conflict with our need to be like others and be accepted by them.

17. Our need to express our feelings as they are may conflict with our need not to hurt anyone.

18. Our need to express our real feelings and thoughts might clash with our need to have the others' acceptance.

19. Our need to follow a spiritual guide might conflict with our need to rebel against all types of advice or control.

20. Our need to control persons and situations in order to feel secure may conflict with our need to let things flow and allow others to act freely.

21. Our need never to show weakness may conflict with our need to share our weaknesses with others or seek their help.

22. Our desire not to ask anything from others may conflict with our need to have their help and support.

23. Our need for a stable routine for our balance and growth may conflict with our need for variety and change.

24. Our need to play our familiar emotional relationship games may conflict with our desire to get free ourselves from them.

25. One part of us wants to face and overcome our fears and blockages while another prefers to avoid and ignore them.

There are certainly conflicts, which we haven't mentioned, but most will fall into these categories.

How these Personas are Created

Our various emotional survival mechanisms can lead to the development of diverse personas or sub-personalities within our personality structure (we are not talking here about clinical illness such as multiple personality syndrome).

In response to early childhood experiences we develop various inner emotional responses in an effort to maintain our feelings of security, self-worth, power and freedom. These then grow in their own separate ways, manifesting as parts of our personality that have their own personal beliefs, logic and identity and power. We might call these roles "personas," or "sub-personalities." Throughout this discussion we will refer to them as personas.

Each persona has its own core belief that creates and sustains its existence in our larger identity. This core belief will coincide with our need for security, pleasure, affirmation or freedom, or in a few special cases, other less common needs, such as the need to be useful, or to acquire self-knowledge or enlightenment. In some cases, the basic needs may be distorted and work in conflict with survival or growth, as for example, with the need to harm ourselves or others.

In most cases, however, these personas are created by our needs to establish our safety and self-worth, usually through other persons or possessions. (For a more detailed explanation of this process see *The Psychology of Happiness*.)

In the next part of this series we will offer methods of resolving these conflicts.

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Reconciliation of Inner Conflicts - Part 2

By Robert Elias Najemy

We suggest that you read part 1 of this series.

http://www.awakening-intuition.com/Reconciliation_of_Inner_Conflicts_Part_1.html

1. We first need to get to know these various parts of ourselves by keeping a daily diary in which we refer to them by names that represent their particular qualities needs or emotions.
2. We can keep a separate page for each persona in which we list its particular needs, desires, fears, emotions, reactions and beliefs.
3. We then need to discover for each persona the core belief that creates, sustains and drives it.
4. We must accept each persona as a natural development in our evolution process. Regardless of whether there is use for its continued existence, at some point, it served some purpose in our search for security, self-worth, freedom and equilibrium.
We can perceive each persona as one of our children, whom we accept and love regardless of its immaturity. Our purpose is to now educate that persona and help it to manifest its higher potential.
5. We can then allow each persona to express itself in its own unique way through dance, writing, drawing, work, etc.
6. We then move on to let them communicate between themselves.
 - a. By writing a dialogue like a one act play in which they communicate back and forth expressing: complaints, needs, feelings, beliefs, as well as questions which they have for each other. In this conversation questions are asked and then answered by the other party, or perhaps arguments or accusations made on the one part to be rebutted by the other. Attempts are made by each part to get what it needs from the other.
The ultimate purpose is to create an atmosphere of communication, understanding and cooperation between these two personas with conflicting needs.
 - b. The same process can then be done verbally as described below.

ANALYZING OUR CONFLICTING PERSONAS

Now separately, for each conflicting part of yourself, answer the following questions.

- a. For Part "A", which I have named _____
 1. Its has the following needs, desires and attachments

 2. When its needs are not fulfilled, it has the following emotions:

 3. It has the following beliefs that cause it to have those needs and emotions.

 4. This part of myself would like to communicate the following to part "B".

 5. Toward the part of me labeled "A" and named _____, I personally experience the following feelings. _____
- b. For Part "B", which I have named _____
 1. It has the following needs, desires and attachments

2. When its needs are not fulfilled, it has the following emotions:

3. It has the following beliefs that cause it to have those needs and emotions:

4. This part of myself would like to communicate the following to part "A":

5. Towards the part of me labeled "B" and named _____, I personally experience the following feelings: _____

Having established this information, we are now ready to allow these two personas to communicate. As mentioned earlier, this dialogue can be done as a written exercise or verbally in the presence of a facilitator.

In the case that we do it verbally, we will place two chairs, pillows or benches opposite each other. We sit on the one chair and assume one of the two roles. We imagine that the other persona is sitting in the opposite chair or on the opposite pillow.

We start the conversation by speaking on behalf of the persona 'A' explaining to persona 'B'

a. How he or she feels.

b. What his or her needs and desires are.

c. What his or her beliefs are which make him or her feel that way.

This persona may also ask the other (supposedly sitting in the opposite position) questions concerning its beliefs, emotions and behaviors in an attempt to understand it more deeply. We then change positions, now sitting in the other chair and give the opposite side an opportunity to speak about itself, how it feels and what it needs as well as to ask and answer questions.

These two parts will speak back and forth as we get up and change positions whenever we change roles (it is important to change positions in order to help change mind-set and psychology). This conversation goes on like any other conversation, as each persona asks questions and we change positions and each answers questions posed by the other persona. Each persona may accuse or perhaps express feelings of tenderness and love, or plead and ask for help or even ask deeper questions which help the one part of ourselves understand the other part more deeply and clearly.

The conversation goes on until we have sat in both positions consecutively and have nothing more to say or ask from either point of view. This is important because we may feel we have nothing more to say from the one side, but when we sit on the other side and ask a question, it may open up an entirely new discussion, which could last another half an hour and involve many more changes in position.

Once we have completed this dialogue, we then take a position in the middle, to the side of the two previous sitting positions, and imagine we are our higher self, or that we are an enlightened spiritual guide. We then give advice to each persona separately, explaining what each needs to understand or do in order to live in greater harmony with the other and to proceed more effectively with less conflict along the path of spiritual growth or self-improvement.

Whether we perform this exercise verbally or in written form, I am sure each persona will find it very useful in resolving conflicts which are often serious obstacles to achieving our inner peace, establishing harmonious relationships, and moving forth in the evolutionary progress.

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Relationship to Soul Path

By Shirley Knapp

What is our soul path?

You do direct your souls' travel and density.

We have all chosen on a soul level to have certain lessons and experiences in this life, which is your soul path. Your soul has chosen this particular time on the earth and the experiences you have had and are about to have, all in preparation for soul growth. In essence, you are choosing what is required of you to take the next step that will push you just a little further. Your soul is requiring this process.

When you are working on understanding the importance of your relationship to self and your relationship to others, you are about to begin the next step: relationship to your soul path. This is to invite you to not only recognize relationship to soul path, but to be conscious of it, and be understanding of how you do direct your souls' travel and density.

Open your arms to the essence of who you really are.

Many of you have been opening to a new consciousness, so the awareness to the soul path has already been clearing for you. You may have been re-examining your own limited thoughts. And now you ask, "What is the next step now that I am open and expanded? Where do I take this information and apply its understanding in my life?" You have been preparing for this step, letting go of old past limitations so that you are consciously prepared now to open to the examination of your soul destiny.

Remember, that your souls have chosen this particular life all in preparation for soul growth. In essence, you are choosing what is required of you to take the next step that will push you just a little further. Your soul is requiring this process.

Now, you can pretend at times that you don't hear it, or you don't see it or feel it. The soul will continue on the path until you align with what is, the most important piece for your growth on your journey. Whatever circumstance brings you to this place, whatever person asks you to stretch a little further, or a relationship in your life asks you to go a little deeper, examine it before you push it away. You are being brought exactly what is going to take you to the next step toward growth on your spiritual journey. For some of you, it is about relationship; for some it is about home; and for others, it is about spiritual growth. Whatever it is, look at each aspect of your life and see how it is asking you to stretch, without fear, to the next level.

Always remember you are integrating.

Sometimes, it will feel like you're moving ahead and flowing faster and forward, and then it is very quiet, and there seem to be no insights or understandings; it's a fog. That is the time of integration. It has to be that after every forward movement, you have to integrate. You could not keep up that pace in your energy. So when it feels foggy, just sit. You never move forward in a fog. You sit in your quiet, in your Truth.

When the fog lifts, you begin forward motion.

Just listen to your inside cycle of Truth and healing and open your arms to the essence of who you are. Open your heart to the beauty of all your being without fear and limitation and you will see yourself as never before. Each of you has a strong, vital path that only you, and you alone, can walk. Honour each other's path, because we all walk a different path, but many are heading in the same direction. Just remember this.

The commitment to staying centred on your path and in your Truth of healing is more important

than before. It may also appear more difficult than before as fear and change feel very oppressive and heavy at times. Support each other. Continue to gather resilience to all that you will see about you. See it as change; see it as opportunity; see it just as you would plant a garden. You must till and pull out the dead wood, the weeds that are in the garden, so that you can grow the new. As you shift, you will shift others. It is more important than ever before to hold fast to this truth because it will encourage others to consciously choose Joy.

You deserve the highest on all levels.

Your conscious choice to choose Joy will support you and others about you as you make this choice. Remind yourselves of this choice and your Truth, and that you deserve the highest on all levels.

Exploring Your Soul Path

Exercise:

Heart is aligned with soul and purpose. The mind moves with the issues of society. Whenever you experience confusion in your life, you can be almost certain the heart and the mind are in conflict. For this exercise, pick one situation or one issue around which you are feeling some confusion not sure what to do, which way to turn. Check in with the heart. What is the heart feeling? Next check in with the mind. What is the mind saying? Is the mind fighting the heart with logic, erecting fear barriers, or is it connecting with the heart? When your mind is on one track and the heart is on another, choosing to follow your heart will bring you the most growth and keep you moving forward along your soul path.

1. Describe a situation around which you are experiencing some confusion.
2. What does your mind have to say about this situation?
3. How does your heart (soul) feel about it?
4. What step can you take now that will move you in the direction of your soul path?

Shirley Knapp is an internationally recognized spiritual teacher, and author of "Sustaining Joy" who leads groups in personal growth. She has been in a holistic private practice, teaching and embracing individuals and groups since 1986. Shirley's goal is to empower us to move beyond personal barriers and limitations to lead a more empowered and joyful life. www.northwindsprod.com

Relativity of Perfection

By Lama Anagarika Govinda

From Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness

LIGHT INCESSANTLY MOVES through the universe, but it becomes visible only when it meets resistance. In the same way consciousness becomes aware of itself only when there is resistance. If this resistance is impenetrable or insurmountable, it is felt as suffering; if it can be mastered it is felt as joy. Joy means the overcoming of resistance. This is why people climb mountains, endure self-imposed hardships, and engage in all kinds of adventure and sports. Life becomes worthless and unbearable if there is no resistance or if the obstacles we meet cannot be mastered.

But what about aesthetic pleasure the happiness of solitude or that of samadhi in which there is apparently no resistance? However, these states cannot be attained without overcoming hindrances or without mastering our instruments of perception and knowledge.

This is why we cannot dwell indefinitely in the bliss of samadhi or in the enjoyment of beauty. As soon as effort ceases and we get accustomed to a certain condition, joy also ceases.

It is only in the moment towards perfection that perfection can be experienced. Only in the movement toward the infinite is infinity experienced. Infinity attained is no more infinity. In order to enjoy the blissful state of samadhi, we have to develop it again and again. In order. In order to enjoy beauty we have to create it within ourselves.

Thus there cannot even be aesthetic pleasure without creative effort; and as there is more creative in the artistic than in the person who beholds a work of art, the joy of the former is more intense.

The way to samadhi is a continuous process of spiritual renunciation, a continuous giving up. To give up a thing means to be free from it, to be master of oneself and of one's decisions. Freedom exists in the act of renunciation. In other words, it is the faculty of renunciation that gives us power over ourselves and the things of the world around us. Not the things that we renounce but the act of renunciation is what matters. Therefore even samadhi has temporarily to be renounced if we do not want to lose that faculty, because a faculty which is not constantly reacquired loses its power.

If renunciation is genuine, then things can no more enslave us, but we have become their masters and can use them without danger. Then we can fearlessly go from the unity of samadhi into the diversity of the world. After we have convinced ourselves that we can do without things, we have now to prove that we have no more reason to fear them that we can accept and even create them without losing our independence, our inner liberty.

It is the way of the Buddha: starting with the renunciation of the world, culminating in the realization of enlightenment, and leading back into the world through compassion. It is like the threefold process of breathing: the inward movement of inhalation, the moment of stopping or motionless, and the outward movement of exhalation.

Both sides of this process are repeated in Tantric meditation as practiced in Tibet; only here the objects are first produced from the state of "perfect emptiness," and afterwards they are reduced again to "emptiness." Here the state of Buddhahood or Enlightenment which lies between the two movements has been chosen as the starting point.

But how can such a starting point be chosen if the state of Buddhahood has not yet been actually attained? The answer is: because it is only in the movement towards perfection (which, after an intricate process of spiritual purification, is here produced temporarily as a mental image or symbol)

that perfection can be experienced.

Perfection is not an absolute value or a static condition, but the harmony of forces that can be established in every moment in which their movement is coordinated by the direction towards a common aim. In such a moment these forces form a "universal" group (the word "universal" taken in its literal sense: directed toward one point), a universe in miniature.

But the ideal point toward which these forces move must lie in the infinite and can never be reached by them; otherwise they would clash and merge into each other, i.e. their ideal differentiation which is balanced by the common direction would be destroyed, and their movement, without which life is impossible, would be stopped. Harmony needs differentiation as much as it needs unity. One tone alone cannot make music.

Thus we can say that perfection is possible at each stage of development, in each form of life. A human being who has properly developed all his human qualities can be called perfect, though there may be other beings who surpass humans in many respects. And in the same way we can say that an animal which possesses all the qualities of its kind is perfect; and similarly a plant or a crystal which expresses harmoniously the characteristics of its nature.

Thus perfection exists neither as an end at the top of a scale, nor as an absolute or fixed measurement, but as an infinitesimal moment of harmony in movement.

In self-conscious beings this harmony is generally disturbed by exaggerated egocentricity and a destructive type of intellectualism. Only one who has completely overcome the illusion of ego hood and its concomitant evils, i.e., one who has attained enlightenment, is able to dwell permanently in a state of harmony, which ordinarily we are able to experience only for short moments.

Harmony establishes itself more or less permanently by an organic or unconscious process of continuous readjustment in forms of life in which the balance has not yet been upset by the hypertrophic growth of ego consciousness. A similar continuous readjustment takes place in those individuals who have conquered the ego and regained their spiritual balance.

The difference between the perfection of a flower or of an animal and the perfection of an Enlightened One is that the former is unconscious, while the latter is conscious of the harmony which he has established by creative effort, and in which he continues to dwell by virtue of his wisdom, which makes a relapse into the unbalanced state impossible.

The Realm of Awakenings

By Jack Kornfield

From A Path with Heart

A guide Through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life

Whenever we come to rest in this perfect balance, whether through meditation or another deep spiritual process, we can encounter yet further extraordinary states of consciousness, spontaneous awakening and profound realizations that come unbidden to the open heart and balanced mind, like grace from the divine or even like lightening. These realizations can come in many forms. Sometimes from high equanimity we enter the void, the silent emptiness out of which all things arise. The entire universe disappears and later reappears by itself. This release from all sense of self and form brings enormous peace and shows us a freedom beyond all form and all limited existence. Sometimes such realizations of the void are deeply restful and quiet; other times they shock like thunderbolts. Some students will go around dazed for weeks after a profound opening to the emptiness of the void, not yet sure how to put life back together. Sometimes experience of cessation and the void will have the flavour of absolute emptiness; other times there will be a mystical sense of pregnant fullness. There are many dimensions possible in experiencing the void.

At this level of perfect equanimity, students understand the suffering and the pain inherent in all forms of identity, in all existence. At earlier levels, we experience and see the suffering but we don't understand it. In equanimity, our understanding and acceptance brings a direct apprehension of freedom, of the deathlessness that lies beyond all existence, beyond all form and limitation. Wherever this arises, there comes an unquenchable joy and the knowledge that for eons we have wandered, entangled in life, and now our grasping has unravelled and we have tasted freedom at last.

Other equally illuminating realizations can appear, showing us the complete freedom and liberation found in the very midst of life itself. A complete freedom and liberation found in the very midst of life itself. A luminous vision arises when our heart realizes the inherent completeness and perfection of all things. Like T.S. Eliot's "still point of the turning world," we can come to a wondrous sense of wholeness and completeness, transcendence and love, beyond self and other, beyond all endeavours. We wake up just here, as the mystics say, in the Body of Buddha, the Body of Christ, and even the limited things of the world are filled with an inexhaustible sweetness and purity.

At these deep levels of practice, profound satoris and mystical awakenings continue to unfold. The ever changing essence of life shows how consciousness itself can be experienced as the creator and container of all that is. We discover that we are the Reality we are seeking. Consciousness can be experienced like galaxies of stars sending out their light. Our clarity of mind can illuminate the artificiality of time and space. We can see directly how all things exist right now, see that the whole sense of time and creation is but a trick of consciousness, where individual identity is done with mirrors and "Time is simply God's way of keeping everything from happening all at once." We can know the arising of the illusion of separateness in each moment and live in the great peace that underlies it all.

In all of this there comes a dying to the old way we have held ourselves and an amazing new vision of life. This process of death and rebirth can happen in any period of time. Weeks, months, or years of meditation and prayer may precede it or it may happen quickly, on the operating table, or through some powerful shamanic ritual or other exceptional circumstance. For some people it happens in the midst of daily life, the discovery of that perfect balance and greatness that is possible for the human heart. Whenever it is discovered, in whatever circumstances, it begins to transform us. Even though we do not always in such a state, as if we had climbed to the top of a mountain, we've had a taste of

inner freedom that can inform and affect our whole life thereafter. We cannot ever again believe that we are separate. To the extent that we have died already, we are not afraid of dying in the old way. This is called dying before death. It brings to our life a wonderful kind of wholeness and equanimity.

In the end, the gift of this process is to realize the most fundamental teachings of the dharma, the law, the Tao. We see what the Buddha taught, that all suffering in life is caused by grasping, fear, and limited identification. In the midst of this we discover a freedom, a release from individual entanglement that empties us and yet leaves us connected with everything. We discover that liberation is possible for every human heart, that it has happened in ancient times and it happens to this day.

And finally we come to see that spiritual practice is really very simple. The whole process is a path of opening and letting go, of being aware and not attaching to a single thing. This teaching leads us past all the temptations and demons, through the whole process of death and rebirth. As my teacher Achaan Chah taught:

If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot you will have even more peace. So wherever you are attached, let go of that and come back to the centre. Learn to see all movement of life with balance and openness.

As we end this chapter on expanding and dissolving the self, let me remind you that this map of the Elders describes only one path among many for spiritual opening. Even those who have a natural ability to enter these realms discover that these experiences have their benefits and their limits. No matter how tremendous the openings and how strong the enlightening journey, one inevitable comes down. Very often in coming back down, layer by layer, one again encounters all of the difficulties of the journey.

Then, when we have returned to ordinary consciousness, we find that sometimes we are deeply transformed by such states and sometimes not! At best they leave us with a greater sense of balance and fearlessness, with an ease and tenderness of heart and mind. But finally there is nothing to do but to let go of them as well. This is what we will have learned if the lessons are true.

This is illustrated by a story of an old Chinese Zen monk, after many years of peaceful meditation, realized he was not really enlightened. He went to the master and said, "Please, may I find a hut at the top of the mountain and stay there until I finish this practice?" The master, knowing he was ripe, gave his permission. On the way up the mountain the monk met an old man walking down, carrying a big bundle. The old man asked, "Where are you going, monk?" The monk answered, "I'm going to the top of the mountain to sit and either get enlightened or die." Since the old man looked very wise, the monk was moved to ask him, say, old man, do you know anything of this enlightenment?" The old man, who was really the Bodhisattva Manjusri said to appear to people when they are ready for enlightenment let go of this bundle, and it dropped to the ground. As in all good Zen stories, in that moment the monk was enlightened. "You mean it is that simple; just let go and not grasp anything!" Then the newly enlightened monk looked back at the old man and asked, "So now what?" In answer, the old man reached down and picked up the bundle again and walked off towards town.

This story shows both sides of spiritual practice. It teaches us to let go, to relinquish our grasping and identification with all things, and reminds us that we just rent this house for a while. Once we have realized that, it teaches us, we must re-enter the world with a caring heart. We must pick up our bundle and carry it back into the realm of human life.

But now we can travel as a bodhisattva, as one who has traversed the terrain of life and death and is

free in a new way. From this freedom we can bring a heart of understanding and compassion to a world that needs it so much.

Remembering and Forgetting

From *The Savage and Beautiful Country*

By Alan McGlashan

Perhaps the two most moving chords that can be struck from the human heart are contained in these four words: I remember, I forget. For the unheard anthem of our whole existence is created out of the antiphonal movements of remembering and forgetting; not only the remembering and forgetting of individuals, but of races and cultures. Perfect balance between this pair of opposites is the mark of maturity.

Memory, the psychologists briskly tell us, has two main aspects. The first is Reproduction "not necessarily exact", as they concede with the naiveté which is the birthright of academic psychologists. The second is Recognition - that rainbow bridge flung in a magical instant between the present and the past. Recognition is the core of memory and of the mental life. Without it nothing could be experienced, neither love nor hate, hope nor fear, beauty nor ugliness; and a merely vegetative existence would remain. Hardly even this perhaps; for as the physical world is held in being by all-pervasive, unobtrusive force of friction, so without the act of remembering, the entire architecture of the psychic world might at once disintegrate.

Memory has other and more equivocal uses. It is, for instance, the guardian of self-love, the busy spider in the brain, interposing between past and present its invisible web, through which can only pass only selected and fondly edited items into the specious records of the conscious mind. Memory has its graces, too, storing sharp images of happiness and grief, laying a soft patina on the past, giving to the unripe act of living what autumn's gold gives to the mellowing peach.

But if remembering is a vital function, so also is forgetting. To forget is essential to sanity. Like a clumsy mother the huge inchoate body of past events, recalled in their entirety, would overlay the infant mental life and suffocate it. Even if this were not so, the loss would be immeasurable if all things were clearly remembered. History's canvas would have the maddening facial iteration of a mammoth end-of-term school photograph.

Since man must remember if he is not to become meaningless, and must forget if he is not to go mad, what shall he do? The dilemma, not logically resolvable, has been subtly resolved. Within man the past is perfectly contained - but he is allowed to live as if it were lost. He is tolerantly permitted to taste a naïve pride of discovery, a childish delight in new toys; as when William Harvey staggered the seventeenth century world by his discovery of the circulation of the blood - in which he had been anticipated by Hwang Ti, Emperor of China in 2650 BC, who quietly noted that "all the blood in the body is under the control of the heart . . . The blood current flows continuously in a circle and never stops". Or, to come nearer to our own time, when the recent discovery that the inner structure of the atom mirrors the structure of the universe is found to be one more illustration of the fact long known to mystical thought, that the microcosm mirrors the macrocosm, "as above, so below".

Mixed always with the joy of new discovery is a shadow of disquiet, a teasing half-recollection of things long past the secret penetration of the archaic into the present, of the timeless into the temporal. To the percepts of the conscious mind are added intimations from an unimaginable distant and forgotten past, still alive in the depths of the psyche. Nowhere is this more clear than in the magical quality of the enjoyment we derive from myth and parable and fairy tale. Good stories are rare, and these are the three forms in which they are most often contained. The best of them have indeed been told countless times through history and prehistory. This would be intolerable were it not for the grace of half - forgetting, as children do, which allows us to receive with an ever fresh delight tales first heard, perhaps, in some lake village of the Neolithic age.

The tragedy is that it is fatally easy to lose the precarious balance of these opposing and compensating functions of remembering and forgetting, whereby the imaginations of men are group and regrouped in endless intricate patterns of wisdom and folly, kindness and cruelty, insight and illusion. It is so hard to grasp the essence of this reciprocal movement.

In his book CUMAEEAN GATES Jackson Knight has suggested that the essence of genius "consists in the power to find contacts further back in time beyond the reach of others, and to evoke latent stores of feeling and of meaning in the collective mind of the present". Silent, patient waiting for the truth, as Simone Weil has said, is an activity more intense than any searching.

What is needed is an extension of contemporary consciousness to include what can be defined as the translucent quality in all things; the quality by which an object or an event is seen not only as a thing in itself, but also as a membrane through which can dimly be discerned the foetal stirring of a different order of experience. The quality of translucence is the key; a golden key that is the careless playing of children, and the conscious instrument of geniuses.

To become aware of this translucent quality in all things is no vague romantic goal. It is a sharply defined, delicately poised effort of vision, a state of harmonious balance of forces in the Pythagorean sense, born of the union of many opposites: of remembering with forgetting, of thinking with feeling, of the temporal with the eternal, of the personal conscious perceptions with faint echoes from the remotest regions of the archaic psyche. It is the basis of all true science, the essence of ritual, the constant attribute of wisdom. It may be the nearest that human minds can reach to the meaning of meaning.

Renunciation

By Giuseppe Filipponio

The average man is in the habit of identifying himself with his body. He knows the world through his senses and considers that happiness consists of satisfying every wish of his baser instincts. When by chance, he comes into contact with the world of the spirit, a transformation, although slight, takes place; a new horizon arises before his internal vision and as he progresses spiritually step by step his tastes become simpler, although he derives greater pleasure from beautiful things.

If he dares to venture along the arduous Path of the occult, his personality will become more and more receptive, and his spirit will be manifest in his consciousness by a greater awareness. There are many aids to climbing the difficult path and one must know how to find and use them profitably. Among these the main ones are: renunciation, harmlessness and service.

Many people are dismayed by the thought that renunciation means giving up what we love most. This is not the case. It is a question of ceasing to identify oneself with the inferior aspects of things, of ourselves and of life, and to identify oneself on the contrary with the spiritual aspects so that we may evaluate the various elements of life. Renunciation is, therefore, a matter of overcoming rather than giving up.

All that we are most attached to which causes an obstacle to our spiritual development must be surrendered at the right moment and with joy. Then the more important things appear to us as love, as the union of souls, and as understanding.

This is a state of freedom at which all who have learned the Truth arrive. It is the latent divinity in us which emerges and urges us irresistibly towards a renunciation which is less painful and more gentle in experience. This happens because we flower a little every day when we abandon ourselves to the beneficent action of our inner selves. But one must let one's soul open and allow the spirit to enter one's consciousness.

What prevents renunciation from working fully in us is self-pity, the short-sightedness of our intellect, not to mention the limitation of our knowledge, which does not permit us to realise that what we are giving up is returned to us mysteriously, but with mathematical certainty, a hundredfold; because in the invisible Plan the accounts do not add up, but are multiplied. Not the sum, therefore, but the elevation to power is the result.

One must integrate one's personality by its identification with the soul which, when it assumes domination of the personality, becomes the silent observer, the guide, the light, the path and the goal of life.

To arrive at this is to acquire the awareness of the soul which, when it assumes domination of the personality, becomes the silent observer, the guide, the light, the path and the goal of life.

To arrive at this is to acquire the awareness of the soul. How can we recognise whether we have acquired this consciousness?

To begin with, we must bear in mind that the nature of the soul is Love-Wisdom, and that it has many sides like harmony, happiness, understanding, rhythm, harmlessness, order and purity, ect whereas the unredeemed nature of one's personality is on the contrary desire, egoism and the wish to be separate, ect. If the sense of separation and other barriers do not exist in our hearts, if we love others spontaneously according to our true character, then we can say that we have to a certain extent contact with our soul.

If the people we associate with feel more love in us, they will want to approach us for comfort. Therefore, if we can identify ourselves with others a certain contact with our souls will very probably be established. Another sign is to know how to act disinterestedly, without attaching any importance to the results, as has been said in the Bhagavad Gita: 'Perform action without attachment to the fruits of action'.

One of the most difficult things is to work in silence, in the dark, without aiming at any material satisfaction for our ambitions or for our pride. To see everyone's point of view without losing sight of the whole, directing ourselves constantly towards the principle and essential goal, the Divine Plan, and to collaborate in its realisation should be our aim.

This is the path we follow. If it is not put to the test there is no transformation, and without transformation there can be no profound and occult transformation: the sublimation of instincts. One must gradually reach the consciousness of the individual soul and from this, the consciousness of the Cosmic Christ. This requires a series of efforts which we must make by accepting, choosing and provoking the opportunity to do so.

Our spiritual evolution must be a series of small self-initiations intended to develop the ever latent power in us, of detaching from us what we have acquired in order that renunciation does not give us a sense of loss. So let us not procrastinate; let us realise our real self. By means of renunciation we can enter the Whole, and by the dedication of our personal lives we shall be able to find eternal Life.

REASONS to IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES

By Louise Morganti Kaelin

Living your life "in integrity" means that your words match your actions which match your beliefs. When you are living your life in harmony with your values, you naturally have more energy. Clarifying what really matters to you, knowing what you stand for, will set you free to live life to its fullest potential.

1. If you don't know who you are, you can't be true to yourself.

Sounds obvious, but many of us go through life without taking the time to identify what truly matters to us.

2. It makes decision-making easier.

When faced with a decision, look at your choices in light of your values. How does each choice support you in living your values? If both support your values, which value does it support? And which of those values is more important to you? Makes it easy, doesn't it?

3. It helps you identify people, situations and things that don't support those values.

Sometimes people, situations or things don't make us comfortable. Very often, the negative emotions they evoke are caused by a value being threatened. Without understanding that, and without knowing which value they threaten, we use valuable energy defending or protecting ourselves. If you have a strong need to be true to yourself, look around. What situations evoke those feelings? In my experience, we only have a strong need to be true to ourselves when we're not being true to ourselves. The rest of the time, we just are.

4. It helps you identify people, situations and things you do want in your life.

Being clear about what your values are allows you to proactively seek the people, situations and things that support those values. That gives you the freedom to replace the items you identified in #3. It puts you in charge of your life.

5. It gives you an incredible sense of peace.

Clarifying your values and then living your life in harmony with those values provides you with an inner peace and tranquility that allows you to move confidently through life.

6. It allows you to stop reacting, and start responding.

Whether we've identified our values or not, we always know when we're not being true to ourselves. This often creates a vague sense of uneasiness and we react defensively. When we are clear about what our values are, we respond to such events with clarity and we do it quickly!

7. It's a great yardstick for creating goals [and it's easier to achieve goals that are based on values].

When a goal is in harmony with your values, the natural energy around it provides a momentum that allows you to take the necessary action "without effort".

8. It allows you to get rid of goals that aren't really yours.

Take a close look at the goals that have been around for a long time. You may find that they're really things you feel you "should" want. Let them go. The guilt associated with not working on these goals is wasting energy you could be using to achieve what you really want.

9. It allows you to be very clear about the standards you set for yourself.

Standards are behavior that we establish for ourselves. They are the expression of our values in every day life.

10. It allows you to be very clear about the boundaries you need to establish for others' behavior. Boundaries are what other people cannot do to or around you. The behavior that is least acceptable to you is that which violates your values. Clarity around your values allows establishing and enforcing boundaries to be painless. You're not trying to change people, you're just clear about the behavior that's acceptable around you.

If you'd like an inventory (in PDF format) to help you identify your core values (and automatically sign up for my bi-weekly newsletter), please send a blank email to <mailto:values@touchpointcoaching.com>

About the Submitter

(c) 2002, Louise Morganti Kaelin. Louise is a Life Success Coach who partners with individuals who are READY (to live their best life), WILLING (to explore all options) and ABLE (to accept total support). Visit her website at <http://www.touchpointcoaching.com> to find out about her 10%-Invest-in-Yourself pricing program. To sign up for her bi-monthly free newsletter which offers insightful and practical suggestions for creating your best life, <mailto:3mc@touchpointcoaching.com?subject=Subscribe>

The Rules of the Road (6)

From Glamour

By Alice Bailey

A discussion by Ernest Sufferm

Rule 6: " The Pilgrim, as he walks upon the Road, must have the open ear, the giving hand, the silent tongue, the chastened heart, the golden voice, the rapid foot, and the open eye which sees the light. He knows he not alone."

There are many, though selected, sounds that reach the ear of the disciple upon the Path. There is the voice of the master, (using this term to designate primarily that Master who is one's sponsor, but also, in certain instances and on occasion, others of the associated Brotherhood who may have occasion to speak). One must become receptive to those great inner Guides, alert to catch Their thoughts and to meet Their call. There is the voice of the Inner Ruler, - the whisperings of one's own Soul, which soon or late, will be caught by the attentive ear of the pilgrim. This great event will mark the beginning of that blending so beautifully described in *The Voice Of The Silence*, and in which the functioning individual, joined to the Soul, will use that inner ear to hear and heed that Voice.

There is the voice of one's brothers on the way, which now are coming and more and more will come to use the subtler telepathic speech in the free exchange of thought on their common way. The extent of the present use of this telepathic gift among those close to the Path or upon it, is much more widespread than is normally conceived.

There is the call of those in distress which is ever heard, for the open ear is ever alert to hear and heed the cry of pain. "Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun. Let not the fierce sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye. But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain; nor even brush it off until the pain that caused it is removed".

The pilgrim becomes alert to the whole gamut of sounds which reach up to the world of Souls. In a certain sense the inner ear gains the capacity to receive and note all the different sounds which issue from all that lives. Very much changed, however, is their receipt and interpretation, according to the level and quality of the recipient. Things which may seem dissonant or painful from one level may sound a quite different note to one with a higher perception. Then that which had appeared imperfect is heard in a new setting, in its relation to a greater whole. A needed supplemental tone is observed; a deeper, richer, inclusive harmony registers.

"The giving hand" clutches at nothing for the separated self. It is the hand of service. It grasps but to convey and to bestow. In the long course of human evolution the function and symbolism of the hand changes greatly. During the slow early stages of evolving man, as the sense of separated selfhood gradually develops, more and more the outreaching hand seizes to appropriate. Thus the clutching hand becomes the symbol of the self-seeking person, the man who takes and holds for his petty gain.

It is only toward the end of the long journey through the human kingdom that, at last, dissatisfaction with the fruits of selfishness, the discovery of the emptiness and valuelessness of that which has been claimed and separately used, causes relinquishment. Then the hand, differently held and used, serves to release and distribute that which it had grasped and held.

"The silent tongue". For all aspirants the regulation and watching of speech is an imperative necessity, and there is perhaps no better gauge of one's position upon the Path than the way in which one guards and uses the gift of speech. When the aspirant has become the disciple, and when

he has set himself to the task of preparing himself to serve as an initiate, he has special and new needs to master the gifts of silence. More and more as he proves his worth, his present and potential usefulness, and as he demonstrates due reticence, will reliance be placed upon him, and the facts of the realm of the inner life will seep into his consciousness. This will only happen when Those who guide evolving men find in him one who respects and protects Their confidence. He has proved himself as one who has acquired or who has is rapidly gaining, the priceless gift of due control of speech.

Many are the lessons to be learned in the process of acquiring "the chastened heart". In fact, a complete transformation of character is summed up in these few words. Ambition must have given place to consideration for others and a desire to serve. Instead of pride and self-love, by dint of bitter experience and of many painfully learned lessons, the aspirant must have offered up the sincere prayer for "a humble and contrite heart", and have begun to tread the Way in humility and selflessness. In substitution for all those lower impulses and vibrations which link to impurity, definite progress must have been made towards that region of high quality, of subtle and new beauties which only the pure in heart can see and know. All that adroitness and subtlety that links to deceit or untruthfulness must yield to the simplicity, directness and candor which faces the sun and expresses Truth. Above all, there will have been marked growth in that pervasive and transforming agency, LOVE, to correct and efface that which is critical, selfish and unloving, and to precipitate into the life the other needed virtues, of whatever sort.

"The golden voice" of the Pilgrim will come to partake of the quality of gold, both in the value of that to which it gives utterance, and also in the radiant and magnetic beauty of its expression. That speech which is hurtful or trivial, - that which fails to partake of the quality of gold, can find no outlet through such a voice. That which is useful and constructive, above all, that which manifests wisdom, must and will become its normal tone and nature.

Students can derive much light and a keen enjoyment from a study of the relation of the quality of tone and speech to the spiritual level of individuals, as well as of those subtle changes in this quality in any person's utterance which corresponds with the unfoldment of his character. This proves thus to be one of the varied ways in which the emerging beauty of the Soul finds expression, and it explains why those who are disciples, and to a still more marked degree, those who are still further along the Path, normally reveal in their voice that subtle beauty that inspires confidence and makes a strong appeal.

The golden voice and the magic of the Soul's speech may well become objects of attention for the pilgrim (for such are we) who makes his way steadily forward toward or upon the Path. Even as we approach that goal, the quality of our tones will begin to register and to evoke response from those whom we may meet. A young woman was recently advised that a group of friends, - people of kindred tastes, were taking a cottage together for the summer. It was suggested to her that she attempt to meet the one in charge to see if she might be allowed to join the group and spend her holiday with them. As a first step she telephoned the woman in charge and discussed details in a preliminary way. This done, she proposed to call upon the woman in order to learn whether she might be accepted. The reply she received was this: "We have talked together. I have heard your voice. I believe I know you. You will be welcome".

"The rapid foot" we are to have, will no more loiter upon the Way. The period of lethargy, of slowness or inertia, the time of fitful impulses now lies behind us. Rapidly and steadily are we to march ahead towards the goal. With minds resolved and hearts attuned, we press forward toward the mark of the high calling to which we are committed. Henceforward nothing must hold us back, for we are unitedly embarked upon this high adventure.

In service of our brothers, the open ear, the giving hand and the rapid foot are closely linked. Quick the response must be to the call received, and rapid our feet, as we direct our steps to the point of need. For when the cry goes forth, is heard by the attentive ear, and registers in the chastened heart, there is no other wish or desire than to go forth and to give freely and in wisdom that which is needed.

The last of these descriptive terms, "the open eye which sees the light", is a most significant phrase. A discussion of this clause alone in a paper of this length would still be far too short to deal adequately with all its implications.

We may here view this open eye as the eye of the Soul, that eye which clearly sees the light beyond, - that of the distant goal. It also discerns the light in all that is. Under the stimulus of such an opened eye, the awakened and illumined mind discovers a new capacity to see through all obscurations to the inner truth, to discover new and deeper meanings and values in all fields. The aspiring pilgrim, oriented to such a light, is able, as never before, to chart his course toward the distant star, now clearly seen, and to hold unwaveringly to that course with quickened pace.

Interesting fields, to which this phrase invites consideration, include a certain faculty and capacity, still dormant and latent in many of us, but still which more and more awaken into life among those who tread the Path, which, in an actual and not a symbolic sense, can be called the eye of the inner vision. Also new and varied vistas appear when we contemplate the light here mentioned as the Light of the Soul, to which increasingly we turn.

"He knows he travel not alone". Having duly taken stock and found his way to the Path of Discipleship, toward which he has so long aspired and striven, the disciple has developed the capacity to discover and know his companions on the Way. He observes them, - many of them, by his side and all about him. Furthermore, today, as never before in human history, he sees indications of the great numbers of his fellow aspirants who are finding their way and taking their place upon the same Road. He realizes all the peculiar and unique circumstance which, combining, have made it possible for him and his many brothers to overcome the obstacles that hitherto held them back, and by the special grace and the concerted efforts of the brotherhood of the Greater Ones, to join as brothers in the special privileges and responsibilities of this New Day.

Joined in the comradeship of this common aim, and in the recognized common life and essential quality, uniting his forces with his brothers, he goes forward, - an integral and vital spark in the flame of divine life. In this blended union he walks ahead with joy and love upon the common high road of the Soul.

The Secret Place

By Michal Jeastcott

From The Silent Path

Through inland far we be, Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither.

WORDSWORTH

'We do not have to hear the sun rise,' wrote Paul Brunton, author of many books on meditation and the mysteries of the East. 'So, too, the greatest moment in a man's life comes quietly. In that stillness alone is born the knowledge of the Overself'. This gives the reason for the title of this book. The path of meditation can well be compared with the long stillness before daybreak. There is frequently nothing to mark it but a quietly increasing light. The gradual dawning of a new world in our consciousness comes silently. It is a secret, inner thing which we can never fully share with others a silent path.

It must of necessity be so, even if we pursue it in the company of others, for it entails certain adjustments that we have to make in ourselves, it leads to recognition that we only come by through our own endeavour, and it brings, eventually, knowledge realization that we only reach by personal experience. As the spider spins out of its own substance the thread it will proceed along, so we, through meditation, build our pathway out of our own consciousness. It must, therefore, be an inner, silent, secret path which we carve out for ourselves.

Yet there are many different kinds of silence, and meditation can be practiced in the midst of sound. In fact it very often has to be today! We are compelled to slip it into whatever semi-quiet times we can find while life goes pulsing on around us. We are learning to accept that cloisters and hermits' caves are not to be found in modern society. The difficulty of finding any quiet today is one of the conditions of the advance of civilisation; our growing powers place more demands on us. But this is evolution, and if we have to thread our way through countless impacts before we can make our approach to inner places, this is the battleground of our present stage. Further, it underlies the fact that meditation is not simply an escape into day-dreams when the fancy moves us, but a specific use of our faculties to make an inner penetration. A quiet use, yes, but nevertheless a defined, deliberate and controlled use which demands both intention and effort.

Meditation is often mistakenly thought to be a negative procedure, but it requires many of the positive qualities that Christian was called upon to demonstrate in his more dramatic Pilgrim's Progress. These qualities are called for on a higher turn of the spiral, on inner, silent, unseen reaches, where they bring no glory or outward prestige. There are none to see our victories whom we know of and our long efforts, struggles and achievements seem known only to ourselves.

Yet our endeavour does not go unrewarded. The ramparts of the inner world are surrendered to us when we have proved ourselves. This is a matter of the law of vibration, of like being able to synchronise with like. We shall go into this later, but right from the start, it is wise to realise that meditation is not a passive form of devotion; it is a positive use of our highest capacities to bridge between the outer and the inner worlds.

What makes us start with this undertaking? Perhaps the origin of the determination to meditate lies way back in the sense we all have hidden in varying degrees of an inner world or 'somewhere else', apart from everyday existence. It was with a great many of us persistently as children. We knew another world. We clothed it as our fancy led, were heroes there, achieved the impossible, possessed all attributes, rode as kings.

It was escape, of course, on the wings of imagination. But it was also more than that. It was a refraction of the sense of the reality of the other dimensions. The magic world through the hole in the fence replaced dominions we were missing. Here we broke through all boundaries. It was 'holy'. And no matter how we clothed this secret world, it was where we withdrew to when we needed more than the world around us gave or when that world, we considered, treated us badly. We told no one of it in case they spoil it. We sensed it was lodged on ephemeral grounds. But in fact, it was built on something sounder than we had any idea of then on a memory that still lingered and was not yet veiled entirely by louder and more tangible things.

Wordsworth still remembered it when he wrote 'Heaven lies about us our infancy.' And

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises in us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

Slowly we put on more and more of the world. As Wordsworth went on to say in *Intimations of Immortality*: 'Shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the growing boy.' The sense of the inner world inevitably slips away to a large extent, yet do we ever quite forget the special joy we dwelt there with as children, and have never quite recaptured since?

This recollection of an inner or secret or super world appears continually in the writings of all ages, quite apart from religious teaching and the doctrines of the East, where it is no strange thing and more or less generally accepted. 'All the poems of the poet who has entered into his poethood are poems of homecoming,' Martin Heidegger wrote. But according to Plato:

All souls do not easily recall the things of the other world. Few only retain an adequate remembrance of them.

Plotinus put forward the same thought as Wordsworth in these words:

The soul . . . falling from on high, suffers captivity, is loaded with fetters, and employs the energies of sense. . . . Thus the soul, proceeding from the regions on high, becomes merged in the dark receptacle of body. Goethe wrote in *Faust* of the soul in him which . . . seeks to rise in mighty throes to those ancestral meadows whence it came.

Thomas Vaughan drew a more attractive picture of our sojourn on earth than most of the poets and philosophers: 'I look on this life as the progress of an essence royal; the soul but quits her court to see the country.' But however we may regard the contraposition of the inner and outer spheres of life, most will agree with Emerson:

The Genius which according to the old belief stands as the door by which we enter, and gives us the lethe to drink, that we may tell no tales, mixes the cup too strongly, and we cannot shake off the lethargy now at noonday. Sleep lingers all our lifetime about our eyes. Hence our efforts, like someone stirring in his sleep before he wakes, to penetrate the mists that hang between the two domains and to investigate all kinds of methods holding any promise of showing a way through.

The beautiful, the fanciful, the strange, the unknown, all awake some echo in our half-starved souls, and hungrily we respond, hoping we may find something to satisfy our unframed yearning, or even some clue to the source of this indefinable nostalgia. The storytellers and poets and there are many who have written in answer to this 'pull' to the unknown world are among the most famous and most widely read.

Eagerly men have feasted from the earliest times on the sagas, legends, folk tales and allegories that fed the imprisoned sense of infinity, and reiterated the promise of the Isles of the Hesperides and the lands of Lyonesse. Almost everyone has at some time found a special story that has fanned the spark deep in his heart into a glow that lasted, secretly, for most of his life-time. From Malory to de la Mare, and east and west wherever words have been written, we have, to paraphrase Thomas Hardy's lines in *The Oxen*, gone with them gladly in the gloom, 'hoping it might be so'.

But all this has only served to keep the embers glowing. Few have discovered the fire of the spirit or turned with true intent to find the 'secret place'. Now, in our practical age is arising a new concern to do this, to follow these leads that tug at the heart and track down their origin. Many of the young people are experimenting with drugs in their search for these deeper areas, and many among these, now finding this leads nowhere that is mentally satisfying, are turning to explore various fields of meditation.

Flights of fancy and mystical dreams have little appeal for the modern mind. Pretence will not be tolerated, reason must prevail, and the goal and the way to it must be defined in clear if possible scientific terms. In this framework the new concepts of meditation as a mental and logical method of inner penetration are taking on an important role.

A few years ago, meditation usually meant to most a 'religious' reflection. It suggested beside books and quiet gardens and the thoughtful writings of the mystics who had 'walked with God'. But in the East, meditation had long been practised as a mode of achieving consciousness on various levels of awareness, and the coming to the West of this teaching has brought about a new realization of the potential of this form of approach to that which is inner, higher or spiritual.

The science of meditation is primarily built on the concept of graded levels of life or consciousness or vibration. Seven major planes of life are spoken of in the *Ageless Wisdom*, each having seven degrees of density or vibration, and the function of meditation is to lead the conscious mind from stage to stage upon the inner stairway, from one level to another, gaining continually higher or subtler regions of awareness. This briefly, is the essence of the true practice of meditation. It brings about a higher or greater consciousness and enables us to realize the more subjective realms.

True meditation is not simply an ecstatic experience, an emotional state of bliss or feeling of transcendency. Neither is it just an entry into a void. Some forms of meditation do, it is true, lead in these directions, but they will not assist us to take up our highest potential, and the processes that we should follow are those which are positive and utilize the higher powers of the mind.

This is why meditation is becoming almost a vogue today. It is being acknowledged as a means of progressing in consciousness, and many are feeling it can take them the next step forward. This stage is described by the Tibetan writer Djwhal Khul, and the turning point he depicts will be recognized by many:

As long as the polarization is purely physical or purely emotional, no need for meditation is ever felt. Even when the mental body is active, no urge arises until the man has run through many changes and many lives, has tasted the cup of pleasure and the pain through many incarnations, has sounded the depths of the life lived entirely from the lower self and found it unsatisfying. Then he begins to turn his thought to other things, to aspire to that which is unknown, to realize and sense within himself the pairs of opposites, and to contact within his consciousness possibilities and ideals undreamt of hitherto. He has come to a point where success, popularity and diverse gifts are his, and yet from their use he derives no content; always the urge within persists until the pain is so severe that the desire to reach out and up, to ascertain something and someone beyond, overcomes all

obstacles. The man begins to turn within and to seek the source from whence he came. Then he begins to meditate, to ponder, to intensify his vibration until in process of time he garners the fruits of meditation.

Seeing the Big Picture

By Lois Grant-Holland

Sometimes, in traveling a path, we discover a short-cut, and we reach our destination in less time—and with less effort than we thought, when we began the journey, would be required of us. On the path to self-awareness, however, there are no short-cuts. Personal growth awareness of the person we are in every present moment-is an ongoing lifetime process. The end of one learning cycle is always the beginning of the next.

Growth on any level, for any life form, is a continual process. Our soul's growth accumulates from lifetime to lifetime within each level of consciousness, and moves with us from one level to the next. It is never a case of "all or nothing," with our infinite future being permanently defined by the choices we make within a given time span on a given level of learning; because soul experience for the purpose of growth is the only real objective in life, God poses no limitations - no time limits, no space limits—on our infinite, predestined accomplishment of that objective. Each soul learns-through experience-in it's own time and on it's own terms, as does every human being.

When—for our soul growth objectives—we come into a physical existence as a human being, we come in fully capable, on every level, of fulfilling the growth objectives we've planned to accomplish through our life experiences. Each of us has—in each lifetime—one primary lesson we hope to learn. The secondary lessons that we build into our life plan are lessons that support-and point to the primary lesson. Based on our life plan, everything in our lives is geared to exposing us to the people, the events, and the circumstances that will encourage us to learn-through our own experience - what we came here to learn.

Sometimes, we choose to look at our lives objectively and see the people, events and circumstances as the learning experiences they were intended to be. Sometimes, we choose to look at life from a more human, more emotional perspective. It often happens that a person goes through an entire lifetime, complete with all of it's experiences, good and bad, without ever realizing, on a conscious level, that there is a higher purpose to those experiences and/or a higher aspect to themselves.

In their spiritual blindness, they have missed the opportunities presented as life lessons and are completely unaware, because they fail to see the importance of their interactions with others, of the effect or lack of effect that they've had upon the people who chose, with ultimate faith on a soul level that the interconnected spiritual objectives would be accomplished in that lifetime according to plan-to learn and grow together by agreeing, long before the physical lifetime began, to be a part of each other's life plan.

"Ignorance of the law" does not redeem someone who breaks it and ignorance on a conscious level of the karmic Law of Repercussion does not redeem us from the karmic debt that we incur when we wander through life spiritually blinded. Whatever karmic debts we incur in our state of unawareness we must build into future life plans, when we will try, try again to awaken the conscious mind to the soul's plan for growth.

Assessing our conscious awareness of our spiritual objectives at any point in our life journey is a vital ingredient in self-awareness, for it is only we recognize, accept and work with the soul as the essence of our current lifetime self that we can begin to see, for ourselves, the order of the universe as it is reflected in our lives and the learning experiences that constitute living.

It would be nice if all of us, as souls, could come up with a perfect, infallible life plan. Our life lessons would be accomplished quickly and easily, and we'd never "miss the point" of any relationship or any situation. We'd know why we were here, and like all good students, we'd do our homework, learn what we needed to learn, pass each test of life with flying colours, and graduate to

the next level of spiritual learning. Life would be simple. Life would be good.

But...life doesn't work that way, and either do life plans. The greatest challenge, at this juncture on our personal path to growth, is coming to recognize and respect the plan at play in our lives, a plan that, in the perfection of it's inception, perfectly accommodates our soul growth objectives.

Without conscious recognition of "the big picture" the soul's objective of spiritual growth being accommodated by the learning experiences being offered in the present lifetime-we see our lives as a maze of emotional, physical and mental experiences that seem to have no purpose at all, other than to make us feel that we are victims of circumstance surviving the whims of a cold and uncaring Fate.

About the Author

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Seeing Truth Whole

By Roland Northover

Seeing truth whole does not mean seeing the whole of Truth. None of us can do that. Truth itself is so much greater than those who look at it, who inspire towards it, and who try to reach and grasp it. The great thing is to be orientated towards truth, even though all we can grasp of it is a limited at any one moment in time by our capacity to understand and to interpret what we touch.

Wherever we may stand on the path of evolution we can have but very partial experience and limited appreciation indeed of what truth really is. Truth characterizes and is the 'livingness' or nature of 'The One in Whom we live and move and have our Being.' How indeed can we sense the real purpose of that great Being?

There is, however, value in attempting to 'see truth whole', for it is our minds, our backgrounds and our other limitations and colourings that offer the real obstacles to our sight and appreciation. The scientific, the philosophical, the financial and the economic are all attitudes to, and approaches to truth. In that a man is intelligent, sincere and unprejudiced in his approach and he has his heart in it, one might say what the colourful limitations of his mind? Yet it is in this concrete mind of ours that the real barriers appear.

Perhaps the most common of these barriers is the religious one. Most will agree that a 'religious attitude' is an attitude towards truth. Few yet agree that a scientific attitude is equally as important as a religious one. From this fundamental misconception arise many of the quarrels and arguments between science and religion. These should not exist for each is but part to truth which inevitably meets all the other paths where they converge at the Centre of all Truth.

As we proceed towards this centre along one of the particular spoke-like paths we get glimpses of the other converging paths. We begin to coin such words as 'political economy', 'religious education' and 'psychological-medicine' and so on, showing a trend towards integrative thinking as we approach the centre. Men will one day use, and freely use the word 'spiritual' to characterize such attitudes and approaches as the economic and the political ones, in much the same way as today they link the words 'religious, and 'spiritual'.

Seeing truth whole is question of seeing things in relation to each other. Because things do not happen to be of the same kind does not mean that therefore they should, or indeed logically can be, the subject of controversy and disagreement. In that a man is a stamp-collector he cannot, as such, have an argument and a disagreement with an amateur gardener, for stamp-collecting and gardening are not things of the same kind; they both coalesce or meet under the umbrella of, say, hobbies.

This natural unrelatedness of things not of the same kind is well understood by mathematicians. And this natural unrelatedness at horizontal level disappears as each of the approaches arrives at the centre. Therefore in that a man is approaching perfection as, say a scientist he can have but little disagreement with an economist who has gone the same distance towards truth along his own line.

Seeing truth whole therefore is a sort of visualization of a wheel of spokes all approaching the hub where truth lies. We may not be able to get within the hub, but we are all within the wheel of which it is the centre.

Self-Acceptance and Self-Improvement

By Robert Elias Najemy

Some fear that if we accept ourselves as we are, that we will have no motive to improve ourselves.

There is a small possibility that self-acceptance might cause a few people to lose interest in self-improvement. In most cases, however, it opens the door towards natural change and self-betterment.

Contrary to what many think, self-acceptance is usually a prerequisite to moving beyond aspects of our selves which we would like to leave behind.

It is as if that aspect which we want to change is another person whom we are rejecting and asking to be different. They will usually resist and become even more deeply entrenched in the behaviours we would like to them to change.

The same seems to happen when we reject aspects of ourselves. Those tendencies or "sub-personalities" tend to resist letting go of their ways of functioning and behaving. Thus, we often delay our freedom from such undesired habits or characteristics when we reject them or ourselves for having them.

Say for example, we smoke or eat or drink too much. Or we might tend towards aggressiveness, jealousy, anger, fear or other unwanted emotions. We might prefer to be more assertive and dynamic in achieving our goals.

Rather than reject ourselves for what we would like to change, a much more effective approach is to:

1. Accept that undesired aspect of ourselves as a natural evolutionary response to the various stresses, disappointments, difficulties, and challenges we have encountered until now in our lives. We have developed these habits and tendencies as an attempt to "protect" our selves from "dangers" or to "relax" from our tensions.
2. Learn to understand these aspects of our being. They are parts of us, which deserves our love and acceptance as it is. We need to understand what those parts of ourselves are actually seeking through those behaviour. They might be seeking security, affirmation, freedom or perhaps release of tension.

Our "aspects" or sub-personalities can search for security in money, food, relationships, sex, smoking, coffee or even through conflict. We have been programmed to doubt our security and self-worth and to fear for our freedom and to seek them at times in strange and sometimes self-destructive ways.

Thus the second step is to understand these parts of ourselves and realize how they feel and what they need.

3. The third step is to begin to re-educate these parts of ourselves and help them understand what is really in their benefit and how they can achieve real security, self-worth, freedom and full fulfillment. This might take the form of a dialogue with that aspect of ourselves in which we listen to its needs and then explain how we perceive our lives and share our goals and needs. We can write a dialogue between these two parts of our being - the one who wants to keep on with its habits and the second which wants to move on to other ways of behaving. They can each express to each other their:

- a. Needs
- b. Feelings
- c. Beliefs
- d. Goals.

This can also be done by setting up two chairs and creating a verbal exchange in which we speak alternatively for each part of ourselves as we change positions sitting in each chair as we change perspective and seek to feel and express that aspect of ourselves.

4. The fourth step is to take the position of our higher wiser self and speak to both parts of ourselves. Both the part, which wants to the change and the one, which does not, are equally aspects of our being. They are like our children and they need to be accepted and loved as they are. They need to be helped to love harmoniously in the same body and mind.

5. In the end we need to understand that our true being is not limited to either of these aspects. We are something much greater.

This mutual inner acceptance and communication between these conflicting aspects our being opens the door to a type of inner cooperation which brings about a much more effective and lasting change than can ever be accomplished through self-rejection and conflict.

The same is obviously true about our need to change others. We can get much better results if we accept and understand them and their needs and then express our needs in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.

As for the fear that we might relax too much and not move forward if we accept ourselves, we would do well to remember that all of nature seeks to evolve. Our inner being naturally seeks to evolve. This is our basic inner need. We are all driven by an inner pressure towards perfection. How else can we know that we do not have perfect love or justice, unless we have an inner frame of reference.

We want to create health, harmony, peace and love in our lives because these remind us of our true inner self. These are who and what we are.

No matter how much we accept ourselves we will always want to move towards that manifestation of our inner potential.

We need to externalize our inner beauty. Loving and accepting ourselves is the first step towards that.

Many people believe that they must be dissatisfied with themselves, or that they must reject themselves, or feel guilt or shame in order to have a motive for self-improvement or growth. They wonder, «If I accept and love myself as I am, what motive will I have for continuing to change, grow or improve? »

Accepting ourselves, as we are, is not a deterrent to continuing our efforts to learn, grow and improve ourselves. We can easily accept ourselves and still continue to improve our character and increase our knowledge.

The First Grader

Perhaps the example of children in grade school will help us to understand this. These children in

the first grades of grade school do not reject themselves because they are not in a higher grade, or because they do not know as much, or are not as capable as those children in the higher grades. They accept themselves as they are, and are happy with themselves with their present level of abilities and knowledge.

Yet, no child would accept remaining in the same grade the next year or year after year.

In the same way, there is no conflict between accepting and feeling comfortable with our temporarily limited abilities and lower level of conscious, and our need to continue growing. It is natural to accept and love ourselves at his present stage of growth and simultaneously to attend to learning, evolving and improving ourselves

Growth is a natural instinctual need. Scientists have discovered that when a person learns something new, this creates the excretion of endomorphines and other positively reinforcing chemicals in the brain. Learning brings pleasure, when it is natural and not connected to fear of rejection and failure.

But there are yet other motives for action and growth, and these are love and the need for creativity. We need to love and to create, just as we need to sleep and eat. These are basic needs, even if they are higher on the need-hierarchy scale.

Thus, even if we do not have self-rejection or dissatisfaction as a motivating force, we will always have love and creativity as motivating forces to grow, create and produce.

Let us grow naturally without fear or self-doubt.

We are all in the first grade of the school of spiritual growth.

But we need to prepare ourselves to be in the second grade next year, and the third the year after and

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Self-Growth: When Everything Falls Apart

By Wendy Betterini

We often have the perception that self-growth will be simple, enjoyable, and rewarding. It certainly can be, but there is also another aspect of the self-growth journey that is rarely mentioned. And that is, when everything falls apart.

One of the major parts of self-growth is learning how to look inside yourself and get clear about certain things. Most often, this involves recognizing and dissolving inner blockages. These are usually deep-rooted beliefs that we formed in childhood, or at least the early part of our lives. Sounds good, right? It's very good, actually, because these beliefs are usually what prevent us from living fully productive lives. These are the beliefs that keep us stuck in self-destructive patterns and have a negative effect on all aspects of our lives. So dissolving them is an excellent idea.

The problem is that these deep-rooted beliefs are part of the foundation upon which our current lives are built. When we dissolve inner blockages, there are suddenly gaping holes in our foundation, which cannot support what is resting above them. Inevitably, something will slip down into the hole, causing pain and turmoil and terror.

That's what happened to me this week. My eyes were opened in a big way about a blockage I had been struggling with since early childhood. I finally felt totally clear on why it was there, and I understood exactly what I needed to do to dissolve it. So, I set about doing just that -- and then everything fell apart. That's the understatement of the century. Everything I thought I knew about my life suddenly became a lie, and I was shaken to my very core.

I spent a couple of days feeling shell-shocked. Then another couple of days grieving. Then the light dawned. Finally, I understood what was happening, and I could see clearly how everything is interconnected. It was no accident that everything fell apart just when I was finally making progress on my inner blockages. They fell apart BECAUSE I was making progress on my inner blockages.

As painful as it is, it's a good thing, because my life circumstances were built on lies. The lies were the early beliefs I had formed about myself since childhood. Once I began changing those beliefs, my life circumstances began changing also. Change is good, but it can also be scary and painful as hell. It is necessary however, because in order to build something better, we need to tear down what already exists.

In my own experiences, I've noticed that there is a direct correlation between the size of the blockages we dissolve, and the magnitude of destruction it causes in our lives. If we dissolve a small blockage, something small will fall apart in relation. Maybe our car will break down, or we will develop a minor illness. When we dissolve a very LARGE blockage, something equally as large will begin to slide into the abyss. Our marriage might fall apart. Or we might lose our job. Or we might experience a more serious illness or accident. As frightening as this sounds, it's a very important part of the process because it makes us sit up and take notice! Most often, the parts of our lives that begin to fall apart weren't that great to begin with. They didn't serve our higher purpose, even though we may have felt comfortable with them.

So, how do we deal with the pain and fear when everything falls apart? Our first reaction might be to run away to avoid feeling the pain. Another reaction might be to try and put everything back the way it was before it fell apart. But doing so only delays the process. Remember that the destruction is necessary in order to make room for the rebuilding of something better.

In order to complete the process, we need to stay with it. Yes, there will likely be pain and

discomfort involved. There will be fear. There will be anger and grief. But there will also be an awakening deeper than any we have experienced before, and our eyes will be opened in powerful ways.

Here's how to stay with the process through its completion:

1) Look closer. When everything falls apart, pay special attention to the exact circumstances that have begun deteriorating. This gives you a BIG clue about the biggest lies (limiting beliefs you have formed) about yourself, and your life. Look for the connection between the blockages you are dissolving, and the circumstances that are coming apart at the seams. For example, if you have begun exploring your true talents and abilities, and then you suddenly lose your job, a little introspection may help you to realize that your job didn't allow you to USE those talents and abilities, so it needed to be removed to make way for a more fulfilling career. Sometimes the connections can be a little more vague and you may have to dig a little deeper. It may take some time to fully understand how everything is related, but if you keep at it, you will come to understand it and you can then use that knowledge to rebuild something better.

2) Grieve. Yes, you MUST allow yourself to grieve! Just because the old circumstances were built on "lies" doesn't mean you won't feel a sense of loss and sadness as they unravel. Allow yourself to go through that. Cry as much as you need to, and stay with the sadness for as long as necessary to move completely through it.

3) Follow through with the destruction. As much as you might want to try and "fix" everything immediately, don't do it yet. Instead, take an active role in continuing the destruction of that which no longer serves you. Hell yes, it's going to hurt. But at the same time, it will be so incredibly freeing and empowering. Maybe for the first time in your life, you will feel in control of your circumstances. You will be choosing to release self-limiting beliefs, and free yourself from self-destructive patterns. This "destruction" process can take many forms, but it usually involves releasing circumstances that no longer correspond with your newly emerging beliefs, such as unproductive relationships, unfulfilling jobs, etc. Be willing to let them go, and prepare yourself for the creation of something more meaningful.

4) Form new beliefs. Once you dissolve your old beliefs, you will need to form new beliefs to take their place. Usually this means replacing limiting beliefs with empowering ones. This is a process all its own, and it will take time to fully reinforce the new beliefs in your mind and heart. A helpful activity is to write out the old beliefs, and then write your new (and usually opposite) beliefs right next to them. Example: Old belief, "I am not worthy of love." New belief, "I am worthy of love. I deserve to be loved." Then simply keep reinforcing these new beliefs until they become a strong part of your foundation.

5) Begin rebuilding. This is the fun part! It can be a bit confusing, however. What do we build? And how? Especially if the destruction process was particularly painful and life altering, we may feel at a loss about where to begin again. And the answer is: let your heart lead you. Think about what you really want your life to be, and then begin taking the steps to create it. That might involve getting an exciting new job, or moving to a new location, or building new relationships. The important thing is to be sure that your old beliefs have been replaced by new, empowering ones.

Otherwise you will simply re-create circumstances that don't serve you, and you'll eventually have to go through the destruction process all over again! Listen closely to the urgings of your heart, and use them to guide you along the path to a better life.

This isn't an easy process by any means. But it is oh so fulfilling and exhilarating if we embrace it

and allow it to happen without fighting against the pain and fear. Through our trials and challenges come new levels of growth, wisdom, and inner strength beyond our wildest dreams. We just need to stay with the process and watch for the rainbows after the storm.

About the Author

Wendy Betterini is a freelance writer who strives to motivate, uplift, and inspire you to make your dreams a reality. Visit her website, <http://www.WingsForTheHeart.com> for more information on self-growth and self-improvement.

Know Your True Self - Relationship Between Values And Goals

By Terence Young

It is very important that you know yourself and what you want in life. Choosing what you want in life can only happen when you create a life based on your own particular design. This design reflects your own personal growth and the way you make them fall into different choices made by you in life, i.e. in relationships, career and jobs and so on.

Right Values, Right Goals

As mentioned, your first necessary step towards your personal growth should be to identify yourself and your likes and dislikes. You should clearly demarcate a line between your needs and wants in life. For your personal growth, it is very necessary that you strengthen your strong suits and talents, a gift which you can identify yourself best. Everyone wants to achieve the best in life, give a push to their career as well as personal life. This can only be realized when you strengthen your core abilities and achieve a higher personal growth in life.

Your attitude towards life and society in general is based on some values. Your values automatically are reflected in the way you present yourself to others. This forms an important aspect of your personal growth. When you as an individual contribute more towards your society and community, inspire others through your learning and values, admire beauty and stay connected, you already achieve a different position for yourself, a position, which is unique, and a position that contributes to your emotional, mental and personal growth.

We always, as individuals, set some priorities and goals for ourselves. We lead our lives based on these priorities. However, it is very necessary that these goal oriented priorities do not off sync with our values and ideas. Try not to pursue goals for the sake of pursuing it. This stagnates your personal growth. Therefore, it is always better to write down your goals, which you yourself can identify with and match it up with your values that define your true self. By focusing yourself to a particular set of goals, you can really motivate yourself to achieve what you want in life. It allows you to stay focused, clear in life, and identify your true self in the pursuit of personal growth.

Experiment with Life:

Achieving your goals require commitment and a desire to work on those goals and spend time on them. Change can only take place when you are prepared to undertake certain risks and experiment with different aspects of life. This really shapes and contributes to one's personal growth.

Experimenting with one's life is very important as it helps you in discovering many facets of life and simultaneously designs your life according to these experiences.

Remove the roadblocks that come on your way when you are designing your life according to your values and goals. Often people are unaware or unable in identifying and removing these blocks. They seek the help of a Personal Coach who helps them in exploring their opportunities, outside perspective and the possibilities of achieving their goal. They guide you through the necessary tools and structures that leave a profound and ever lasting impact on your life. In the long-term, you would reach the higher echelons of your personal growth.

About the Author

Terence Young - For more personal growth articles visit: <http://www.personalgrowthunlimited.com>

When Self-Growth becomes Self-Sabotage

By Marie-Pier Charron, Life Coach

Many of us invest quality time and energy into our personal development. We buy inspiring books, sometimes with the workbooks or journals that complement them. We discuss psychology with our friends - or we look for friends with whom we can have open discussions on the subject. There is activity in our mind - at times a little bit of confusion. We encounter so many different lines of thoughts, so many tools, so many exploratory exercises we can do. It's as if we were in the middle of a dense, majestic forest...

Then, maybe it happened to you, you reach a point where you don't feel satiated anymore after reading the hot new self-improvement book... The workshop just feels like another workshop... Philosophical discussions feel more like empty calories... It's not that your head is full: it's more that you are hungry. You are hungry, because you have tasted - sometimes chewed - the wisdom you have read or heard, but you haven't digested and integrated it. Don't we benefit from relaxing and taking a break after a good meal?

I think none of us have ever seen, written in the back of a book, "You don't need to read me - all the wisdom is within you". No publisher would be so open-minded (or masochist)... Besides, we are the ones who have to figure out for ourselves how we can best use the resources available to us - how we can use them to connect to our own inner wisdom, inspirations, intuitions. Other people's insights are guiding lights. We don't need a zillion guiding lights, in fact we get lost if we are surrounded by too many of them - they point in too many different directions. Their role is simply to show us possibilities, which we can consider... and once we have chosen something to be our truth, we close the book, we turn the light off, and we get in touch with our own inner guidance.

One simple concept can drastically change our life. It can be, "Love yourself", it can be, "Be all that you can be", or "Fear is an illusion"... But none of these makes real sense, no concept will truly transform our life, if it's not integrated in every cell of our body, if it doesn't feel as tangible as if it came from us in the first place. We keep reading and listening to "teachers", and "experts"; but who's the best expert, when it comes to you, or when it comes to me?

I believe nothing in self-growth has to be hard and complex. You can sit in silence, you can look inside yourself with wide open eyes, and you will "see", or feel, the precise wisdom you need at that exact moment. It's not always exactly what we want to hear - in fact, often it's not, so we refuse to accept it - but sometimes that's what self-growth is about, that's what we really need to bring ourselves to the next level. That being said, it's easier sometimes to face a book, or another person, than it is to truly face and accept ourselves. And let's acknowledge the fact that we often prefer complicated answers, and techniques.

"Self-sabotage" is a strong word... What I tried to convey with the provoking title is that, at some point, the energy we dedicate to self-growth resources may better serve us (in terms of self-growth) if we invest it elsewhere: in introspection... in basic down-to-earth actions... in meditations... or maybe in fun things... Sometimes we have an endless to-do list that causes us major stress, and instead of simply doing what must be done, we will read a book on relaxation, do yoga, or else... Sometimes we are a little gloomy, we just need to loosen up, laugh, and have fun... but we will attend a workshop on a subject we think will provide us answers. Not that it won't! Obviously, none of this is "bad" - sometimes it may even be the most constructive things to do... but what I'm highlight here is that sometimes, it may not. Finally, I guess my point is: "self-growth can be everything, you have access within yourself to all the wisdom there is, and you are magnificent beyond what you can imagine".

About the Author:

Marie-Pier Charron, Life Coach, is founder of Implosions, and editor of a monthly newsletter filled with practical tips and empowering strategies. To get your own free subscription, visit her at <http://www.implosions.net>

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Self Improvement: Destiny or Journey?

By Eldon Taylor

How high is up?

Have you ever asked yourself, “Just how high is up?” or “Just how successful is successful?” or “Just how good is good?” Have you ever thought about the different “Yous” within yourself? Most of us have, at sometime, considered our own path to personal growth and desired to improve upon improvement.

There is a simple, yet powerful, way to evaluate many personal characteristics and thereby gain additional access to who we are and what we truly wish to be. If life is essentially a school, which I believe it is, then we not only have our course work cut out for us but our objective for which our "learnings" specifically prepare us. Get a piece of paper and try this little exercise.

First, write down all of your strengths, all of those characteristics about yourself that are good. Begin with the obvious, perhaps you're very honest, or friendly, or cooperative and so forth. After you have completed this list, write down some characteristics that you would like to improve. Perhaps you wish to overcome some fear or stop being jealous, or end gossiping or release anger and so forth. So, you'd like to be more courageous or more accepting and trusting, or more confident and so forth. Now, with both of these lists completed, think about yourself as having four inner aspects (IA) of the same you.

The first IA is your actual self--who you are, what you do, etc. The second IA is your concept of an ideal-self. The ideal-self for most of us is just that, an ideal—but usually too ideal to be realistic. “Under no circumstances will I ever become angry,” may be one such ideal. Okay, the third IA is the ought-self. The ought-self is that collection of things typically foisted upon each of us during maturation. The collection of “you ought to do this” and “you ought to do that” statements we all have heard particularly from our parents and family members. Last, but not least, is our desired-self. The desired-self is attainable, not so ideal as to be impractical as a goal. With these four IA's, take another sheet of paper and write down characteristics that apply pressure to how you feel about yourself, positive or negative, under each IA heading. That is, use a separate column or sheet of paper to list the items (including feelings) that you may have about each category. When you're done, compare the categories.

The question, “How high is up” has no answer unless there is some reasonable estimate as to the ceiling. Personal improvement is much the same. Self-examination can assist all of us in obtaining reasonable goals and that can provide at least some clear steps on the way to our ceiling.

Fantasizing your way to your goals.

I related the research that showed one could obtain the same gains from imaging exercise as from exercising in a study I reported upon in my Wellness book (which is free to download in our e-book library at www.innertalk.com) where basketball players improved their free throw shots as much by practicing mentally as the group that shot free throws everyday of the thirty day study. Current research tends to suggest that the scripts we fantasize, that is, our daydreams, rehearse our worldview and in that sense predispose our experience. Repeating themes such as those around “getting even” and/or emerging victorious at someone's expense, probably tend to create scenarios in many peoples lives that may lead to violence, anger, and so forth. In short, our mental daydreams may become rehearsed scripts seeking an opportunity to be played out.

By contrast to the above scenario, whenever I have spoken to a successful person, a champion

athlete, or anyone else truly at the top of what they do, they have informed me repeatedly and universally that their daydreams were about their success. You can choose what to daydream about and you can end a daydream if it's not something you want rehearsed and thereby a part of you.

Knowing this, it is incumbent upon each of us to think about the goals we wish to achieve. Look back at your lists, and set up a day-dream that is truly self-serving—one that rehearses your success and achievement according to your goals—your highest best.

To your best and thanks for the read, Eldon

About the Author

Eldon Taylor, Ph.D. is the author of over 200 books and self improvement programs. He is a Diplomat in the American Psychotherapy Association and received the 2005 International Peace Prize for his work in teaching self responsibility (<http://www.innertalk.com/eldon/index.html>).

Beyond The Senses

By Richard Treadgold

There is a subtle, but life-altering difference between our experiencing life the way we normally do, through our identities, and experiencing life the way we could, through our Essence. Our reality is determined by what we experience, but what we experience may have very little to do with the truth of what's really going on. We interpret our experience of life through what is commonly referred to as our five senses - seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling.

The range of detection of our senses is narrow compared to the almost infinite spectrum of stimuli. Therefore when we rely on the usual, sensory method of defining reality, we limit ourselves to only a fraction of what comprises the universe. Picking up a brick with our hands, we would say with absolute certainty that the brick is solid, because that is what our sense of touch and our eyes tell us.

But, the science of Quantum Physics has proven that the atoms of the brick are mostly space. If our senses were acute enough to experience its atomic form, we would see a rectangular block of mostly empty space with random flashes of electrons.

What we detect with our physical senses is subjected to another screening process called "beliefs". Suppose we see ourselves (define ourselves) as someone who is rather shy and not too good at making small talk. In addition, we believe that attractive people are hard to approach and usually aren't too interested in us. Sure enough, we will be attracted to someone and find it very difficult to approach that person; the conversations we do have will be awkward.

Our experience will conform to our expectations and beliefs. Whether the other people really weren't interested in us is irrelevant because we will interpret our interactions in a way that validates our beliefs.

Experience Vs. Experialization

Actually, we do not "experience" our life; we experience the emotions resulting from our beliefs. Since we are certain that the events and people around us are the cause of our emotions, the real cause - our beliefs - is ignored. We are continuously comparing life to how we believe life should be. What we call our experience of life is just our reaction to the on-going comparison.

In contrast, experialization is a more complete experience of life, because we are not limited to 'just' our five senses. When we choose to experialize, we allow our awareness to include much more than 'just' the information provided by our senses.

Our ability to experience things within the body and even outside the body (called meta-normal experiences) goes far beyond what we usually limit ourselves to. Take, for instance, the experience of knowing who's at the door when the doorbell rings, or knowing who's calling when the phone rings. We can walk in a forest and be suddenly mesmerized by one particular tree. Somehow, we are drawn up into that tree and we "know" something of what it feels like to be that tree. These kinds of knowing cannot be explained by our senses. In nature we see this process of experialization occurring all the time. Animals, void of identities that limit them, continuously live at their greatest level of awareness. A deer will develop a thicker winter coat than usual before a particularly harsh winter arrives, somehow knowing that the weather is going to be more severe. This is not a conscious decision on its part; it's a knowingness of what it must do.

A Truer Experience

When we experialize, we expand our awareness beyond our physical senses and consequently, we know things about ourselves and the world around us that can be known in no other way.

Experialization takes into account our five physical senses as well as our "sixth sense", but it is much more than just intuition. Experialization is the process of choosing to put our awareness in direct contact with that which we want to experience. When experializing a tree, for instance, we expand our awareness into the tree and experience the tree as it is, rather than just looking at the tree and forming a sterile image of the tree in our minds.

Experialization is also a "true" experience of life because it is not filtered by our definitions and beliefs. We do not judge a tree. Therefore, our experience of the tree is not limited to an emotional reaction caused by whether or not the tree matches our expectations. We simply "know" it by directly experializing it.

No Definitions

There has never been a computer, nor probably ever will be that can analyze things like our minds can. Our extraordinary ability to think is unmatched, but very little is understood about the process. We do know one characteristic of our mind's ability to analyze that is both a blessing and a limitation, which is the proverbial good news/bad news. As fast and complex as our ability to analyze is, it still relies on the input of definitions. Our minds require that we define everything we store in its memory banks. In this way, the mind can quickly associate and analyze stored data. But, as much as this is a benefit when we are wanting to employ the scientific method of deduction, it is often a limitation when we simply want to know the truth.

A few years ago, I was working in a large, fluorescent-lit office in the heart of Silicon Valley. Hanging near the window was a plant, the customary decoration for men wanting to demonstrate a more sensitive side. One day, one of the people with whom I worked stopped talking in mid-sentence. I thought that she had been distracted by something outside the building. She quickly walked to the window and stuck her finger into the soil of my plant, and then felt the leaves as if touching an infant. "This plant needs water. Can't you see that?" she admonished.

At the time I thought very little about the incident, merely tolerating her taking the time to water the plant before we got back to business. It wasn't until later that I realized I really hadn't seen the plant that day, or on most other days for that matter. I had defined the plant in my mind and categorized it with a relative importance to the other things I perceived in my life.

Technically, each morning, when I walked into my office, I did see the plant but I did not experience the plant as it was right then, in the moment. What I experienced was simply my mental image or definition of the plant.

The disadvantage of living too much in our minds is that we naturally define ourselves and the people and events in our lives. Once defined, we can no longer experience anything as it is each moment; we tend to experience only our definition, our mental representation.

When President Reagan said, "When you've seen one redwood tree, you've seen them all...", it made perfect sense in his mind. He defined what a redwood tree is and can experience the definition anytime he wants. However, in truth, his experience of redwood trees is restricted to his mental image of a tree.

Experialization is the process of knowing redwood trees without defining them for the convenience of mental storage. We do not need a well-honed analysis in order to experience a redwood tree, nor

does a greater ability to analyze mean that we will have a more complete experience of a tree. The more we analyze an object, the more we experience our thoughts and definitions of that object, rather than the object itself.

About The Author

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Improving Your Senses

By Dale Power

There are two ways to increase how much you perceive. The first is to repair any damage that may have been done to the sensing organs, perhaps even improving on the natural structure. You might do this with mechanical enhancements, like glasses, binoculars and hearing aids or with surgery. It is possible that in the future gene therapies will be discovered that will allow a person to grow better eyes, ears and noses.

You can also improve your ability to see, hear, feel, taste and smell by learning to be more fully aware of the information that is coming in.

Our minds filter the impressions we get from our senses. This is done to protect us from having too much information to work with in our early lives. When we are young and have not learned how to deal with the world, we learn to block out large portions of the incoming information. Visually we only block out about twenty percent of what comes in through our eyes. This makes sense for a species that is primarily visual. We only process around twenty percent of what we hear, ten percent of what we feel and around two percent of what we smell and taste.

By learning to pay closer attention to what we are perceiving we can condition our minds to expect greater amounts of information. In a manner of speaking we can learn to have better reception of sensory input.

The techniques for this are not hard, though they take regular practice and a meditative state of concentration. With practice you should notice testable results without even being in a deeply focused state.

To start focus on the individual sense you wish to sharpen. Resist the temptation to concentrate on the sense organ, make sure you pay attention to the information coming in, or you can slow your progress. In other words, if you want to see better, focus on what you see, not on your eyeball!

Relax and clear your mind.

Pick one of the below methods to work with at a time. It works best if you separate your exercises by a few minutes. Do one, wait a bit, do the next. Pick the senses that you wish to improve and practice daily. You can work on more than one sense per day.

Vision: We really do tend to notice what we see. So to increase your visual skills, concentrate on the things you don't normally notice.

Relax your eyes and pay attention to your peripheral vision, the fuzzy edges of your sight. Notice your cheeks below your eyes? How about your nose? With practice and attention you will begin to notice the blind spot in the center of your visual field.

Keep looking straight ahead while placing your attention to the front, then points to the side, then on your nose, then the blank spots straight ahead of each eye.

Now, start paying attention to two things at once, after minute switch to another two. Practice holding your attention on more and more objects.

This will force your mind to adapt and allow you to notice things you normally block out.

Hearing: We generally have a lot more room to work with in our perception of sound, than of light. In many ways this makes this a much more impressive skill to master than the one above.

Find a quiet place, indoors or out. Pick a sound that is fairly consistent, the sound of a river, of a passing car, the hum of a refrigerator, whatever sound is handy. Focus on that sound, notice each part of the sound. How does the sound change? Does any of it stay the same?

After a few minutes switch to another sound. Switch two or three times.

Next, try to pay attention to all the sounds around you at once.

Smell: With smell it pays to focus on only one scent at a time. The trick here is to be able to isolate each one from the others.

Try to get a sense for each scent by paying attention to a point around and inch into your nose, on the top side. Alternate short inhalations, with long slow breaths through your nose.

Pick one scent at a time and focus on it for around a minute. Then change to another scent.

Only practice this for a few minutes at a time. The proteins released that bind with particles in the air will rapidly be exhausted, due to greater release caused by your focus. It takes a few minutes to replenish fully.

Taste: Place a small bit of food in your mouth, chew it a bit first. Draw some air through your mouth, over the food and push it through your nose. This will allow the particle to pass into the nasal cavity. What we think of as taste is actually made up both true sense of taste and the ability to smell.

Again break the sensations apart and focus on one. With each bite, refocus on a different part of the sensation.

End the session with a few sips of water. Focus on the differences between the food and water.

Touch: Take a bag and put a dozen or so differently textured, but similar objects in it. Try to pick objects that will be difficult to feel a difference in.

Pick an object and focus on the way it feels, holding it in the bag so that you cannot see it. Touch it, rub it, hold it. Focus your total attention upon the object.

Choose a different object after a minute or two and do the same thing.

When you have done several different objects, stop and notice how the rest of your body feels. Feel the clothing on your body, the parts of you that touch different areas of the room. The pressure of what you are sitting on, the feel of your feet in your shoes.

Now keep all this in mind and pick another object in the bag. Try to hold all this information at once.

Be creative and push yourself to notice finer details and sensations as you go on. Practice daily and you will find yourself noticing much more of the world around you.

About the Author

Dale Power is a psychic healer, researcher and educator that has been focusing on ways to improve psychic functioning in humans for the last twenty years. Go to: <http://healing.worldispnetwork.com> to find out more about the work being done.

Shadow Dancing

From Meeting Your Secret Self and Becoming Whole

By Robin Robertson

"A Jungian Approach to Unity with your Shadow Side"

Sent in by Paul Wilck

We are all born whole, and let us hope, will die whole. But somewhere early on our way, we eat one of the wonderful fruits of the tree of knowledge, things separate into good and evil, and we begin the shadow-making process; we divide our lives.

----Robert A. Johnson

Psychologist C. G. Jung once said that all change is experienced by the ego as a death. It's a long, slow process to develop into the person we are. Abraham Lincoln once remarked that he didn't like a man's face. When his companion criticized him, saying "he can't help his face," Lincoln answered calmly that "after a certain age, every man is responsible for his face." In other words, we are each responsible for our lives; the moral choices we make throughout the course of our lives are reflected in us so deeply that others can see them in our face, our voice, our walk, our every action.

Psychologist Wilhelm Reich's clinical studies confirmed Lincoln's astute observation. Reich found that our bodies are literal mirrors of our souls. Our muscles set in patterns which are indicative of the choices, good or bad, we have made in our lives. We develop body armour to protect us from life. We become rigid and unyielding. In order to make changes in life, we have to break down that rigidity and become flexible once more.

The person we are is the product of many choices which we have made along the course of our life. We each begin with a unique set of possibilities determined by our inborn abilities and our outer circumstances. These provide the material with which we can paint the portrait of our life. However, it's the choices we make in life which actually paint the picture.

Over the course of our lives, each of us has taken paths that others haven't taken. We have each accepted certain ways of doing things because they fit us, and denied other ways because they just were not us. Over time, those paths, those choices, have made us the person we are, and that person is less and less likely to change. When we are confronted by a new challenge, we are prone to fall back on solutions which have been hard-won in past struggles.

However, inevitably life presents us with problems which can't be solved with old answers. These are the problems that demand a change in our life. We know it, but resist knowing it. We force an old solution onto a current problem, pretending that, while it might not fit perfectly, it's close enough. Of course it doesn't really. We're just applying the ostrich principle of sticking our heads in the sand, hoping the problem will go away. If, through fear or rigidity, we continue this behaviour long enough, we begin to cause ourselves real suffering.

It seems too much to expect that we have to change still one time more; after all, haven't we changed so many times before? We feel unfairly treated by life. However, as Robert Green Ingalls said: "in nature there are neither rewards nor punishments--there are consequences." We aren't being singled out for punishment, we are merely experiencing the consequences of our own rigidity. If we choose security over change, we have to suffer the consequences. As Gail Sheehy summarizes succinctly: "If we don't change, we don't grow. If we don't grow, we are not really living. Growth demands a temporary surrender of security."

We can learn how to recognize our own rigidity and how to correct it. It takes honesty and courage, but the rewards are immense. First, the suffering stops. This is the surest sign that we have chosen the right path again: the unnecessary suffering stops. More importantly, new possibilities open up

everywhere in our life. Where everything seemed sterile and barren, and there seemed no possible answers, now everything seems possible. The possibilities may be scary, because each offers a path that we have never taken before, but it's a good kind of fear, like the fear that a fine pianist experiences before a concert. Hello Darkness My Old Friend.

[Jung] told me that he once met a distinguished man, a Quaker, who could not imagine that he had ever done anything wrong in his life. "And do you know what happened to his children?" Jung asked. "The son became a thief, and the daughter a prostitute. Because the father would not take on his shadow, his share in the imperfection of human nature, his children were compelled to live out the dark side which he had ignored." (A. I. Allenby describing a conversation with C. G. Jung.)

There is nothing so frightening as facing the darkness within, our inner shadow. We will do almost anything to avoid having to look into the dark places of our soul. And rightly so, the darkness contains much that we mere humans can't face. There is evil, of course, we're all too familiar with that, but there is also much more that is neither good nor bad, but merely beyond our human capacity to comprehend. Wonder and beauty and all our future possibilities also lie hidden in the darkness, and far too often in our short sightedness, we confuse them with evil. When we start to automatically dismiss something as evil when in fact it is merely outside our normal experience, we should remember the words of poet/painter/religious mystic William Blake: "Everything possible to be believed is an image of truth."

There is no change that doesn't begin in the darkness of the human soul. We first have to discover an entrance into the darkness, then we have to light a tiny candle in the dark, so that we can search for our future self, and finally we have to join with it. And that takes resourcefulness, and patience, and most of all courage.

The Shaman's Path - the Adventure of Self Discovery

By Howard G. Charing

"Creation consists of the emanations of the Eagle. There are forty eight distinct emanations of the Eagle, of which humans through our ordinary perception can perceive two of them."

Don Juan - the Yaqui Indian and teacher of Carlos Castaneda.

There is a lot of discussion and opinion on what a shaman is. The word itself is rooted in the word *šaman* from the Tungus people in central Asia. Definitions vary greatly in modern society, this varies from people who enjoy trancing out to music at dances and 'tribal' gatherings calling themselves shamans to a very precise definition as per Mercia Eliade who in his book *Shamanism - Archaic techniques of ecstasy* specifically defines the term shaman as distinct from medicine man, sorcerer, healer, diviner, magician, herbalist and so on. Eliade's specific differentiation is that the shaman who may be and practice all of the above is defined as, "the shaman specialises in a trance during which his soul is believed to leave his body and ascend to the sky or descend to the underworld". This definition is sometimes employed in a strict sense, and appears to me to be limiting in scope. To me a shaman means more than that definition.

To quote Joan Halifax from her book *Shamanic Voices*; "The shaman, a mystical, priestly, and political figure emerging during the Upper Palaeolithic period and perhaps going back to Neanderthal times, can be described not only as a specialist in the human soul but also as a generalist whose sacred and social functions can cover an extraordinarily wide range of activities. Shamans are healers, seers, and visionaries who have mastered death. They are in communication with the world of gods and spirits. Their bodies can be left behind while they fly to unearthly realms. They are poets and singers. They dance and create works of art. They are not only spiritual leaders but also the judges and politicians, sacred and secular. They are familiar with cosmic as well as physical geography; they know the ways of plants and animals, and the elements. They are psychologists, entertainers, and food finders. Above all, however shamans are technicians of the sacred and masters of ecstasy."

Leo Rutherford in his book *The Shamanic Path Workbook*, also sees a shaman from an inclusive and holistic perspective. He defines a shaman as "someone who has fully walked the path of transformation and chosen to become a healer, helper, seer, prophet, in service to the people".

The most important and consistent point in all the above views is the emphasis on community, whether healing, divining, or prophesising, it is done in service to others. Shamanism is not shamanism if done in isolation.

Contemporary Shamanism

Shamanism has always been a way for living as humans in relationship to all things on our planet Earth. Some thousands of years ago at the dawn of human civilisation a quantum change happened to this way of being. It was not the introduction of religion but something far more powerful, the shift from a hunter gathering and ad-hoc horticultural society to agriculture. This change had enormous consequences. From being in relation to all things; we became the 'managers' of the living world. The ways of animal husbandry, crop rotation and irrigation of fields led to permanent settlements, the human tribes no longer had to follow the migration of the animals and foraging for plants, we could have it all in one place! The early civilisations started, from where the social and religious structures, systems, and worldviews (many of which we still experience today) came into existence.

The ancients knew and experienced that there is an energy normally invisible, which connects all that exists, and they lived with the knowledge of this energy and how to use it. This concept of the inter-relationship and understanding that man is a part of nature, not separate to it, a part of the connecting energy has been expressed in many ways and in many cultures but unfortunately not in ours. As Chief Seattle said in 1855 in his address to the American Congress;

"What befalls the Earth befalls all the sons of the Earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web he does to himself."

The separation in Western society from the natural world with its accompanying myth of man having "dominion over all living things", has led to spiritual disconnection from the universal energy field. At some level we are aware of this, and many are experiencing a heart-led desire to reconnect to the universal field of energy and consciousness which we are part of.

Many people are being drawn to spiritual paths such as shamanism as one of the ways to meet this deeply felt desire, to heal the pain of separation, and rejoice in the ecstatic beauty and possibilities of simply being alive on this rich and beautiful planet.

Shamanism contains time tested healing practices, ceremony and teachings to support people in this re-balancing of themselves. These practices are fundamentally healing, not only for the physical body but also for our inner sense of being and our soul. However the challenge is to build a bridge between the ancient wisdom and practices in such a way as to be useful, effective and meaningful to the modern Western individual.

One of the most significant separations between modern Western approaches and the shamanic approach is one of perspective i.e. between energy and physicality. From the shamanic perspective you could say that we (and everything else) are fields of energy, and the actuality that we experience as the physical world is but the description of our physical senses rather than being an absolute inherent fact. In some respects quantum physics is now pointing in the same direction as have the ancient shamans for forty thousand years.

In shamanic Healing we work with energy. Another word for this energy is life-force, soul, or the 'vital nature', and in shamanism there are many traditional ways of healing working with soul or life-force. It comes to fundamental questions and challenges to what is reality. This fundamental conception is so vast, that it seems that it can only be described in terms of metaphor.

"Nature shows us only the tail of the lion. But I do not doubt the lion belongs to it even though he cannot at once reveal himself because of his enormous size".

Albert Einstein

The Path of the Shaman

The distillation of shamanism in the 21st century is the recognition that we and our god (whom we have made in our image) are not separate from creation, but discrete aware elements in a vast unending timeless ocean of consciousness and energy, and that we are all connected to each other, simply because we are each other.

All the traditional and indigenous shamans that I have encountered share one unifying characteristic, they will do whatever is required to help a person into health and well-being by catalysing in one way or another that person's inner belief system, to guide change in that person's reality so that they

come to feel and 'know' that they will get well. This is just as important as the 'real' and tangible medicine work. They know that we are greater than we have been led to believe we are, and can influence and co-create our 'reality'. Creative visualisation and other practices to influence the unfolding of our lives are not new-age, they are very much 'old-age' and belong to all of us. If we go back in our ancestral lineage, you would find that we all came from shamanic cultures, it is our birthright.

One of the beautiful aspects of shamanism is that it is a true spiritual democracy; there are no priests, no hierarchy. We all have the same rights of access to the universal field of love, life-force and consciousness because that's where we are at. We have just forgotten it.

About the Author

Howard G. Charing, is an accomplished international workshop leader on shamanism. He has worked some of the most respected and extraordinary shamans & healers in the Andes, the Amazon Rainforest, and the Philippines. He organises specialist retreats to the Amazon Rainforest He is the author of the best selling book, Plant Spirit Shamanism (Destiny Books USA), and has published numerous articles about plant medicines. Website <http://www.shamanism.co.uk>

The Power of Silence

By Steven Taylor

Modern humans have lost touch with their inner "true self". Silence and stillness are a means to recovering happiness and contentment.

In the modern world silence has practically ceased to exist. The human race has stamped its authority over the planet Earth not just by covering its surface with concrete and destroying its plant and animal life, but also by burying the natural sounds of the Earth beneath a cacophony of man-made noise. We live our lives against the background of this cacophony, with the jagged mechanical sounds of urban-industrial society continually assaulting our ears: the roar of cars, aeroplanes and trains, the clanging and thudding of machinery, the noise of building and renovating, the chatter of radios and TVs in other people's cars and houses, and pop music blaring from every conceivable place. But nothing, of course, has done more to obliterate silence than the car. In the modern world it's very difficult to go anywhere where there's no possibility of being disturbed by the sound of passing cars, and the only chance that city or town dwellers get to experience something of the quietness which existed everywhere in the pre-car world is sometimes on Sundays, when the mad rushing to and fro of modern life slows down. This quietness seems so foreign now that it seems difficult to believe that a hundred years ago and before it was everywhere all the time. Back then this quietness would even have filled the busiest city centres, which would have probably had a noise level equivalent to that of a modern small village.

There's also more noise than ever before inside our houses. It's unusual to go into a house nowadays where there isn't at least one television set chattering away somewhere, even if the residents aren't actually watching it, and other forms of home entertainment compete against TV to produce the most noise: radios, CD players, computer and video games etc. In fact the only sound which is largely absent from people's houses nowadays is the voices of their occupants actually talking to one another.

Living in the midst of all this noise is bound to have a bad effect on us. All man-made noise is fundamentally disturbing—we find the sound of birds singing or of wind rushing through trees pleasing, but mechanical noise always jars and grates. And since we live our lives against a background of mechanical noise it follows that there's always an undercurrent of agitation inside us, produced by the noise. This noise is certainly one of the reasons why modern life is so stressful as well. In modern life our senses are bombarded with massive amounts of external stimuli—our fields of vision are always crowded with different (and constantly shifting) things, and our ears are bombarded with a bewildering variety of sounds, all of which clamour for our attention. Our senses have to absorb and process all this material, which takes up a lot of energy, and means that we're liable to become drained of energy or 'run down' easily. We can get out of this state by removing ourselves from all external stimuli and letting our energy-batteries naturally recharge themselves—i.e., by relaxing. But there's so much external stimuli around in the modern world and people are so unaccustomed to the absence of it, that we may never be able relax properly, which could mean living in a permanently 'run down' state.

This lack of quietness has also meant is that people are no longer used to silence, and have even, as a result, become afraid of it. Along with inactivity, silence has become something which most people are determined to avoid at all costs, and which, when they are confronted with it, unnerves them. People have become so used to the frantic pace and the ceaseless activity of modern life that they feel uneasy when they're left at a loose end with nothing to occupy their attention even for a few moments, and they feel equally uneasy when the noise they live their lives against the background of subsides. Why else is it that they need to have their radios and televisions chattering away in the background even when they're not paying attention to them?

In other words, in the modern world silence has become an enemy. And this is a terrible shame, because in reality silence is one of our greatest friends, and can—if it's allowed to reveal itself to us—have a powerfully beneficial effect on us.

Inner Noise

It's not just the noise outside us which causes us problems, though, but also the noise inside us.

In the same way that the natural quietness and stillness of the world around us is always covered over with man-made noise, the natural quietness of our minds is constantly disturbed by the chattering of our ego-selves. This chattering fills our minds from the moment we wake up in the morning till the moment we go to sleep at night—an endless stream of daydreams, memories, deliberations, worries, plans etc. which we have no control over and which even continues (in the form of dreams) when we fall asleep. This 'inner noise' has as many bad effects as the mechanical noise outside us. It actually creates problems in our lives, when we mull over tiny inconveniences or uncertainties which seem to become important just because we're giving so much attention to them, and when we imagine all kinds of possible scenarios about future events instead of just taking them as they come. It means that we don't live in the present, because we're always either planning for and anticipating the future or remembering the past—'wandering about in times that do not belong to us and never thinking of the one that does' as Blaise Pascal wrote. And this constant inner chattering also means that we can never give our full attention to our surroundings and to the activities of our lives. Our attention is always partly taken up by the thoughts in our minds, so that wherever we are and whatever we're doing we're never completely there.

It's probably possible to say that there's also more of this 'inner noise' inside human beings than there's ever been before. The hectic pace and the constant activity of our lives, the massive amount of external stimuli we're bombarded with, and the barrage of information which the mass media sends our way, have made our minds more restless and active. We've got to juggle dozens of different problems and concerns in our minds just to get by from day to day, and every new thing we see or every new piece of information which is sent our way is potentially the beginning of a whole new train of thought to occupy our minds.

The True Self

Ultimately, the most serious consequence of both this inner chattering and the noise and activity of the modern world is that they separate us from our true selves.

Our 'true self' might be called the ground, or the essence, of our beings. It's the pure consciousness inside us, the consciousness-in-itself which remains when we're not actually conscious of anything. It's what remains when our the activity of our senses and the activity of our minds cease. The sense-impressions we absorb from the world and the thoughts which run through our minds are like the images on a cinema screen, but our 'true self' is the cinema screen itself, which is still there even when there aren't any images being projected on to it.

Experiencing this 'consciousness-in-itself' can have a massively therapeutic effect. It brings a sense of being firmly rooted in ourselves, of being truly who we are. We also have a sense of being truly where we are, realising that before we were only half-present, and everything we see around us seems intensely real and alive, as if our perceptions have become much more acute. But above all, we experience a profound sense of inner peace and natural happiness. As the Hindu and Buddhist traditions have always held, the nature of consciousness-in-itself (which means the consciousness inside us and the consciousness which pervades the whole universe) is bliss. Getting into contact

with the pure consciousness inside us enables us, therefore, to experience this bliss. Indeed, it could be said that it's only when we do this that we can experience true happiness. Usually what we think of as happiness is hedonistic or ego-based—that is, based around pressing instinctive 'pleasure buttons' or around receiving attention and praise from others and increasing our self-esteem. But the kind of deep and rich happiness we experience when we're in touch with the ground or essence of our beings is a natural, spiritual happiness, which doesn't depend on anything external, and doesn't vanish as soon as the thing which produced it is taken away. It's a happiness which comes from experiencing the divine inside us—and also the divine inside everything else, since the pure consciousness inside us is the same pure consciousness inside everything else, and the pure consciousness of the universe itself.

Making Contact with the True Self

Whether we're in touch with this 'true self' or not depends on how much external stimuli our senses are taking in from the world around us, and on how much activity there is going on in our minds. If there is a lot of noise, movement and activity taking place around us then we can't help but give our attention to it; and in the same way, when there is a lot of 'inner noise' taking place we have to give our attention to that too. And when our attention is completely absorbed in this way—either by external stimuli on their own, such as when we watch TV; by 'inner noise' on its own, such as when we daydream; or by both of them at the same time—it's impossible for us to be in contact with our 'true self' to any degree, in the same way that it's impossible to see a cinema screen in itself when it's full of dancing images. Being in contact with our 'true self' is a state of attentionless-ness, when our minds are completely empty.

What we have to do if we want to get into contact with this part of ourselves is, therefore, to withdraw our attention from these things. And this is, of course, what we do when we meditate: first of all, we remove ourselves from external stimuli, by sitting in a quiet room and closing our eyes. And then there's only 'inner noise' standing between us and consciousness-in-itself, which we try to quieten by concentrating on a mantra or on our breathing. If we manage to stop the inner noise (and therefore stop our attention being absorbed in it) pure consciousness immerses us and we become our true selves.

And this brings us back to the most serious problem caused by the massive amount of external stimuli (including noise) which our senses are bombarded with in the modern world, and by the intensified 'inner noise' which modern life generates. It's not just a question of completely closing yourself off to external stimuli and shutting down 'inner noise', so that you can experience a state of total immersion in pure consciousness. It's possible to have a foot in both camps, so to speak—to live a normal life in the world, being exposed to external stimuli and experiencing inner noise, and at the same time still be rooted in your real self. That is, it's possible to be partially immersed in consciousness-in-itself, and for your attention to be partially absorbed by external stimuli and inner talk. But this can only happen when there is just a moderate degree of both of the latter.

It would probably have been quite easy for our ancestors to live in this way, because they weren't exposed to a great deal of external stimuli and because their lives were relatively slow-paced and stress-free, which would have meant that their attention needn't have been completely absorbed by external stimuli and inner talk. Perhaps this even partly explains why native peoples seem to possess a natural contentment which modern city dwellers have lost—because their more sedate lives mean that they're able to be in touch with the ground of their being as they go about their lives, and that they can therefore continually experience something of the bliss of which is the nature of consciousness-in-itself.

For us, however, this has become very difficult. There's always so much noise and activity both

inside and outside us that our attention is always completely absorbed, so that we can't be in contact with our real selves. We spend all our time living outside ourselves, lost in the external world of activity and stimuli or in the inner world of our own thoughts. We're like a person who plans to go away for a few days but finds so much to occupy them in the place they go to that they never go home again, and never again experience the peace and contentment which lie there. This is certainly one of the reasons why so many people nowadays seem to live in a state of dissatisfaction—because they've lost touch with the natural happiness inside them. That natural happiness has been buried underneath a storm of external stimuli and what Meister Eckhart called 'the storm of inward thought'.

As a result of this it's essential for us, in the modern world, to go out of our way to cultivate silence ourselves. Circumstances may oblige us to live in cities, and our jobs may be stressful and demanding, but we're still free to remove ourselves from external stimuli and to try to quieten our minds by meditating, going out into the countryside, or just by sitting quietly in our rooms. We don't have to fill our free time with attention-absorbing distractions like TV and computer games, which take us even further away from ourselves. We should do the opposite: stop our attention being absorbed like this so that we can find ourselves again.

We need silence and stillness to become our true selves and to be truly happy. 'Be still,' said Jesus, 'and know that I am God.' But he might have added, 'and know that you are God.'

About the Author

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What is sixth sense?

By Spiritual Science Research Foundation

Sixth sense or subtle perception ability is our ability to perceive the subtle dimension or the unseen world of angels, ghosts, heaven etc. It also includes our ability to understand the subtle cause and effect relationship behind many events, which is beyond the understanding of the intellect.

Extrasensory perception (ESP), clairvoyance, premonition, intuition are synonymous with sixth sense or subtle perception ability. Throughout this website we use the words sixth sense, ESP and subtle perception ability interchangeably.

* How do we perceive and understand the unseen world?

We perceive the gross (seen) world through the five physical senses (i.e. smell, taste, sight, touch and sound), our mind (our feelings) and our intellect (decision making capacity). When it comes to the unseen world or the subtle world, we perceive it through the five subtle senses, the subtle mind and the subtle intellect - more popularly known as our sixth sense. When the sixth sense is developed or activated, it helps us to experience the subtle world or subtle dimension. This experience of the subtle world is also known as a 'spiritual experience'.

* Sixth sense perception through the five subtle sense organs

The world is made from the five absolute cosmic elements (panchamahabhoota). These cosmic elements cannot be seen but make up all of creation. When our sixth sense gets activated, we begin to perceive these absolute elements progressively, beginning from the most gross to the most subtle. Thus we are able to perceive them in the order of the Absolute Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether elements through our subtle sense of smell, taste, vision, touch and sound respectively.

* How does one develop the sixth sense?

The subtle world is all around us, however we cannot perceive this world. Even though we cannot perceive the subtle world, it impacts our lives to a great extent. In order to tune into this world we need a 'spiritual antenna' i.e. our sixth sense to be awakened. Our sixth sense grows when we do spiritual practice.

This is akin to a television set that gives a black and white speckled blur when it is not connected to an antenna. Even if the television station is transmitting signals, the television set cannot catch them until it is connected to an antenna. In the same way, the subtle world and God's presence is constantly around us but we do not perceive it until we start doing spiritual practice which in turn enables our sixth sense.

Sometimes we see people have the ability to perceive the subtle world from a very young age even though they have not done any spiritual practice. The reason for this is that they have attained the requisite spiritual level from spiritual practice done in a past birth (previous life). Another reason this may happen is because they have been possessed by a ghost (sorcerer) since childhood. In this case it is actually the sorcerer's sixth sense that is displayed.

* Sixth sense (ESP) and Gender

Females in general have stronger sixth sense than men. An extrasensory perception (ESP) ability comes more naturally to women and they are more likely to be intuitive than men. One of the main reasons for this is that men are more intellectually oriented and tend more towards the rational side.

* Spiritual experiences involving the subtle mind and subtle intellect

Sometimes one experiences a strange feeling of homecoming when seeing a totally unknown house, a premonition of impending disaster or feels unending love for a person who is otherwise contrary to one's liking. These are experiences through the subtle mind. Here we cannot comprehend the reason behind these feelings. Sometimes we hear about people who get information from the subtle dimension and who converse with beings in the subtle regions. The following paragraphs will explain this phenomenon in more detail.

1.1 How do people perceive this information?

People who receive knowledge from the subtle dimension generally receive it in three ways.

- * By letting a subtle entity use one's hand to write their message (known as automatic writing)
- * By a vision where they can actually see the words or passages in front of their eyes
- * Through thoughts

Among the above methods receiving the answer in thoughts is most subtle among the three ways.

1.2 Source of the knowledge

People who receive knowledge from the subtle dimension either get it:

- * Automatically due to their ability to tap into the Universal Mind and Intellect or
- * As answers to questions specifically asked by them to subtle entities. They are able to do this through their sixth sense through the medium of their subtle mind and intellect.

In both cases, the person understands the subtle dimension, but only a spiritually evolved person can differentiate whether the knowledge received is due to the first or second way. In most cases, the person converses with subtle bodies from the various subtle regions such as the nether world and hell and very rarely from a deity or God, that is the Universal Mind and Intellect.

The type and grade or level of information received depends on the spiritual level of the person receiving it.

Information from lower sources:

The information received from subtle bodies belonging to lower regions, i.e. either from regions such as the nether world or hell is mostly of a worldly nature and of importance only for a restricted part of the world and for a short time span. An example of this would be getting information about whether and when President Bush is going to declare war against Iran or which political party will come to power in a certain country.

The information received by Nostradamus is an example of this category. Nostradamus, himself at 50% spiritual level received the information from a subtle body at 40% spiritual level. Many of the mediums fall in this category of receiving knowledge.

A 40% spiritual level subtle body may receive knowledge that is beyond him from higher-level subtle bodies. Also, subtle bodies of the same or slightly higher level having the requisite knowledge, may pass it on. This is like a mason asking for knowledge about architecture or carpentry from another person.

Knowledge from higher sources:

Knowledge received from subtle bodies from higher regions like the Mahaloka (beyond heaven) and above, is of a spiritual nature. The knowledge obtained is progressively of more universal need and of lasting importance in terms of a time span of centuries. Receiving divine knowledge from the Universal Mind and Universal Intellect (i.e. mind and intellect aspects of God) is of the highest kind

To correctly ascertain the source of the knowledge or its accuracy, one would need to be of a very high spiritual level i.e. a Saint of 90% and above. For more information on all the subtle realms and regions please read the article 'Where does one go after physical death.'

1.3 How does one know whether the knowledge received is from an external source or one's own subconscious thoughts?

There are a few pointers, which suggest that the knowledge is being received from an external source as opposed to one's own imagination.

* When the content of the knowledge is totally alien to the receiver's field of knowledge. For example, there is a seeker of God who barely scraped through high school and yet receives complex diagrams of machines.

* The quantity of knowledge amassed is another indicator. A seeker of the Spiritual Science Research Foundation (SSRF) has been receiving divine knowledge from the subtle dimension since 28 October 2003. Each day she receives over 15 – 20 A4 size pages of knowledge. This spiritual knowledge is currently being analysed and categorised for the benefit of humanity.

1.4 Factors that decide which person receives knowledge through the subtle intellect

There is a combination of factors that goes into deciding which person receives knowledge from the subtle. The spiritual level of a person is one of the key factors in deciding which person receives knowledge from the subtle. Besides the spiritual level, the factors that decide the acquiring of higher spiritual experiences, like the receipt of knowledge are:

- * Motivation and intense yearning of the person,
- * Necessity for God's mission,
- * Resolve and blessings of the Guru (a spiritual master and guide beyond the 70% spiritual level),
- * Destiny of the person

It should be noted that if a person at a higher spiritual level is interested in acquiring knowledge of an inferior nature, for instance concerns about day-to-day happenings on Earth, even though he is capable of receiving knowledge from higher-level subtle bodies, he would receive such knowledge through lower level subtle bodies. In contrast, if a person at a comparatively lower level, e.g. 50%, has a deep motivation to learn the higher principles of spiritual sciences, he will receive knowledge from higher subtle bodies or subtle bodies from higher regions, especially if blessed by the Guru.

1.5 Sixth sense, premonitions and time and space

Sometimes people have premonitions of things to happen or a gut feel of events that have happened in the past. This is possible in two ways:

* Through subtle bodies: The premonition (information) has been put into their sub-conscious mind by subtle bodies. In most cases, the subtle bodies or entities are ghosts from the nether region or hell. These subtle bodies in some cases have the ability to see across time. If they themselves do not

have this ability, they get the information from higher-level ghosts like higher sorcerers with this ability.

* Accessing the Universal Mind and Intellect: There are seven layers to the Universal Mind and Intellect. Depending on his grade of sixth sense, a person may be able to tap into a lower or higher layer of the Universal Mind and Intellect.

In almost all cases of premonition (a forewarning of the future), clairvoyance (information received from a distant place) and precognition (information received from a distant time) the information is received from subtle bodies and not through one's ability to access the Universal Mind and Intellect. The harm that subtle bodies can cause has been explained in the next section.

1.6 Accuracy of knowledge received from the subtle world

A person generally receives knowledge from subtle bodies, with a spiritual level which is same as his and the accuracy and grade of knowledge is also the same. To understand this concept, consider a scale of 0 to 100%, wherein no knowledge is 0%, the lowest knowledge understood by the intellect is 1% and that available from the Universal Intellect is 100%.

* A person at the spiritual level of 40% generally receives knowledge from a subtle body of a corresponding spiritual level i.e. 40%, however the accuracy is also 40% and the grade of the knowledge is also 40%.

* Up to the spiritual level of 70%, the receipt of knowledge is more likely to be from ghosts (demons, devils, negative energies etc.) and hence it is accompanied by a proportion of black energy. Those unaware of the mechanisms of the receipt of knowledge may be ignorant of this aspect and hence blindly believe implicitly in all the knowledge received. If the knowledge is received through subtle bodies, there is a strong possibility that it may be incorrect in part or in entirety. The subtle bodies usually give some correct knowledge at the outset to garner belief. Once this is established, they go on to give varied degrees of incorrect or misleading information. Another important factor one has to consider is that the knowledge received from subtle bodies is always cloaked in black energy. This affects the recipient adversely in various ways like failing health, psychological weakness, clouded intellect etc. But this process is so gradual as to escape the attention of the person and his family and friends. If this knowledge-receiving process continues for some time, slowly the person becomes a virtual puppet in the hands of the subtle body to be used in various ways, to further the interests of the subtle body.

* But after the spiritual level of 70%, as the knowledge is given by positive subtle bodies like Saints and Sages in the higher regions above heaven, or is received through the media of the Universal Mind and Intellect, there is no black energy accompanying the knowledge.

* After attaining 70% spiritual level one starts receiving Absolute Knowledge from the universal Mind and Intellect.

There are various levels to understanding the negative aspect of the subtle dimension such as ghosts (demons, devils, negative energies etc.), demonic possession and an attack by a ghost. Quite often, what people are able to experience is just the tip of the iceberg. It is only at a spiritual level of over 90% that one is able to perceive the entire spectrum of the subtle dimension.

* Misuse of sixth sense (ESP)

Sixth sense is to be used only for spiritual growth towards God-realisation which is the ultimate in spiritual growth. From a pure spiritual perspective, it is considered misuse when it is used for

anything else, such as worldly matters. In other words, if a psychic uses his psychic ability to find out if a person is going to get married or get a job it is considered misuse from a spiritual perspective.

When sixth sense (ESP) is misused by a person who is psychic, over time two things happen:

1.1 They lose their ability. This generally happens over a 30 year period.

1.2 They become targets for sorcerers of higher spiritual strength.

Sorcerers initially give some genuine information, enough to gain the confidence of the person. However they later mislead them and the people they are guiding. In such cases, their psychic ability lasts for longer periods and may in fact appear to have improved steadily. But this psychic ability is not by virtue of the person but because of the sorcerer who is guiding the psychic. In such cases, the rare gift of sixth sense available to the person that could have been utilised for God-realisation is wasted on lesser matters.

The Spiritual Science Research Foundation (SSRF) is a volunteer non-profit organization. Over the past 20 years it has under-taken extensive and exhaustive research in the spiritual realm. It has recently begun to publish its spiritual research on its website www.spiritualresearchfoundation.org. In doing so, SSRF intends to demystify the spiritual realm and provide research that will help humanity to effectively alleviate difficulties in life.

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Courtesy: www.spiritualresearchfoundation.org

Words That Inspire - SIMPLIFY

By Julie Cohen

WORDS THAT INSPIRE

A monthly quick shot to motivate you, in less than 45 seconds, from Julie Cohen Coaching

What do you gain if you SIMPLIFY?

Dictionary*says:

to reduce to basic essentials, to diminish in scope or complexity, to make more intelligible.

What it REALLY means:

removing clutter and interference from your life and work; looking at large obstacles as the sum of small challenges; choosing to do less, have less, want less.

Why it MATTERS?

SIMPLIFYing, both physically and mentally, leaves more space for creativity, problem-solving and exploring. Decision making is clearer, communication is enhanced and personal enjoyment is increased.

Questions that INSPIRE:

- What personal or professional situation would you like to SIMPLIFY?
- How would SIMPLIFYing make you feel?
- What do you gain if you SIMPLIFY?
- What barriers are in the way of SIMPLIFYing this situation?
- What one action can you make today to SIMPLIFY?

I would love to hear your answers and comments. Take 45 seconds to reply to these questions at Julie@juliecohencoaching.com . I will keep all responses confidential and reply directly to you.

I hope you enjoyed Words That Inspire, a monthly glimpse at words that matter. To continue receiving this, please send an email to subscribe@juliecohencoaching.com. Permission granted to forward or reprint, as long as copyright, subscription and signature information included. Visit archives at: <http://www.juliecohencoaching.com/wordsthatinspire.php>.

*(Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1977, G. & C. Merriam Co.)

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Sleep and Samadhi

By Sister Devamata

From a Lecture published in The Message of the East.

Sleep is generally recognised as essential for replenishment of vital energies. But cannot this be done, at least in part, by other means? By samadhi, for instance, instead of normal sleep?

Sleep is not merely a physiological fact. It something more than a simple state of inactivity, a time of passive forgetting. It has a deep spiritual significance and value.

When the individual soul came out from the Absolute and, plunging down into matter, began its weary ascent up from the protoplasmic cell back to the Absolute again, the all-loving, all watchful Divine Mother knew that, unless once at least in the twenty four hours, that striving soul touched the supreme soul, it could not live and go on its journey. So she laid upon it the blessing and obligation of sleep.

Sleep is the call of the mother to each child to come home from toil or play and to rest close to her divine heart until the child is recharged with life and ready to take up again its task of unfoldment. It is nature's chief restorative, the refuge she offer to every creature.

We see this pre-eminently among the lower animals. When they are weak or suffering, do they not always creep away into some hidden spot and go to sleep? They may not know why, but a dumb brute instinct tells them that they must hurry back and touch anew the source of their life.

Among human beings, too, the great majority demand long periods of rest. How often do we hear people declare, 'I cannot keep well and do my work unless I have eight or nine hours of sleep', but the results of sleep, the replenishing of their vital energies, and they have not discovered that this can also be accomplished in other ways.

The actual suggestion for us is not: how much we need to sleep? Rather it is: how can we reach the main reservoir of strength as well in waking as in sleeping? In other words: how can we learn to do consciously and voluntary that which, through sleep, we have been doing involuntarily and unconsciously?

What happens when we fall asleep, the first thing is, we forget our body and bodily conditions. A man may be racked with pain, he may be beset with great anxiety or affliction, but he drops asleep and the hurt is gone. We who stand facing the stress and difficulties of our complex life can we not learn to do this at our will? If sleep or some drug can do it for us, why not find the way to do it for ourselves?

These nerves may quiver with pain or pleasure, but why identify ourselves with them? Rather look at them and say:

'This is only a fleeting sensation in the body, but I am no more the body now than when I am sleep. At this moment let me fall asleep to this bodily condition and awaken to the mind, like a man who goes to sleep and dreams.

'As such a man may forget he is a pauper and in dream become a king, so I will create a new mind-world. And when the body brings a weak or painful thought, I will counteract it by a thought of strength, of cheerfulness and courage.'

But suppose all dreams cease, what follows then? A deeper sleep. The restless activities of the dream-realm vanish, the whole mind grows still, and man enjoys perfect rest. Why no try to reach that state in our waking hours by detaching ourselves from the ever-changing mind? Let us watch its

play of moods and say:

'It is true, foolish mind; you have these little waves of anger, these waves of worry and distress. You feel out of sympathy, you criticize and condemn, but you are only a small part of me.

'Why should I, who am greater, go your foolish way? I will choose a wiser path, a path of calmness, a path of steadiness, of such unwavering trust in a Supreme Guiding Power that I shall remain unshaken even when you are disturbed and falter.'

Stand like a Witness

If we can cultivate the habit of standing like a witness, looking upon the ever-shifting panorama of the mind as upon so many moving pictures, soon its troubled surface will grow quiet, and we shall pass into a state of conscious dreamless sleep. Then, as in sound sleep, this outer shell, which is born and dies, which gains and loses, which suffers and enjoys, will be forgotten. But are we gone? Is it a death-like state, a state of annihilation? Each one can answer for himself.

When a man has been in sound sleep and awakes, is he not re-animated? Could that be if he had touched death? Life does not come from death. Is his mind clear? Then thought has not been annihilated, for clearer vision comes from thinking, not from mental blankness. Has he new hope and courage, as man always has when he rises from refreshing sleep? Then he has not returned from a region of dull hopelessness.

The condition of sound sleep (called 'deep sleep' by some) cannot therefore mean a suspension of activity, a blotting out of consciousness, but the passing into a subtler form of activity and thought, a withdrawing from the outer to the inner, from the many to the one, from the manifested to the power that manifests. Only because man has touched that power seated in his heart does he come back recharged with life and energy.

When the individual ceases to be a detached part and becomes one with the whole, when his entire organism seems unified and all the warring forces flow in one homogeneous current, what is that state?

It is the state of Samadhi or super consciousness. And by the loving provision of the Divine Mother, we attain this state unknowingly once at least in every day, when we sleep soundly.

It is the state of new life. Without it we are dull and heavy.

It is the state of new joy. Without it we are sad and soul-weary.

It is the state of the new light. Without it we grow blind and fall.

Is it not then the state which every man must work for? It cannot be left a matter of chance. It is something which he should hold within his grasp at every moment.

No human being can afford to be disconnected for the one instant from his source. If you knew that here is the only pure water in the universe, would you leave it? No; you would build your house beside it and you would call out to others to join you, until a city would spring up around you. If you had been told that in one spot only is there pure air and everywhere else is death, would you not always keep the road open to that place and never wander far enough not able to return?

Similarly, if you believe that there is one source of life, one source of knowledge, one source of bliss, should you not discover for yourself the road to it and the way to travel that road? That is why the great Vedic Seers constantly call to every man:

'Go within. (Know thyself thy Self.) Find your true nature, the Divine Essence of your being. Identify yourself with That, for until That is found, danger threatens you on every side.'

Be not content to sleep eight or nine hours out of twenty-four. Sleep every moment the sleep which means contact with the source. Let all your life be a waking in the sound-sleep state and a sleep in the hours of waking. Let the thread of your consciousness bind you unceasingly to the centre.

The Difference

You will say, 'Surely there is a difference between sound sleep and Samadhi. Otherwise, why are not all men illuminated when they wake?' A great teacher in India once defined the difference to me thus:

'A man, when he falls asleep, is like one who backs into a room. His face is turned towards the door and his back to all that is in the room. Therefore he sees only what is outside and nothing inside the room.

'On the country, the man who goes into Samadhi is like one who enters face forward. He sees everything in the room and what is left behind is not visible to him.'

So it is with us. We go into the state of sleep always with our thoughts pointed outward to the world. We drop asleep thinking of our worldly griefs and worldly needs, of all the things which concern this little outer man. And, when we wake, our thoughts are still pointed in that direction, and we have no consciousness of the place where we have been. Yet we have been there just the same and have had the benefit so far as we could without seeing it. The proof is that we come back refreshed.

When a man goes into Samadhi, he goes with the whole soul quivering for God. Every fibre of his being is turned Godward, his inner eye is strained to perceive him; so he quickly loses sight of what is left behind and sees only what is there. Which one gains the greater good from his visit to that room? Which one is able to bring back the richer store of new strength and power? There can be no doubt as to the answer. We have only to look at the contrasting lives of the sense-bound worldling and the God-illuminated prophet to divine it.

That which we have been doing like dumb animals is it not time for us to begin to do as wise men? The whole lesson has been set before us. We need not search the Scriptures for it, or to go to a mountain cave to learn it. We have only to study what we do once at least in every turn of the sun. There the lesson is written out clearly for us, and we have been repeating it all the while without understanding. Now the time has come for us to repeat it intelligently and at our will.

We cannot master the whole of it at once, however. We must begin gradually. Let us first try to detach ourselves from the tyranny of this body. As we drop our physical ills and discomforts at the hour of sleep, so let us learn to drop them out of our waking consciousness. At present we add to their power and reality by constantly dwelling on them, whereas, if we kept our attention fixed less on our bodily states, many of them would pass unperceived. Also, the body would be stronger, for constant thought turned on it wears and weakens it. It needs to be left to itself, as children do. Give it necessary simple care and then forget it. Do not always be a body. Sometimes be a soul, or even a thinking mind.

This does not mean, however, dwelling in the memory or imagination. A wholesome mental life does not consist in constantly feeding on one's own experience and opinions or on those of others, but in passing beyond the petty personal plane to larger problems and in forming habits of original thought. Everyone can do this who has the desire and determination to go to the origin of things.

The Value of Memory

The value of memory is much over-rated. Remembering too often clogs the mind with useless material and becomes a serious obstacle to concentration. It makes man retrospective rather than introspective. The enlightened man has no need of memory. It is necessary only to the little man. He is like a poverty-stricken housewife who saves every small bit of cloth for some future garment, or like one who lives far from the spring and must store his water in rows of pails. It is because we do not keep in contact with the source that we attach such importance to collecting facts and experiences. Let us touch that and we have just the knowledge we need at every moment without the aid of memory.

There is in the world one supreme consciousness. As that universal consciousness trickles down through the narrow channels of the senses, we call it sense-perception. As it runs in broader stream through the mind, we call it thought. When it flows through the intellect, we call it reason or discrimination. As it pours in spontaneous current through the heart, we call it moral beauty. But when it passes through no one limiting channel, but manifests itself pure, undivided, single, then it is Samadhi or the state of complete illumination. Light flood the whole organism and every faculty attains its highest efficiency. Then alone is man's education complete.

Every living being is travelling towards that goal, but each one of us may by our choice make the journey a long or a short one. We may linger content and sense-bound in the dim cave of this body, we may grope our way about in the deluding twilight of the mind, or push on into the clearer light of intellect and reason, but never shall we stand in the full daylight until we develop our super conscious faculties. With those only can we see 'face to face'.

When we come into conscious possession of our whole being and learned to live in unbroken contact with our source, we shall find within us an inexhaustible store of refreshment. We shall be like a man with an unlimited bank account. The poor man carries all his earnings in his pocket, but the multi-millionaire can afford to go about with only a few cents on his person, because he knows that he may always draw upon his bank. So will it be with us. When we have established a conscious connection with that divine power within, we shall never lack for anything.

If a perplexing problem confronts us, we shall have just the wisdom necessary to solve it. Is there an unexpected call upon our strength? We shall have more than enough for the occasion. Does someone turn to us in trouble or perplexity? By a look we can pierce to the core of his heart and understand his need better than he himself. Such is the power for help and blessing latent in each one of us.

A Sleep like Meditation

Have we the right, then, to go on in heaviness and darkness, asleep though we believe ourselves awake? Let us rouse ourselves from this little sleep and begin to master the secret of that larger sleep.

You may say, 'I have not the time'. Then leave your daylight hours as they are and begin merely with your hours of rest. Take five minutes night and morning from your bodily sleep and spend it in spiritual practice. Before you lose consciousness at night, if you can fix your mind on higher thoughts, all your sleep will be like a meditation, and your whole system will be renewed, not only physically but spiritually.

When you wake, do not throw away the real benefit of your sleep by loosening at once your hold on the inner and seizing the outer. Rather tighten your grasp by directing your first waking thoughts towards the supreme fountainhead of all life and consciously uniting every part of your being with

him. Make it a rule never to let your worldly concerns enter your mind until you have filled it full of God by prayer and meditation. At the close of a few days take another five minutes from your rest, then another, until, without perceiving it, you have transmuted at least one hour of sleep into an hour of meditation.

Through such simple practice the entire organism will become refined and purified, a sense of lightness will replace the heaviness which now so often overpowers us, and we shall suffer less from fatigue. Also, the mind and nerves will be quieter, each task will be done with less strain and friction; there will be in consequence less waste of energy, and the system will no longer demand so many hours of rest. We find this among those who have attained a high spiritual development. While others sleep, they meditate. Yet they show no signs of wakeful weariness.

More than all else, a new world will open before us a world of spiritual joy and beauty. As by our higher vision we begin to discern the God within all things, we shall feel that those around us who live unconscious of that presence are really sleeping, while only those truly wake who walk with all their super-conscious faculties alert. As the Bhagavad-Gita says:

'That which is night to all men, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and in that where all beings wake, that is night for the knower of the Supreme.'

Solitude: Developing Personal Intimacy

By Dan Hunter

Many of us who grew up in neglectful, invalidating, and abusive households never learned to appreciate ourselves. Instead of being taught that we were important, deserving, capable, lovable, good, and valid, we were taught the opposite.

Because of these conditions, we developed a negative inner perspective of ourselves. We came to believe that somehow, we were "never enough" because we did not receive enough validation to develop a positive attitude toward ourselves and those around us. We came to project being invalidated and rejected instead of being appreciated and accepted. Because of this feeling of "not fitting in", many of us ended up doing one of three things:

- 1) retreating from the world (withdrawing/denying/sedating/distracting)
- 2) rebelling against it or dominating (rebellious/controlling)
- 3) complying with whatever it was others wanted us to be so as to become "acceptable" (submitting)

The problem with all 3 of these "defensive" measures is that all of them reject the reality of what is and result in either our own isolation, self-rejection or abuse of others. We never realized we could validate ourselves whether others did or not and that our own opinions of ourselves and our sense of personal dignity was not dependant upon what others thought of us, but upon what we thought of ourselves. We could choose to approve of ourselves whether others did or not though for many of us, to do so would usually result in "punishment" which was really a nice way of saying abuse. Our spirits were broken and most of us had little choice but to conform at least until it was possible to leave our homes (prisons) in one way or another. We were virtually treated as slaves - comply or else! We submitted out of fear and shame.

It is difficult to want to be any part of a world when one's perspective of it is that it is unsupportive, abusive, and neglectful. It is said that many alcoholics for instance are the only people who treat loneliness with isolation. My reply to this is that the reason for this is that they do this because they perceive it as better to be alone than to be abused. They have not been supported in life so they have naturally developed the belief that they will not be. Simple experience has taught them that others are not validating, trustable and supportive so they simply give up trusting.

Learning to trust and appreciate ourselves and our own worthiness is key to developing an inner sense of Serenity - something that most of us were never taught how to do. We can learn to do this by developing creative outlets for our self-expression which can allow us to mirror back to ourselves and others our innate Talents and Truths. This self-validation is important if we are ever going to learn how to develop an inner calm and emotional security within ourselves.

Support groups are very important in filling our human need for love and in serving as the supportive family structure many of us never had. It can be very helpful to get us started in developing personal validation, but eventually, learning how to love ourselves even without the help of others can provide us with a way to feel valid even when these groups are not available. Developing an unconditionally loving and supportive Higher Power connection via meditation is another very powerful way to self-validate and is what I choose to do on a daily basis to feel grounded, secure, safe, and supported within myself. All I need do is close my eyes and connect with this Source whenever I need it. I cannot tell you how important this has been to me in developing a sense of Inner Serenity.

Decoding the Language of the Soul

By J.E. Gulamhussein

How does one actually begin to decode or decipher the messages from our soul? Is a soul code even recognizable? Does it sound different from our native language that we use to speak and communicate with or does it sound foreign to our own ears? Is it audible? How do we know?

As a soulologist, I recommend you begin to pay attention to your personal thoughts, daily moods and to the areas of your life that you label as stressful. What are the reoccurring themes or patterns that show up in your life? Begin with a personal self-assessment or by taking an inventory of yourself and your life's environment.

- * How much time in the day do you spend alone?
- * Do you spend alone time quietly or is it filled with background noise?
- * How might your thoughts sound?
- * Do you think of all of the things you have yet to do?
- * Or do you try to free your mind of thought?
- * If you had to describe your present state of mind, would you describe it as frustrated, hurried, tense, afraid, stressed, calm, peaceful or relaxed?

If you rarely spend quiet time alone, reflecting on your personal feelings and thoughts you probably won't have a very good understanding of the soul's meta-messages. On the other hand, if you spend more and more time alone focusing on your feelings and thoughts you may recognize that you feel out of place in some area of your life. Or you may recognize the areas of your life that are not functioning to their fullest potential. Such as your work may be stressful and creating a lot of tension in your life. You may feel misunderstood by family, friends or co-workers. You may feel that you are taken advantage of and that you rarely receive your deserved recognition.

Ask yourself the following questions to help you assess what your soul is trying to tell you:

- * Do you often feel your significant other doesn't respect your feelings and or thoughts?
- * Do you feel you give much more than you receive?
- * Do you compromise your wants or needs more than others in your life?
- * Do you feel you are treated unfairly by most people?
- * Do you feel most people in your life understand who you are?
- * Do you feel you often misunderstood?
- * Do you communicate your feelings well or do you assume others should know what you intended?
- * If someone accuses you unfairly will you defend yourself?
- * If you want something different from others do you speak up for it?
- * How important is your work? Is it valuable in some way?
- * If you were gone would anyone suffer or miss you because you no longer were present or because you were not there to make their life convenient?
- * Do you forsake your goals and dreams for someone else's?
- * Are you honest to yourself and to others about your feelings towards them?
- * How would your friends describe the type of person you are?
- * How would your family describe the type of person you are?
- * Who do you wish your life could be more like?
- * What is your perception of their life?
- * What do you need more of in your life in order to achieve the kind of life you want?

Be completely honest when answering the questions above. There aren't any wrong or right

answers. The honest answers to these questions will help you begin to hear what your soul's messages are saying. When we aren't in touch with our soul, we may ignore the ways in which we automatically move through life as if we have no choices. We blame others for our unhappiness instead of looking inward. Personal happiness is a function of the individual. No one else is responsible for our personal happiness. When we feel we are valuable and secure, we no longer will look outside of ourselves for external validation. Take the time to hear your soul, listen to what you hear, pay attention to your feelings in every area of your life. Your soul's language is very recognizable, all you have to do is listen with an open mind.

About the author

As a practicing soulologist, J.E. Gulamhussein, offers simple and effective soul guidance to those searching for meaning and purpose in their lives. She helps people heal and understand their behaviour, life choices and personal wounds or fears. Her mission in life is to enlighten others by healing the soul and finding the organic self

The Sound of Soul

By Sam Oliver

Have you ever wondered if soul has a sound? We may experience the sound of soul more than we know. Any time you move your attention to the inner dynamics of what lies behind your body and your mind, your soul will reveal itself to you.

Soul can be experienced outside your body and your mind as well. Just the other day, I was riding in my car with my friend Suzanne. We drove by an old barn that was caving in upon itself.

At some point, this barn stood upright. It was strong and enclosed many vehicles and animals for years. As with people, this barn aged over time. What once was a structure capable of containing many experiences of life, now, became a broken reflection of moments filled with life suspended in time.

You and I are a structural mind/body system that holds experiences within us just like this barn. As we recall these memories, these past experiences move our awareness toward an expression of experience where stillness allows us to re-live soulful memories filled with life and vitality. These inner visions, feelings, and experiences are our soul's way of speaking to us.

In silent reflection, our attention moves into expressions of living that are eternal. It is the part of us that is aware of our awareness. The part of us aware of our awareness and not identifying with the need to compete, become successful, or any other manifestations of the material world.

Our soul is the identification with what lies behind all appearances of separateness. This part of us needs no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no hands to touch, no tongue to taste, and no nose to smell. Our soul is completely free of any expression of our world. Our soul is the part of us that infuses all these qualities of attention.

Our soul is the silent spaces between every thought, word, and deed. It is a pregnant silence, all pervading, all knowing, and filled with eternity. Our soul is a connecting point from the world of flesh and the world of Spirit. The sacred human relationship between the form and formless states of our being create a spacial quality of existence within and beyond us whereby infinite possible correlations become the path of our soul.

* Try this exercise:

The next time you wake up in the morning, listen to your surroundings, just listen and do not analyze any sound. Let your attention be drawn into the sounds around you. Notice how far they are from you or how close. Do not try to define anything - just notice. You may hear birds, cars on the street, or the sounds of your home. Now, notice the part of you noticing all these sounds. What does this part of you sound like?

There is another sound within you. It is the part of you constantly speaking, analyzing, and judging. This part of you begins to plan your day, organize, and worry. It is the part of you that drives you out of silent witnessing all the events taking place around you. This part of you will get you out of bed in the morning.

At this point, learn to integrate the two consciously. They are going on anyway. This way ordinary events in your life will become sacred human awareness and a life filled with gratitude for every moment. Did you notice the difference between these two sounds? One moves your attention into the material world. The other moves you deeper into silence - the part of you aware of life's inner

qualities the Sound of Soul.

Samuel Oliver, author of, "What the Dying Teach Us: Lessons on Living"

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Five Keys to Tap Into Your Soul's Wisdom

By Ada Porat

Everyone wants to be able to change their lives in some way: to heal something, to initiate activities like an exercise program, to change a personal habit, to find a romantic partner, to lose weight, to get to their highest potential, to develop their intuition, to find their soul purpose.

As long as we are alive, this process continues. Everyone has a next step waiting to be taken, and everyone – absolutely everyone – has trouble accomplishing these goals. In fact, we spend an inordinate amount of time making up reasons and excuses for not moving forward.

Not moving forward is extremely painful, not just because you're frustrated with yourself. The desire you have to change a habit or begin a new life comes from your soul. When you do not move forward on your path, you are blocking the very expression of your soul. Therefore, the emotional frustration that accumulates over months or years of coping with the same dysfunctional patterns of self-sabotage merely represents the surface issue.

Here are five practical things we need to be aware of so we can break free and move forward in our lives more effectively:

1: Get over the fear of humiliation

Most people are controlled by the fear of being humiliated. That fear alone holds them back from moving forward in their lives.

How do you get over the paralyzing fear of being humiliated and worry about what others will say? You do so by recognizing that your true locus of control is inside of you, and does not come from anyone outside you. When you recognize the Divine Presence in you being and start to follow its gentle prompting, you will find that the truth and affirmation you are looking for, resides within.

Looking outside ourselves for approval, acceptance and love, is a trap of the ego. And the fear that it invokes of being humiliated if the external feedback does not meet our expectations, is really based on pride.

True commitment to the journey of our souls brings with it a deep sense of humility. When we are no longer looking outside ourselves for approval and affirmation, we finally align with the true Source of our being. That relationship moves us to a place of deep inner honesty and humility. No longer do we need to impress or win the fleeting approval of others; instead, we identify with our true identity as souls, and focus on aligning every aspect of our lives to express the eternal relationship with our Source.

2. What reality do you live in?

Do you find yourself bargaining that you will get on with what you need to do as soon as the children are grown, or after you are out of debt, or once you get a new job? Are you dreaming of the life you'd love to have if only you had the money, time or resources? If so, you may be living in a fantasy world!

On this planet, results come from matching vision with action, step by step. Nothing falls from the sky ready-made, and circumstances never pause to create the perfect show-stopping opportunity for you to step into. If you are waiting for the perfect opportunity before taking action, you will be waiting for a very, very long time. The question to ask yourself instead is, "What I am I doing in

the meantime?”

Appeasing the yearning of your soul with empty rationalization and promises, is not enough. You need to start taking action to bring your life into alignment with the guidance you are being given, or else you are living in a fantasy world. When guidance is given, it needs to be acknowledged and you need to commit to do what you are being shown. If not, you may end up in guidance overload – overwhelmed, stuck or frustrated – and you’ll have nobody to blame but yourself!

3. Guidance Overload

Guidance overload is a very real condition that comes from asking for help from too many people but never acting on any of the information that you have stuffed into your energy field. When you recognize the need to make a change in your life, it is normal to start gathering information for ways to move forward. The trap lies in over-analyzing each piece of guidance and information, or waiting for another, and another, piece to appear before taking action. This can move you into analysis paralysis or guidance overload, where there is too much information floating around in your mind, all of which are triggering your fears, anxieties, limiting beliefs and memories of past trauma, and you end up not knowing where to start. Guidance overload is also an indication of having given your power away to others instead of taking full responsibility for your life; for what it is and for what it isn’t. It is not a happy place to be at!

To break free from guidance overload, you need to go back to the beginning and look at the very first step that needs to be taken. As the nervous chattering of fear and limitation arise in response to that intended step, deal with it! Our greatest power lies in choosing our truth in the face of our fears. Drill down to the source of the fear or belief and recognize it for what it is – an ego tactic to keep you from changing the status quo in your life. Surrender your attachment to it and take that first step forward in the face of your fear. When you have taken the first step, you can ask for more guidance, always listening for and giving precedence to the inner voice of Truth.

4. Become A Mystic In The Marketplace

For many centuries, mystics lived on the very fringe of society. They did not mix with the masses, nor did they participate in affairs of the world. This has all changed. Today, the level of consciousness on the planet has tipped the scales to offer potential for unprecedented growth and change. Spiritually awakened beings are being called to participate in this worldwide shift by becoming mystics in the marketplace, and not on the mountain or in the monastery.

To answer the call, you need to learn how to commune with your soul to access the inner guidance that is stirring there. Every change that you wish to see come about in society, starts with you and the field of consciousness that you are holding. Our growing understanding of science and the quantum field, have made it clear that all change comes about by the energy of that field.

We are to be the change we desire to see in the world, and we are to change the world around us through the power of our evolving souls as we align with the Life Force energy within. No longer are we to separate ourselves from the world at large; instead, the world has become our oyster and we need to start consciously standing in the gap, holding the energy field of love in which consciousness can evolve.

To do so, we need to acknowledge our purpose; commit to the task by clearing, strengthening and purifying our own souls; and become lighthouses that silently radiate the energy field of love to facilitate positive change in the world. We act as vessels for grace in the world to bring about transformation and healing through our becoming that. In a world crying for healing, there is no

greater service we can offer.

5. Appropriate Support For Each Stage of Growth

On the journey of personal growth and development, you will experience three core stages of learning. You may find yourself at a certain stage in one area and another stage in other areas of your life. The key to personal growth and success lies in being able to determine where your personal learning needs to be fine-tuned and then to support that growth with appropriate correction, learning and feedback. When we get stuck in any one of these stages, growth stagnates and behavior can become pathological.

Beginning Stage – Knowledge

The beginning stage of learning is the thinking or cognitive stage. This is the stage where you may decide to learn more about something - you may choose to explore spiritual realities and you may delve into many traditions, teachings and materials. You may spend a lot of time processing new concepts mentally, working out in your mind what to do. Mistakes are common and it is difficult to filter irrelevant information appropriately, since discernment is a skill that gets refined with time and practice. You may get overwhelmed easily when there are too many things happening in your life at one time or if you put pressure on yourself. During this phase, personal growth tends to be sporadic, uncoordinated and often somewhat lopsided – not unlike what happens when you start playing a new sport for the first time. Some of the most valuable tools during this phase include receiving constructive feedback and encouragement from others, giving yourself room and grace to fail, and making a commitment to keep going. Repeated effort provides us with the practice needed to become more familiar with the process.

Intermediate Stage - Application

The intermediate or application stage is the next level in learning. Here, you start drawing on what you have learned about in the beginning stage to implement meaningful change into your life. It is no longer good enough to simply know about things, you now start moving into practical application; you experiment with these higher ways of being in order to live it. During this phase, we start connecting the dots in our learning and with the experience gained from practical application, we start shifting our perspective to a higher level. We start moving out of the intellect and into the heart, from where we start clearing everything that is illumined by the higher awareness as no longer useful.

During the application stage, you may try many different approaches before experiencing a sense of accomplishment. Since practical application brings about real-world outcomes, you are very aware of the external environment in which you operate. You may have a strong need for external encouragement on your progress to build confidence and assurance. If not kept in balance, anticipation in desired outcomes can evolve into expectations that set you up for disappointment.

Constructive feedback is vitally important during this stage to maintain balance, align you to core truths and to recontextualize individual differences. This is the stage where individual limitations and beliefs need to be continually challenged and cleared to facilitate continued development and growth.

Advanced Stage - Integration

In advanced states of learning, you take full responsibility for your actions and your behaviour becomes self-regulating. You have moved from the stage of knowing about things, to doing it, and now you are becoming it. You no longer look outside yourself for affirmation, guidance and

support, but find it through your ever-present connection to Source. Listening and dialoging with the Divine Presence within, is now automatic and facilitates personal diagnosis and adjustment in areas of imbalance when needed.

Functioning at this level brings awareness of the holographic universe and your part in it, and you become very effective at being a positive influence for change, shifting the level of consciousness around you simply by what you are and have become. At this level, growth or development may be incremental and appear smaller, because the individual is dealing with fine-tuning and deep inner work that may or may not be visible to others.

Collectively, these five keys can be very helpful to identify where your progress may be stagnated in any area of life, and how to break free so you can live more effectively.

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About the Author

Ada Porat uses body/mind/spirit techniques to facilitate personal growth and balance for clients. Her innovative approach has brought about profound results for individuals internationally. For more information on vibrational healing, ascension and life balance coaching or to sign up for her inspirational newsletter, go to: www.AdaPorat.com

Soul Consciousness and its Social Effects

From The magnet of Life

A Psychological Key To The Inner man

By H. Saraydarian

"My warriors, guard thyselfes with the shield of God's will, and the Divine Song will ever find echo within thee. Before the deluge, when men were wedding and feasting and bargaining, Noah was already selecting the most stalwart oaks for his Ark."

Leaves of Morya's Garden, p.37

Once a man realizes himself as a Soul, and affirms that he is a Soul, a great change takes place in his life. A great flood of Light pours into his mind and clears up the agelong obstacles, illusions and thought-forms that are still making him a slave of his past.

Energy accumulates in him, because he does not misuse it, he does not have any leakage due to wrong thinking and negative emotions, and he continuously receives higher precipitation of energy. Such a man is a fountain of power which heals, uplifts and leads.

The second thing, which will be very much evident, is that the man will start to be an agent of liberation in his social and national environment. He will work to liberate the human soul from all inertia, glammers and illusions, which are making our planet, a planet of sorrow, of slavery, of racial discrimination, of fear, of prejudice and of self-interest. Of course this will put a tremendous pressure on his vehicles and cause him a lot of suffering and Joy.

The third effect of soul-consciousness will be the creation of simplicity of living, sincerity of expression, and relations.

The fourth effect, will be a dynamic sense of communications and right human relations. We cannot create right human relations until a large percentage of humanity touches its soul-consciousness, where man will realize the supreme meaning of the words;

"The souls of men are one and I am one with them."

The fifth effect will be the creation of a magnetic and radio-active personality, which automatically will group people around him, and serve in a group way, for the cause of human liberation.

Truly the universal, or global revolution did not start yet. Greater revolutionists will gradually appear in all fields of human endeavour and, this time, they will set afire the hearts and souls of all true humanitarians all over the world, who will be charged with the spirit of greater dedications, aspiration and sacrifice.

These Leaders, having achieved soul-consciousness, will never stop at any obstacles and with stupendous self-sacrifice, will lead humanity, as a whole, towards a higher dimension of living, the introduction of which is set forth in part, in the Human Rights.

That is why throughout the ages, opponents of the progress of humanity and the unfoldment of mankind, have also been the opponents of universal liberation of humanity, the opponents of the concept of Soul, Immortality and of man's transformation into his divinity; for soul-consciousness will end all religious, political and financial exploitation.

This revelation can be kept on the on the mental level, without tears and blood, if a greater percentage of humanity responds to the Rays of the New Age and synchronizes all its life expressions with them; but if the greater part of humanity does not respond to the tide of the New age, and if the political, economic and social conditions continue as they are now, then the leaders of the new age, the soul-conscious people, with all fiery people everywhere, who are dedicated to the liberation of humanity, will rise up and the revolution of the planet will start. This will be a revolution for the liberation of all humanity. It will be the most crucial revolution in the history of the planet.

To the extent that a man approaches his soul and becomes a soul, to that extent does he become an independent human being, and a being of greater cooperation. People think that independence is conditioned by outer events, but the truth is that independence starts from within. Man cannot be independent unless he breaks all the chains within, the inner slavery and the inner imprisonment. Once a man is free from inertia, glamours and illusions, he enters the freedom of his soul consciousness and becomes an independent, selfactualized and self-determined man. Before this inner freedom is achieved any outer freedom serves only for his own destruction and suffering.

Education and knowledge often lead him to group or national Independence, to attacks and wars. But soul-consciousness does not work for personal, group or national independence, it works for the planetary, global independence and leads to everlasting sense of unity, because the soul is group conscious. It stands for all humanity and its highest good.

When such people increase on the planet, people who stand above racial discrimination, religious separation, dogmas and doctrines, they will recognize each other, they will hold each others hands from east to west and from north to south. Then a new dawn will break upon humanity and "the orphan of the planet," humanity, will experience a great release of joy which has imprisoned within man for ages and ages due to human slavery and ignorance. This will be the age of health, trust, joy, understanding and cooperation.

The six effect of soul-consciousness will be the elimination of the fear of death, and it a continuous radiation of sacrifice for one's fellow man throughout the planet.

The seventh effect will be a universal sense of harmlessness. Deep, fiery devotion to the flame of life in every form, from the flower on the bush to the stars in the blue firmament.

Then, my dear one, the vision of St. John will come true;

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the sea was no more . . . and He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor wailing, neither shall there be any more pain"

OM MANI PADME

HUM

Spiritual Alchemy, Sacred Geometry, and the Creative Self.

By Neal Ryder

Healer and certified intuitive counsellor

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It may not be readily apparent what all three of these subjects have to do with each other, but for me, one common denominator they share is consciousness. While this is a simple interpretation, do not allow past views of "what" these subjects represent to interfere with what I am about to suggest. The use of the terms found within this offering, such as alchemy, geometry, and the Tree of Life, are used by me, in the same sense as I would use the term, blue jeans. There is an image, but there are many models. I am offering a different, less complex, interpretation of these terms and images, in the context of consciousness; from a healer's perspective, my own.

The Mind/Body connection suggests that the cells of our body have a consciousness. Consider that these cells must also be part of the mind-body-spirit triad and the implications expand. When sacred geometry is considered, we have the concept of shapes influencing or inspiring us, our consciousness, with Divine relationships. If we consider alchemy from the perspective of the transformation of consciousness, from limiting truths or consciousness (lead) into expanded truths or consciousness (gold), the relationships between these three subjects suggest practical transformational opportunities and applications.

The Map

Start with the image of a body, I use Michelangelo's drawing of a man, arms outstretched. Overlay atop the body the Cabalistic Tree of Life. The bottom sephiroth, is placed between the feet and the first paired sephiroth align with the hips. The second paired sephiroth align with the shoulders, and the third pair of sephiroth align with the lobes of the brain.

Place the chakras over the image you now have, only use the image of the caduceus. You can begin to see the suggestion of geometries of energy, within the body and Human Energy Field, begin to take shape. I call them sacred because these geometries within us can inspire us to experience the Divine within.

Application

For simplicities sake, I offer the following suggestions for seeing the Tree of Life. There are three pillars. The right pillar symbolizes compassion; the left pillar, innocence; with the middle pillar signifying balance. I deviate from "traditional" interpretations, but as I mentioned earlier, I am not suggesting a traditional approach.

The relevance of the caduceus is that it suggests, to me, there are two serpents associated with kundalini. As these serpents rise, as the kundalini rises, they move around each chakra, or Celestial Gate, and vibrate that chakra, that Celestial Gate into clarity. The essence of that clarity is an expression of our Divine identity and will be unique with each individual.

Simplicity is the key. It is not my intention to confound a truth that is readily experiential for any willing to invest some time to experience that truth within themselves. The experience of that truth speaks for itself.

The first step in applying what I have offered would be to contemplate the body with the Tree of

Life overlaid atop it. Draw it, think about it, get a sense of it. The next step is one I consider important, FEEL the Tree of Life in your body. This takes some time, so simply be patient.

One would then do the same when working with the chakras, working their way to feeling them within the body.

Simultaneously, once can use this simplistic map of consciousness, and "connect the dots".

Suggestions

In my healing practice I view the Heart as the Sacred Gate. Before using any of the more intricate energetic, geometric patterns within the body, concentrate on the heart. The heart should first be opened. One way this is accomplished is by being in the present moment; accepting life and emotions as they are; forgiving yourself or others, as need; and offering compassion to yourself so that the heart, through forgiveness, love and compassion may deepen. This is best understood as an experiential process.

The heart then attracts, drawing from our "heart's desire" that which we seek to experience. It may be physical, emotional, or spiritual healing; or it may be, simultaneously, creating, from our heart, the life or work we desire and have always imagined was possible for us to experience.

This process may be empowered through the use of the sacred geometries suggested to each individual by the "map" that has been offered.

What occurs is akin to the body becoming "hollow" and the geometric shapes turning within the body and consciousness of each person. The geometries of consciousness move according to the emotions and thoughts each person experiences throughout the day. What occurs is similar to alchemy, in that limiting truths or consciousness (lead), are transformed into expanded truths or consciousness (gold).

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Your Spiritual Awakening

By Lynn Claridge

If you are looking for enlightenment, you may ask yourself where do I begin?

There is only one place you can start your journey of enlightenment, and that is your life's journey.

A place you could start is where you are right now.

Let's start with the knowledge that you already know, the answers you are seeking, you are simply pretending that you do not know or that you have forgotten.

First you must start to understand the apparent paradox that you are alone on your journey, and yet you are at one with everything and everyone else in the universe. You need to acknowledge that you are a divine being, a part of "all that is".

Know that all that has gone in your life before this moment has brought you to where you are right now, that there is a purpose for everything that happens. Rejoice in every obstacle you are faced with in your lifetime, and that it is both a gift and an opportunity. This has certainly enabled you to grow.

Remember that the only thing that stands between you and your goals is your hearts desire, your greatest wishes, and fulfilment or is it your fears.

Start to face the truth and take note that every moment is an opportunity to create a new reality, NOW, and in every moment of your life. Base this on the unlimited possibilities of what can be, not on your fears of what has happened in your past.

Start to understand that your successes and your happiness is limited, only by what you believe is possible. The range of possibilities are only restricted by limited human understanding. Trust the universe, it will show you the answers when you are open to receive them.

Now perhaps some of these ideas are new to you, perhaps you want to reject them as nonsense or as impossible, that is your right. You don't have to accept anything in life or what I say. You have your own free-will to reject or accept that there might be something in these ideas, even if it is not clear, right now, what or how or why.

As you continue your journey of enlightenment and self-discovery you may find some things that made no sense at the time, might then begin to seem possible and perhaps even probable.

What is important is that you apply yourself with an open mind and an open heart. Rejecting everything that is out of your hands just because it does not make sense will not lead to spiritual understanding.

Everyone's path is different so do not assume that what works for someone else will necessarily work for you, or vice versa.

You need to find for yourself those things that work for you and those that do not. You will also find the speed of your journey and the timing of events in everyone's lives will vary. Its important not to give yourself a hard time just because events are not happening as quickly as you would like or that your experiences are different from someone else's.

Spiritual awakening is about understanding your higher consciousness. It means letting go of old beliefs and fears, releasing old ways of being, and doing and thinking in ways in which you feel comfortable. It means accepting responsibility for your life and accepting the power you have. This means not placing your power over others but using that power on yourself.

The mind can be a barrier to spiritual enlightenment. You should experience your life not contemplate it. You need to look deep within yourself to find those things that are keeping you in the past. You will need to face up to your fears before you can let go and move on.

It will certainly get uncomfortable at times but remember there is no growth without risk and enlightenment can not work without growth, love, trust understanding and compassion. You are perfect just the way you are although if you wish to grow in love and light you need to be prepared to place yourself into situations that will take you too the limits and you may feel uncomfortable.

The fact is that they are only uncomfortable to you, no one else. There may be times when you need to face up to some unpleasant truths. You have nothing to gain by trying to deceive yourself or others. When you take the easy options it will not lead to growth and enlightenment.

So are you ready to take the risk and to take yourself on?

There are no teachers; you are your own teacher. Just as you would learn from a teacher you learn from yourself. The two go hand in hand, just as the only way you can receive is for you to give, the only way to be loved is to give love back, and the only way to be forgiven is for you to gain forgiveness.

The most important thing to remember is to love, respect, and honour and forgives ourselves as well as others.

This journey of self-discovery and enlightenment can be difficult and lonely.

The one thing I can assure you is that once you start your journey you will not want to stop. You will find that despite the discomfort you will almost certainly feel from time to time you want to keep up the momentum. Just remember true friends are those who tell you what you need to hear, not what you do not want to hear. So choose your friends carefully.

This is a journey so enjoy the travelling and don't forget to smell the roses on the way.

I was passed this short story and through it would be nice to share with you.

Water Bugs and the Dragonflies Written by Doris Stickney

Down below the surface of a quiet pond lives a little colony of water bugs.

They were a happy colony, living far away from the sun. For many months they were very busy, scurrying over the soft mud on the bottom of the pond.

They did notice that every once in a while one of their colony seemed to lose interest in going about with its friends. Clinging to the stem of a pond lily, it gradually moved out of sight and was seen no more. "Look" said one of the water bugs to another. One of our colony is climbing up the lily stalk. Where do you suppose she is going?

Up, up, up it went slowly. Even as they watched, the water bug disappeared from sight. Its friends waited and waited but it didn't return.

"That's funny"! Said one water bug to another.

"Wasn't she happy here?" Asked a second water bug.

"Where do you suppose she went?" wondered a third.

No one had an answer. They were greatly puzzled.

Finally one of the water bugs, a leader in the colony, gathered its friends together "I have an idea. The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk must promise to come back and tell us where he or she went and why."

"We promise to", they said solemnly.

One spring day not long after, the very water bug who had suggested the plan found him self climbing up the lily stalk. Up, up, up he went. Before he knew what was happening, he had broken through the surface of the water, and fallen onto the broad green lily pad above.

When he awoke he looked about with surprise. He couldn't believe what he saw. A startling change had come to his old body. His movement revealed four silver wings and a long tail. Even as he struggled he felt an impulse to move his wings. The warmth of the sun soon dried the moisture from the new body. He moved his wings again and suddenly found himself up above the water. He had become a dragonfly.

Swooping and dipping in great curves he flew through the air. He felt exhilarated in the new atmosphere.

By and by the new dragonfly lighted happily on a lily pad to rest. Then it was by chance he looked below to the bottom of the pond. Why he was right above his old friends the water bugs! There they were, scurrying about, just as he had been doing some time before.

Then the dragonfly remembered the promise: "The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk will come back and tell where he or she went and why."

Without thinking the dragonfly darted to reach the bottom. Suddenly he hit the surface of the water and bounced away. Now that he was a dragonfly, he could no longer go into the water.

"I can't return!" he said in dismay. "At least I tried but I can't keep my promise. Even if I could go back not one of the water bugs would know me in my new body. I guess I will just have to wait until they become dragonflies too. Then they will understand what happened to me and where I went."

The dragonfly winged off happily into its wonderful new world of sun and air.

About the Author

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Spiritual Awareness as a Healing process

By George L. Hogben, M.D.

From Spiritual Aspects of the Healing Arts

Every day, during my hospital visits and office hours, I see people with a variety of physical and mental conditions. Some have severe catastrophic reactions which threaten imminent death. Others endure chronic degenerative diseases which slowly destroy the individual's will. Many experience physical symptoms without distinct anatomical changes.

Each person, no matter how severe the condition, relates a history of stress generated by the usual temporal stressors: loss of a loved one; job failure; career success; marriage; relocation; divorce; and so forth. The stress provokes an intense maladaptive physical-mental reaction leading ultimately to the disease state.

However, as the ill person and I work through the role of the stress in the illness, we invariably become aware of something within the person which is more fundamental to his becoming ill than the stress itself. This internal state seems to prepare the individual to react to the temporal stress with illness. It may explain why the same stress provokes illness in one person and growth in another.

Spiritual Emptiness: The Ground of Illness

The internal state is characterized by an essential lifelessness at the core of the individual's being. It is as if a light or primary energy had been extinguished or perhaps never burned at all. The individual's vital state must not be confused with other facets of the personality such as light heartedness or apathy in daily life. Ill individuals seem to have an existential weariness which is independent of spirit in daily living.

Let me present a brief sketch of a woman who exemplifies the inner state I am describing. This woman has high energy in conducting her daily affairs. She has a busy schedule and does not tire easily. She is always warm and friendly. Blessed with a good sense of humour, she laughs readily. Her mood is no playacting as everyone feels her genuineness. Yet she claims she feels flat inside. "It seems as if some vital part of me is missing, but I'm not tired or depressed. Just flat. I feel so aimless. I wonder if it's all worthwhile."

This woman is healing from a life-threatening chronic illness and her inner state may have resulted from the condition itself. She does not think so though, since she had flashes of awareness of the feeling prior to her overt sickness. Other people I talk to have also reported the same emptiness before major illness.

The inner state seems related to emptiness in the person's spirituality. Many sick people I have seen do not have an intimate relationship with God. They do not believe that God is in them through each breath they take, waking or sleeping, working or recreating, even during the most mundane activities. They do not sense the Spirit working within them. Even sick people who are strongly religious may be empty of Spirit because for them God is "up there " until the next life. They do not experience the movement of God now! Moreover, people with no religious conviction, or those who do not believe in God may, nevertheless, perceive the reality of Spirit.

I have observed that many factors participate in a person's spiritual emptiness. Most children have a rich and complex spiritual life. Children converse directly with God and see God or, in some direct way, experience God within them. Gradually, as children become older, their consciousness "materializes" and they lose that direct link with God.

No doubt the culture plays a role in this process. The underlying metapsychological assumptions of our culture are rooted in scientific-materialism. Only that which has substance exists for our culture and something that cannot be perceived by the five senses does not exist. Also, intuition, faith, imagination, forgiveness and love, the tools of the soul, are non-rational and, as such, are often ridiculed by our culture.

Development of Spiritual Emptiness

There are also personal experiences which turn growing children away from their spiritual life. Growing up saddles adolescents with increasingly worldly responsibilities. These new burdens unnecessarily compete with spirituality for available development energy. All too often, young adults ignore their spirituality when they don't see adult role models who exhibit a blending of active spirituality and adult responsibility. Moreover, many people have had cruel experiences with spiritual leaders. At vulnerable times during development, when it is important to teach the healing properties of God's Spirit, clergy have acted in ways which portray God as cold, harsh, judgemental and punitive. Young people actively reject their spiritual nature after negative experiences in the confessional or the failure of spiritual teachers to provide healing empathy rooted in the Spirit.

Without experiencing the flow of God's Spirit within us, we perceive ourselves as alone in the world. This percept of aloneness forms our self-image. The absence of the energy and guiding hand of God becomes the animating motif of our consciousness. The consciousness that develops under this condition is one of scarcity, isolation, egocentricity and meaning restricted to the transitory and material. This kind of consciousness spawns a social ethic of closed communication and no-holds-barred competitiveness. It generates affects of fear and anxiety, guilt, anger and rage.

Let us examine briefly, in a very simplified way, the process many people demonstrate in developing the consciousness of scarcity and its negative consequences. When we are alone and isolated from an indwelling spiritual life, we define reality with our senses. The senses deal with the tangible, and the material of the world becomes identified as reality. We see only the surface of our skin, empty space and objects beyond the space. We touch an object outside ourselves, a ball or a friend, and it seems separate. We learn we can move some object or manipulate them in some way. We experience energy and will only as they relate to the objects.

Gradually, we come to feel our energy and actions effect whatever changes we witness within the environment. Thus we assume total responsibility for the vents which surround us and in which surround us and in which we are involved. We place ourselves at the centre of the world and become God-like in our evaluation of our importance in daily life. I can't leave my job now, they can't get along without me. This is the wrong time, maybe later."

Anxiety, Guilt and Rage: The emotions of Spiritual Aloneness

But the material world is transitory and things happen. Objects break, friends move away, financial statements show downward trends. People who do not experience the permanence of the Spirit become terrified lest anything go "wrong" and guilt-ridden at all that does go "wrong." Terror and guilt over loss burns deeply within the individual even though the feelings may exist outside of awareness.

The egocentric person also demands God-like responsibility from others and exists in a near constant state of anger and rage at being "let down" by others. In some, loss may also provoke the thought that the resources of the world are limited thereby evoking intense competitive drives to control them. Perhaps the most destructive aspect of the consciousness being described is the lack of meaning the individual may experience in relation to his or her life. Many people grow

despondent after achieving some long sought-after goal in the material world. This depression expresses the individual's awareness, either consciously or unconsciously, that the quest was undertaken to correct a feeling of inner emptiness rather than as a creative expression of the Spirit flowing within.

Constant feelings of anger, fear and guilt take a heavy toll on the individual over time. Spiritually, the negative feelings increase the separation from God and a vicious circle between estrangement and anger, fear and guilt ensues. Mental attitude and self-esteem suffer. Pessimism, thoughts of self-defeat and personal impotence, and the feelings of self-loathing and worthlessness abound. The chronic stress of rage, fear and guilt lead to a prolonged bodily tension and a multitude of negative physical reactions. These physical states are not identifiable as distinct anatomical pathological reactions. Rather, they are dysfunctional processes such as muscular tension which force different parts of the body to function in non-physiological ways. Ultimately, these states lead to distinct anatomical changes and covert illness.

Illness comes to the progressively deteriorating condition as a beacon illuminating the individual's mindless approach to life. It makes manifest in a physical sign that major dysfunction and fragmentation exist on all levels of being, spiritual, mental and physical. Illness urges the person to stop pushing out of awareness, spiritual isolation and emptiness and the their numerous mental and physical concomitants.

Often, the illness provides information which can point out the path an individual may take for healing. It simultaneously expresses the breakdown in an individual's consciousness and contains the seeds for it's healing.

My own illness is an example of this. I had been working in a competitive academic institution that pursued had science and ignored, even actively criticized, spiritual approaches to healing. I had a rich spiritual life during my early development but gradually denied it by turning to a scientific materialism which was foreign to my nature. In this context I developed severe spinal arthritis with reactive spasm of the back muscle. This was so severe I had trouble getting out of bed in the morning. In fact, I had to kneel next to the bed and push myself up. I also had trouble driving to work because I could not turn my neck to see the traffic clearly. As I worked through the meaning of my illness, I recognised how I had turned away from my true nature, the spiritual life. I saw that to heal myself, I had to leave the job where I was not growing spiritually and begin to kneel in earnest.

Healing of Consciousness

Many, many concepts and techniques exist to help an individual heal. These techniques focus on different aspects of the individual's nature ranging from concentrating on the physical through the mental to the spiritual aspects of life nutritional methods, exercise, massage, acupressure, imaginary, meditation, laying on the hands, prayer, healing of the memories, ect. Although numerous methods may be employed by an individual, healing occurs primarily in consciousness.

Healing may be defined as a miraculous unfolding of consciousness for one's being in the world. We learn who we are, what and who really matter to us, how to express ourselves fully and openly. Ultimately, the healing journey leads to an intimate union with God through the experience of the flow of God's spirit within. It is a slow, arduous passage, unique for each individual, filled with danger and risk, triumph and joy, and finally, peace, trust, awe, reverence, love, tenderness.

Healing of the consciousness develops from the dialogue between ourselves and our illness, and the actions we take to make whole our broken bodies, our pain, our sorrow, and our suffering. The

dialogue begins in assessing what is wrong and what the disease means about how we are leading our lives. I encourage people who consult with me to use several different approaches in assessment such as descriptions of the phenomena of dis-ease and the context in which it develops, imagination, dreams, examination of metaphors about one's disease harvested from drawings or figures of speech, and reading about the illness in specialized texts. The information generated by these inquiries stimulates insights which develop the person's awareness of him/herself.

The developing consciousness in itself is healing and provides a basis for determining what a person can do to continue the healing process. In the beginning of a healing journey, unless an individual is sophisticated in matters of mind and spirit, most people select physical approaches to follow over time such as nutrition, exercise, massage, ect. As the person works with the healing program, I instruct him/her in being conscious of the changes experienced not only in the body but also in the mind and spirit. I also attempt to educate the person on the relationship of mind and spirit to his healing.

Eventually, the person slows down and detoxifies from longstanding abuse. Calming and detoxification are important, not only from the physical need of ridding the body from stress, but also in preparing the person to fully appreciate mind and to hear the call of God's Spirit within. Many people are just too overrun with fear, tension, anger and pain to practice the quiet necessary to explore mind and spirit. However, the insights are relaxed state that emerge from basic dietary changes often permit the person to continue on the healing path and explore mind and spirit.

God's Spirit: The Healing Force

The spiritual nature of the individual is an essential part of the healing process. Whether we know it or not, God is our healer and God's Spirit is the energy for our healing. The various healing techniques we employ all act by channelling the energy of the Spirit in our behalf. Moreover, we cannot completely give up the anger, fear, guilt and terror of our aloneness and the accompanying stress and tension until we experience the steady deep power of the flowing Spirit within. The healing force of God's Spirit transforms suffering and pain to love and compassion. The experience of God dwelling within provides enduring meaning to our lives. It transforms consciousness from one of constantly worrying about competing for limited material goods to one of awe and reverence for the limitless creativity of the Spirit.

While occasionally an individual's consciousness is transformed completely instantaneously, most of us labour along satisfied with modest, but nonetheless meaningful gains. We work at opening our consciousness by continually examining our dis-ease, acting toward wholeness and being conscious of our experience.

It is important that spirituality be brought into the healing process as soon as possible. Even a faint glimpse of the beauty of non-material reality can provide a person with the meaning necessary to continue a healing path. I have seen many a nutritional regime fail because it was not based in a healing consciousness which included the whole person. Advising someone to "give up" sugar is often seen by them from the consciousness of scarcity and only serves to aggravate the already rampant feelings of guilt and resentment.

In the course of a healing, many changes in a person's life and their attitudes about life are necessary. Dietary changes, work habits and attitudes about spirituality name just a few of the many areas that undergo revision. These changes are extremely difficult to make inasmuch as they often require people to act differently from their internalised image of themselves or the established routines and values within the family and society. The energy of the Spirit can sustain an individual through anxiety-provoking healing change.

Spirit is also crucial in healing distorted, broken self-image. Self-image develops slowly during the course of an individual's life. Unless one is imbued with a sense of union with God, self-image is formed from the feelings of anger, guilt and fear with flows from the percept of aloneness. Self-image is at the very deepest levels of our being and permeates all aspects of our lives. It is essential that self-image be transformed in healing, yet we are powerless by ourselves to change it. God's spirit is necessary to penetrate to the depths of our being with the love essential for altering our fundamental image of ourselves.

In the final analysis, healing is the experience of the love and forgiveness from the working of God's Spirit rushing in to take its place, we learn that God's love is here now. Gradually, we learn to accept the love and claim it for ourselves. This teaches us that we commune with all that is through the Spirit. Any ideas of separateness between people were tricks played on us by our limited consciousness. We become able to love others and forgive just as we are loved and are forgiven by the Spirit.

Spirituality: Challenge to the Healing Arts

The great challenge facing the healing arts is to bring spirituality openly and consciously into our work with people. It is not enough to mouth vague theoretical ideas like "holistic health is being healthy in the Spirit" or "holistic health treats the whole person" and then proceed with the business as usual. How do we move from concepts of spirituality and health to working models that fully liberate us from dis-ease?

Healing of consciousness may be practiced by everyone in the healing arts no matter what one's basic approach. It is not necessary to be a rabbi, Zen monk or cloistered nun to foster health through spiritual awakening. Every methodology from physical examination to healing prayer groups provides opportunities to show the healing power of God's Spirit.

In order to help another person heal in consciousness, it is crucial that the healing art practitioner be immersed in his or her own spiritual journey. Developing awareness for the relation between sickness-wellness and spirituality requires direct experience. Matters of the Spirit are non-rational and non-material. One flash of feeling the love of God's Spirit undoing the tension from years of stress is worth more than all the books on the subject. By working on spiritual consciousness, the practitioner develops models to use in healing encounters.

Becoming whole requires role models that show how to live in the Spirit and how this life style promotes wellness. Practitioners who talk about spiritual health without being radiant with their own spirituality do not make their point. Consciousness of God's Spirit develops through love and love heals the pain of dis-ease and the confused twisted inner state that causes it. We heal others when we share the love we receive from God's Spirit.

Practitioners who grow in personal knowledge of the healing power of God's Spirit become emboldened to teach others about it. Very often, sharing knowledge about health and spirituality can lead to profound healing. I have found that many people are struggling to establish an intimate relationship with God but feel awkward and alone in their search because they lack information about the spiritual quests of others. Furthermore, many have been led to believe that a direct experience of God's Spirit is impossible or wrong. Discussing these issues openly with others frequently brings a flood of relief in discovering that they are not alone or crazed.

People who follow a spiritual path may be faced with taking seemingly great risks in their lives and work. As consciousness changes and the individuals move closer to God, they may be stimulated to

act in ways foreign to their old consciousness. When we work with the Spirit we realize we do not do the healing work but act as channels for the activity of Spirit. This realization causes us to open ourselves to the spirit without setting limits.

When I first began committing myself to the spiritual aspects of healing, I intellectually understood the need to be open and not hold back in transmitting the action of the Spirit. This was relatively easy until one day I was confronted to act on this concept rather than intellectualise about it. As I sat talking with a client, I became aware of an intense electrical activity in the room. The patient had been suffering from a severe prolonged cold which had defied conventional remedies. I intuited I should stop our conversation and make the client aware of the energy so that together we could meditate on it quietly. I was made quite anxious by this awareness since it was outside of anything I had experienced previously. Nevertheless, I acted on my intuition and we meditated for some time, both gripped by a strong and deeply moving power flowing within us. After the experience the client felt dramatically better and within hours the cold was gone.

Although our society is trying its best to deny it, we are whole people with spiritual as well as physical and mental natures. Spirituality plays a major role in some forms of healing within our society. However, many healing arts are not practiced with spiritual consciousness. This is unfortunate since healing that does not awaken the individual to the health-giving fire of God's Spirit is incomplete. Hopefully, the growing consciousness for living in the Spirit will develop our knowledge and acceptance of spirituality in the healing arts.

Spiritual Bonding

By John Paul

There will be times when someone special will walk into your life and a bonding of the spirits will take place. This means that both people are compatible, and that their inner spirits are harmonious with each other. Because of this, a kinship is started first, followed by deep inner emotional feelings for each other, all because the spirits are harmonious. At this point we say that we have an attraction for each other, or that the chemistry is right. The true understanding of relationships is in the divine human spirit, which is the foundation of all happy and good relationships. Sometimes we allow reason to cloud our judgment so that we are unable to become aware of our true feelings. We feel through our mind instead of our hearts, and become confused. When that special person enters your life, and you sense the bonding of the spirits, then hold on tight and don't let go, because unions such as this do not happen all the time.

How Will I Know?

You will ask, how do I know when my spirit has bonded with another person? You will feel or sense it, because you find this person easy to talk to, and you are comfortable when you are in their presence. Your face lights up with a smile when you see them, talking to each other becomes easy, you will discover that you have much in common and hold many of the same interests. The joining of two spirits is a beautiful thing because it means that two compatible souls have found each other and can now walk down the path of life together.

Sometimes we, through reasons of fault finding, refused to accept this bonding, because of minor human defects such as "he's not handsome" or "she's not pretty", and refused to allow the heart to guide us. Other times we may think we are unworthy of that other person's affection. Many times we have tried to hang on to or tried to salvage an old or bad relationship, but this sometimes may not work out. It could be because the other person may refuse to bond with you, or, karmically speaking, it may be time for it to end. Only when the spirits bond and "both" people accept this bonding can any relationship be a happy one.

As we are creatures endowed with the divine freedom of choice and free will, this can make spiritual bonding painful at times. The pain comes when one person recognizes the bonding and the other person, for one reason or another, does not. No matter how old or mature we are, we can never ease this pain. But there is hope! Through understanding and with time we learn to heal our emotional hurt, and we become a better person because of this experience. The only sad thing is that the other person may not have suffered the pain that you did, but they lost the great opportunity of having a happy life with you, and this is what is sad. On the other hand, if that other person did suffer pain, it was because they did care for you and did recognize the spiritual bonding, but for some reason could not allow this bonding to grow and blossom into something beautiful.

Growing Together

The bonding of two spirits can be a time of joy or a time of sorrow and pain. When it is a time of pain, we must give the pain meaning, and through prayer or meditation, we allow it to be released from our being and allow it to transform into a new energy of love. One that is pure and clean and free of all hurts and pain, free to be used by someone else that may benefit from your experience. No one can change what has happened except the person who has refused your spiritual bonding, and being human, we always cling to that last star of hope, that the other person may open their eyes and see what they are throwing away.

If you are in a relationship where the person you love is unwilling to spiritually bond and someone

else comes along who wants to bond, there could be a reason why. It could be a divine message from above. If you understand this, then that new person who entered your life has now become that special person, maybe even specially chosen for you. If true, what are you going to do about it? Lives always cross for a reason, and we as humans don't always see that reason, nor do we always understand it and will not understand it until we are ready.

You may ask, why is our spirit so important to us and our human relationships? It is important because our spirit is part of our nature — it makes up who and what we are. It allows us to sense and be aware of things. We are able to sense danger, evil, good, and sad and happy times. As our physical body has the sense of touch on the physical level, our spirit is our sixth sense, by which we are able to perceive the world around us on a spiritual level. By sensing things through our spirit, we become aware of many wonderful things such as spiritual bonding.

At the time of spiritual bonding, you must continue to interact between yourself and the other person with whom you are bonding. This will allow the other person time to sense the bonding, and to allow the bonding to grow and become strong. Once both persons accept the bonding, then both of their spirits are held together with a white light.

Keep A Clear Mind

During this time, we can become aware, through our spirit, when our partner is in danger or troubled, or is in need of more love, caring, and understanding. We can now better sense these things because the two spirits are sealed. There is a word of warning.

If we allow the wrong kind of emotions to enter our thinking, such as mistrust, envy, jealousy, egotism, vanity and self pride, and allow them to dominate our feelings and the way we think, we can break the seal which holds the two spirits together. The same rule applies to people who spiritually bond with someone if the other person does not accept the bonding, the spiritual bonding is incomplete.

Types of Bonding

The most common type of spiritual bonding is the bonding between a mother and her child during the time of her pregnancy. It is also very important for the father to spiritually bond with the child during its nine months before birth, especially at the time of birth. Both the mother and the father should be together on the bed, holding the child between them for the first hour so that the bonding can continue to grow and become strong. Then the hospital can weigh and measure the child.

Another type of spiritual bonding is the love between two friends which we call our "best" friends. All spiritual activities and bonding are recorded in heaven or into the universal archives.

A true lasting relationship begins to grow when it is spiritually bonded. At times we talk about searching for our soul mate as if there is a soul out there created just for us and we have to find it, in order to have that perfect match. Soul mates are not something you look for, they are those which you create when two people spiritually bond. Don't go looking for a soul mate. Go out and spiritually bond with someone and create your perfect soul mate, and find true happiness.

About The Author

John Paul has studied various religions and their spiritual theology, both Christian and Judaism, plus has 15 years experience in metaphysics and Eastern Philosophy. He has also written several spiritual and enlightenment courses. You may contact him at: New Life Center, 15959 Asland Dr., Brook Park, Ohio 44142.

Spiritual Core Beliefs --What are they?

By D.R. Lawrence

There are many things we perceive as a "knowing" and believe it to be so based on that. These things we explain as a "knowing" are core beliefs. We operate on core beliefs and values daily - many times unaware of what they are or where they come from. They can be from an external generated stimulus or control, or they can be from an internal focus. Some examples of core beliefs we accept externally are a) knowing the sky is blue during the day even if the clouds obscure its view; b) if I do not have oxygen, my body will die. These are beliefs we have learned from our existence here. However, core beliefs are perceptions and not all are balanced with scientific and other laws we have come to understand.

Many core beliefs we carry with us are dysfunctional concepts. Values and beliefs we hold intrinsically that were learned from our background, culture, and experiences in life. Automatic thoughts of, "I can't", "I don't deserve", "I will just fail" creep in as reminders our past that have sat at the helm of our consciousness to keep us from our higher dreams and aspirations. Its like climbing a mountain with thrill and exhilaration, then thoughts flow when we reach the mid-point like a polluted river telling us we will fail. So entrenched are these thoughts that many times we aren't even consciously aware of them.

In order to reach the top of the mountain we must get beyond these limiting beliefs, and begin to build core beliefs reflecting our understanding from a higher inner understanding.

Once we begin to realize that something must change, we become vacuum cleaners eating up every book, teacher, counselor, and source we can find to understand what went wrong. We attempt to study all the philosophies and concepts in the world in the hopes of finding the "wellspring" of knowledge to correct all our woes. Although books and guidance can be greatly beneficial, there is a dilemma here. Do we still follow the tradition of looking outside ourselves for the answer verses within? Do we still carry a feeling and belief that we are isolated or separate from the answers we seek? Regardless of the path or ideology we choose as our outline for truth, the following is a good set of questions to ask for our own well being:

CLINEBELL'S (1965) TESTS FOR MENTALLY HEALTHY RELIGION

Does a particular form of religious thought and practice

1. Build bridges or barriers between people?
2. Strengthen or weaken a basic sense of trust and relatedness to the universe?
3. Stimulate or hamper the growth of inner freedom and personal responsibility?
4. Provide effective or faulty means of helping people move from a sense of guilt to forgiveness?
Does it provide well-defined significant ethical guidelines, or does it emphasize ethical trivia? Is its primary concern for surface behavior or for the underlying health of the personality?
5. Increase or lessen the enjoyment of life? Does it encourage a person to appreciate or depreciate the feeling dimension of life?
6. Handle the vital energies of sex and aggressiveness in constructive or repressive ways?
7. Encourage the acceptance or denial of reality? Does it foster magical or mature religious beliefs?
Does it encourage intellectual honesty with respect to doubts? Does it oversimplify the human situation or face its tangled complexity?
8. Emphasize love (and growth) or fear?
9. Give its adherents a frame of orientation and object of devotion that is adequate in handling existential anxiety constructively?
10. Encourage the individual to relate to his or her unconscious through living symbols?
11. Accommodate itself to the neurotic patterns of the society or endeavor to change them?
12. Strengthen or weaken self-esteem?

Each individual must determine the ultimate reflection of sound spiritual core beliefs and values. Those are found with and through inner practices such as meditation. We must come to accept all aspects of ourselves unconditionally. Understand what are our ultimate concerns and begin a JOURNEY today to discover what are your spiritual core beliefs!

Spiritual Screening, Discernment and Knowing the TRUTH

By Barbara Rose, Ph.D.

Being extremely discerning is something that many more people need to understand with respect to the information they allow themselves to buy into.

For example, there was a message post awaiting approval that I did NOT allow to be posted in the Higher Self Communication Yahoo Group that I founded because many times people "fall prey" to "Higher Being" "Spiritual Hierarchy" "Channeling others" from "Higher Dimensions" as if YOU, as a beautiful, pure, whole and complete spiritual/human being are somehow "less than" those "others."

Here below is what I replied to that identical post that I happened to see in another Yahoo forum (from the same person.)

Regarding this identical post submitted in the Higher Self Communication Yahoo Group, I am being guided to share a few things with All of you for the Highest Good of All.

It is imperative that all people fully activate their sixth sense, and have full, conscious alignment with and communication from their Higher Self, God, Source, All That Is, Christ Consciousness, Holy Spirit - that exists within us ALL, from every dimension. The "time" has come for all people to become one with, receive guidance and answers from, as well as 'follow' ONLY ONE "Leader" and that Leader must be Source - their Higher Self. Yes, all (positive, pure and loving) Divine assistance is always needed and requested.

Regarding "readings" - NO, the people must now learn how to receive their own answers from Source/God, or whatever name they give to the Highest and Purest Source of Love, Light and Truth in the universe.

God/Source wants ALL people to know that each and every soul is as Divine as any of the Ascended Masters, and equally worthy.

What IS important is that people who are down, or feel fear - that they are AUTHENTICALLY EMPOWERED from WITHIN, as they receive answers directly from their Higher Self, God, Source.

If people are "sidetracked" then what happens is that they start to seek answers from other people, and they become DEPENDENT upon other people, or beings for their answers.

When people try to make me their "Leader" I immediately STOP that, and let them know that I am not anybody's leader, the One they will be best served to "follow" is the truth in their heart, where their connection to I AM exists.

I am being guided to share with you that although your "list of characteristics" is very well explained, it will not help the people to feel they must have certain characteristics - to be "included" in a certain category.

What God is guiding me to share with you is that there is only ONE characteristic that they need to recognize, honor and fully activate - and this is the Love within their heart, particularly Self love, so that they can then transform their internal emotional pain, receive the Higher perspective from their Higher Self Communication, which then naturally shifts their mind's focus to one that is aligned with Love, Light, and Divine, Pure and Perfect Truth.

We all have massive potential to achieve full awakening in this lifetime. Many people are awakening and transforming from "seekers" to "experiencers" - discovering Source within, and blooming as their God-Self - which is why we are in this life to begin with.

Through pure Higher Self Communication, that sense of "Oneness" with ALL beings becomes well in place deep within. The search is over, because we have "found" it - it has been inside of us all along.

As far as "channeling" - this is the label that humanity must grow out of.

Every single human being can access and bring through Divine, Pure and Perfect truth, guidance, clarification, direction, answers, books, anything positive from their Higher Self. There is no more "special ability" label attached to this - it is the natural birthright of every human being.

I also used to call it "Divinely Channeled" until God/Source/All That Is, guided me to share with all exactly what I was guided to state just above.

If people are led to believe that only a few, select people can access the Highest and Purest wisdom in this universe, then they will feel Disempowered. Now, it is time for all of humanity to know, learn, demonstrate and believe that they CAN receive their OWN answers from All That Is, at any time, for eternity. As so many, many people ARE, their entire lives are completely transforming so purely and positively within weeks and months - and they are dependent upon NO ONE, other than God - their Higher Self.

People need to know that Source, their Higher Self exists WITHIN, and as they receive their own Divine answers directly, their lives completely, purely and positively transform as a result.

I hope this message helps you, and that you will always remember that when someone claims to have "all the answers" the best thing you can do for yourself is to learn how to receive every answer you need to create the best life imaginable.

About the author

Barbara Rose, Ph.D., is the best selling author of nine books including *If God Hears Me, I Want an Answer!*, *Stop Being the String Along: A Relationship Guide to Being THE ONE*, and *Know Yourself*. She is an internationally recognized expert in personal transformation, relationships, consciousness and spiritual awakening, and a pioneering force in incorporating Higher Self Communication, the nondenominational study and integration of humanity's God Nature into modern personal growth and spiritual evolution. Dr. Rose is known for providing life changing answers, quick practical coaching and deep spiritual wisdom to people worldwide as the Founder and Director of IHSC, Institute of Higher Self Communication. Her highly acclaimed books, public speaking events, spiritual intensives, teleseminars, webcasts, and internationally published articles have transformed the lives of thousands across the globe. Dr. Rose works in cooperation with some of the greatest spiritual leaders of our time, to uplift the spiritual consciousness of humanity. Her website is <http://www.borntoinspire.com>

Getting to Spiritual Enlightenment

By Nick Arrizza M.D

The expression "Spiritual Enlightenment" has been used often in reference to personal spiritual development. What exactly is meant by this term however has been vaguely defined. My research on the topic has found it linked to some of the following experiences:

1. A connection to a higher self
2. A connection to an inner knowing
3. A connection to spiritual energies or beings beyond one's self
4. Altered states of consciousness
5. Out of body experiences i.e. astral travel, remote viewing etc.
6. An greater intuitive awareness
7. An enhanced energy state in the body
8. Precognitive or other clairvoyant experiences
9. Extrasensory perceptive experiences
10. Hypnotic experiences

In this article I aim to propose a new experiential definition of Spiritual Enlightenment that is not only accessible to everyone but which also provides a road map to achieving this sought after state of being.

In order to achieve this goal I wish to examine the word "Enlightenment" itself from a strictly literal standpoint. To be "Enlightened" can be taken to mean the following:

1. To feel "lighter" as in more buoyant or less weighted down.
2. To feel or perceive oneself as being "lighter" as in brighter, more luminescent, or more radiant.
3. To be brought "into the light" thereby making things clearer or more visible.

In other words we can distill, from these literal definitions the experiences of a) Buoyancy, b) Luminescence and c) Clarity. For the analysis that follows I now propose an experiential definition of "Enlightenment" which embodies these three qualities of being.

According to this definition one can be said to be "Enlightened" if they are experiencing these three qualities simultaneously. Whether this is possible and whether this corresponds to what one might subjectively describe as being "Spiritual Enlightened" however remain to be determined.

I also wish to put forth the hypothesis that the simultaneous experience of these three qualities of "Enlightenment" can be used as a starting point in our search for what one might subjectively describe as "Spiritual Enlightenment". In order to assess this latter hypothesis I wish to digress for a moment and discuss a matter that is often missed in the discussion of Spiritual Enlightenment. That is, that in order to be searching for it we must already know, at some level within our being that a) it exists and b) what the state actually looks like.

This can be readily seen by the fact that we may feel, say in our current state, that we are not yet enlightened. This means that within us we have a "set point" (i.e a set point is like the desired temperature setting in thermostat which lets the furnace know whether the desired temperature has been attained or not) with which we compare our current state of being and which tells us whether or not we are there. Hence, in order to know that "we are not yet there" we must at some level harbor the knowledge of where "there" is.

Although we are not completely conscious of what "there" looks like we strangely know what "not

being there" looks like. Having said that, it follows that an individual will "know" when they are there, or at least are getting there. With this in mind we created a tool that helps individuals move in the direction of our definition of Enlightenment (i.e. buoyancy, luminescence and clarity). We then asked individuals to assess whether this felt like what they would subjectively describe as a state of Spiritual Enlightenment.

This tool is called the Mind Resonance Process? (MRP) and we will describe it shortly. When we looked at the effects MRP had on individuals' descriptions of their new state, we, as expected found them to correspond repeatedly to our definition of Enlightenment i.e. Buoyancy, Luminescence and Clarity. This basically affirmed that MRP did what it was designed to do. What we also found was that this state of "Enlightenment" repeatedly corresponded to individuals' subjective report of what they described a state of Spiritual Enlightenment.

What does all this mean? Well to start with it means:

- That our definition of Enlightenment appears to correspond with what individuals repeatedly subjectively described as an experience of Spiritual Enlightenment.
- That repeated exposure to MRP facilitates shifts towards successive and heightened states of Enlightenment and subjective Spiritual Enlightenment.
- That the effects of MRP are not reversible. That is the effects are cumulative and cannot be undone.

The MRP process is essentially a simple but powerful algorithm (i.e. a multi-step process) that targets and facilitates the complete and permanent release of "negative" beliefs, emotions, perceptions and memories from the mind/body system (or in Energy Psychology terms, from the individual's bio-field). Please note the emphasis on the word "negative". Negative here implies that the targeted item is "not desirable" i.e. our definition of "negative".

The release of such negativity is accompanied by most or all of the following: a sense of physical buoyancy, a visual sense that one is more luminescent or radiant both to self and to others, a greater sense of clarity about who one really is and who others around them are, a deep feeling of love and compassion, a sense of joy, a feeling of fulfillment, a deep sense of inner peace, a feeling of wholeness or completeness, a feeling of increased energy in the physical body, a heightened feeling of self-esteem and self-confidence, a great feeling of resilience, a feeling of expansiveness which was described as extending beyond the limits of the physical body yet being in at the same time, and much more.

Many have described this as an experience of their Real Self or even their Divine Self. Some interesting and common reactions to this new state are:

- That it is familiar yet feels ancient at the same time. In other words, it has existed far longer than the individual has had a connection to it. Additionally, the state has been experienced at some distant time in the past.
- That this new state feels like it has always been there i.e. there was never a time when it did not exist.
- That who the individual thought they were before exposure to MRP is not who they ever were i.e. the negativity is not experienced as part of the Real Self.

As a result of our observations with MRP we would like to propose that:

- Our definition of Enlightenment is taken as a close approximation to what most would consider an experience of Spiritual Enlightenment.
- MRP is an effective tool in facilitating the shift towards a more Enlightened and Spiritually Enlightened State.
- MRP is a powerful yet simple way of achieving what human beings have long been seeking, their Divine Self.

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Spiritual Ethics

By Mary Phyllis Horn, Med, CMHt, Rev., Shamanic Practitioner

How we view ourselves and how we treat others is directly connected to how we view Spirit. For the sake of clarification, here are my definitions of Spirit: God, the Universe, Divine Source, or any other term you may use for the Highest Power of creation. "Spirit" includes the High Self as well--the highest, purest part of self that is always one with God. It also involves angels (spirit guides), who are as real, individual and sentient as you and I; they devote their entire beings to the service of the highest within Spirit and humanity.

If we treat Spirit with respect and high ethics, any ethical change we implement will occur with ease. Spiritual ethics involve humility, forgiveness, recognizing our source of abundance, gratitude, and surrendering to Divine Will.

Humility

Humility is a combination of awe, wonder, recognition of our true strengths and weaknesses, and the deep knowledge that "I by myself can do nothing." That is, it takes self and Spirit to accomplish our full potential.

If we assume we can do all things on our own, and that we can manipulate Spirit for our own ends, then we view Spirit as a slave to our wishes. If we operate under this assumption, our angelic guides will merely step aside and let circumstances prove what we can and cannot do. They will not intervene on our behalf. This is how karma operates.

Inner work is most productive when approached with humility. In humility, we recognize our talents as coming from Spirit and that we have a responsibility to use them wisely for the highest good of all. We neither belittle our talents nor pose them as being greater than they are. We also recognize that they need to be used in tandem with Spirit's help.

Humility acknowledges the existence of realms beyond physical awareness. What is seen inwardly may be metaphorical, but it is not a "figment of the imagination" (a falsehood) nor an archetype of self. The unseen realm is real. Imaginative forces are real...a necessary part of creativity and manifestation.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the spiritual counterpart to cleaning house: we get rid of burdens and grudges we're carrying. This leaves space for the Spirit to enter... and fill us with love and understanding. The change in vibration allows us to feel Spirit's presence, and hear guidance more clearly.

Recognizing the Source of Abundance

The grateful person recognizes that all abundance, all good fortune, is brought by Spirit. Think about it: right intent and action deserve good karma... But who brings that good fortune to us? Who guides the right person to appear at our doorstep just "by chance?"... Or causes that serendipitous circumstance to wondrously manifest without effort?... Or leads us to see the very words we need? Spirit.

Gratitude

In being grateful, we acknowledge the source of our abundance. In expressing gratitude, we consciously connect with Spirit, strengthening and expanding that rapport. The deeper the rapport, the easier it is to hear guidance and to be ethical.

How do you feel when someone expresses gratitude to you for what you do for them? Do you want

to do more? Do you appreciate your own talents more? Does it lift your spirits and make you feel more abundant, joyous, loving and creative? It's that way with Spirit too.

Surrendering to Divine Will

In gratitude, we strive to surrender our personal will to Divine Will. With an attitude of surrender, we may approach Spirit with such thoughts as: "I come here with my heart open... I honour, love and respect Spirit... I am deeply grateful for my angels' willingness to help and for their wisdom in guiding me... I surrender my personal will to Divine Will... I, by myself, can do nothing... From the depths of my being, I desire to know the truth... I know that Spirit will not deceive me, but will guide me rightly... I am open and vulnerable, trusting in your good will, Spirit... With respect, humility and a loving heart, I ask for your help."

Spirit knows what is in the heart, fake or real. Heart-felt true intent demonstrates a receptivity that allows Spirit to help us the moment we ask for it.

Healthy Skepticism

Spiritual ethics may involve healthy skepticism concerning reality, to assure right discernment and to keep on our chosen path. It is also necessary when first contacting spirit guides, to make sure we're not being deceived.

However, the skeptical thought pattern may be counter-productive when contacting the highest within, such as in meditation, psychic work, shamanic spirit journeying or spiritual healing. A general rule of thumb for working at these levels is: During the experience itself, assume it is real. If you analyse it, you push it away, aborting the process. Analyse it only after you return to ordinary consciousness... Then is the time to decide if it was real or made up. If it's real, apply the guidance in your life. This last step is crucial for building rapport with your spirit guides. Guidance that works in life underscores the truth of their words and strengthens the bond of trust between you.

Extreme Skepticism

Extreme skepticism, the opposite of humility, constantly negates subtle information and any variance from the known. The extreme skeptic approaches inner work with such thoughts as: "This can't be real. It feels like my imagination, so it isn't true!... This doesn't conform with what I think it should be, so I reject it... The guide is only an archetype... There is no guide here for me (perhaps because I think I can do it all myself or I don't trust Spirit?)." The extreme skeptic may also deliberately make things up rather than go with what appears spontaneously...or may discount information given by Spirit.

Sometimes extreme skepticism comes from fear. It may be fear of Spirit or the unknown. It may be based on a deep-seated mistrust of personal perceptions, feelings and self-worth -- all of which may be conditioned responses from childhood or the result of soul loss. They are not in themselves unethical. Nevertheless, they do create a distance between us and Spirit. If we want that close rapport, it is important to work on ourselves and release the barriers.

Extreme skepticism based on arrogance may say, "Everything I need to know is already within me," in the sense that "I don't need to hear it from anyone else, much less Spirit!"

Skeptical thoughts are from the head, not the heart. They sabotage self-discovery, block guidance, and are a sure-fire way of gaining nothing from the effort. Symptoms of this within inner work include: not being able to contact spirit guides...a sense of distance from the guides...the image clouds over...you see the guide's lips moving but you can't hear or understand anything...the guide is unresponsive and appears frozen in place.

Consider this: How would you feel if someone came to you for help and then commenced to discount and "yes, but" to everything you offer? Wouldn't that turn you off and make you not want to offer more help? Spirit reacts the same way; it backs off if we do that. It will not force on us what we obviously do not want.

Spirit Respects Us

Spirit respects us and will not violate our free will. If we want help and guidance, we must be open to it. Spirit will wait patiently and lovingly until we are ready to take the first step. It also sets boundaries for how it will be treated. If we treat it like swine, we'll not be thrown the pearls... But the pearls are always there anytime we choose right spiritual ethics.

We use right spiritual ethics when we approach Spirit with humility and respect, give spirit our love, express gratitude to Spirit for all it gives us, view self as a servant of Spirit while also honouring, respecting and using our own talents, and apply Spirit's guidance in our lives.

Spiritual ethics require that we honour, love and respect both Spirit and Self...in balance.

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SPIRITUALITY: JUMPSTARTING A CYCLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION?

By Judy Marshall, Ph.D.

www.psychmaster.com

There is a general consensus that spirituality is good for you. This may be the only point of agreement about spirituality these days. Traditionally associated with religion or the occult, spiritual belief and practice in the 21st century are variously and personally defined. There is much disagreement, even conflict, between one perspective and another. Yet, from feeling refreshed after a yoga class to a sense of being re-born through a personal relationship with God, the benefits of spiritual expression and growth, however conceptualized, are certainly affirmed by the practicing individual.

Why? There has been scientific research to explore this link between spiritual practice and reported sense of well-being, although the explanations given are entirely rational. It is noted that the brain patterns of individuals in prayer or meditation are similar to those seen in deep relaxation, which is considered a healthful state. Thus, it makes sense that people who incorporate regular periods of these activities into their lives would show an overall positive effect. It is pointed out that individuals who turn to prayer or meditation during times of crisis may actually be using coping strategies that are similar to biofeedback or the relaxation techniques taught in a therapist's office.

From a purely psychological perspective, it is also acknowledged that there may be healthy byproducts to a "spiritual" lifestyle. People who are so oriented tend to get involved in groups of like-minded individuals, either as an avenue for worship or to work on projects that exemplify their values. There may be a network of social support and constructive interactions in the service of a common goal. There may also be more time spent in reflection, with an emphasis on self-examination, weighing moral choices, and finding meaning in life.

Beyond the vague healthful effects described above, spirituality may be the most powerful psychological resource we have. As a clinical psychologist of twenty years, I have consistently observed that those individuals with spiritual investment (no matter what the religion or "spiritual" orientation) react similarly to each other, but differently from those for whom spirituality is unimportant, in dealing with emotional crises and difficult life events. The potential impact on a person's psychology is immense and can be transforming. Genuine commitment to spiritual belief and practice seems to result in paradigmatic shifts in the individual's experience. This translates into the discovery of new, positive feelings beyond purely psychological emotions, a meaningful "bigger picture" worldview, unique coping strategies, and a more rewarding and authentic sense of personal identity.

Spiritual exploration and practice can be transformational on several levels psychologically. A kind of generic understanding of spirituality today is that it is how an individual finds a unique, nurturing, and deeply emotional connection with something greater than one's self. When we go "within," certainly during prayer, meditation, or contemplation, there is a sense of going beyond ego, becoming merged with and transcendentally connected to others, the Universe or God. Whether or not such perceptions are ultimately explainable by science will not be addressed here. From a subjective and uniquely personal perspective, it is this sense of inner connection to something greater than ourselves that is the hub and dynamic of spiritual experience.

It is this internal connection to something greater that becomes a haven, retreat, and existential lifeline. Over time, it may become a source of guidance, soothing, and even "unconditional love" in an individual's life. In addition to this awareness of "presence" or greater connection, the individual may seem to access other "spiritual" feelings beyond the more common, reactive

psychological emotions. There may be reports of a soft-hued joy, peace, clarity, even certainty, which is perceived as a mental, but not intellectual “knowing.” With increased spiritual practice, such feelings begin to generalize beyond the meditative setting or activity.

Spirituality may produce actual changes in learned, automatic thought patterns and behavior. Traditionally, spirituality has meant “living philosophy” or applying universal principles of faith, unity, and service in thought and action. This opens up an entirely different way to view one’s self, one’s life, and the surrounding world. Often spiritual individuals see themselves as living on two levels at once. They experience negative emotions and react to obstacles like everyone else, but their beliefs offer a “bigger picture” dimension or “perspective of wisdom” (which then competes with the immediate and reactive negative feelings). No matter how dark and long the tunnel, this can be an anchor and lifeline in the midst of emotional storm.

The spiritual person also commits to seeing his or her own life as a meaningful journey, involving learning and purpose. Within this context, there is the opportunity to re-frame and transcend long-term psychological issues, trauma, and even biological challenges. There is also the directive to focus on and maximize the positive in one’s life. As a result of all these factors, the sense of personal identity often transforms. Over time, spiritually committed individuals get in touch with and begin to live from an awareness of themselves as an evolving “soul” as opposed to the programmed psychological sense of self that develops out of childhood and cultural learning.

Self-esteem becomes measured through spiritual values, which are not only authentic and positive, but paradoxically “ground” the individual as to how to deal with most situations in everyday living. Spiritual individuals also begin to recognize, respond to, and honor the “soul” in others. This leads to new and unexpected avenues of meaningful connection and relationship, and a willingness to take risks and try uncharacteristic positive behaviors, that are then reinforced as part of the individual’s overall identity.

In contrast to the psychological focus on “fixing” damage and problem areas, spirituality is progressive, a commitment, even lifestyle. Active spirituality opens up an ongoing cycle of personal transformation that can only build on itself, often subtly, but over time carries the potential for not only enhancing but re-configuring an individual’s life.

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About Dr. Judy Marshall

As a spiritual psychologist, Dr. Judy Marshall seeks to bridge the gap between spiritual and psychological understanding. She received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1983. In two decades of clinical practice, she has worked with many different groups, from children to the frail elderly, with particular interests in self-esteem, depression, creativity and aging. Her newly launched website, Psychmaster.com, provides basic, understandable information about psychology and spirituality. Psychmaster tapes, CDs and e-books—all written and narrated by Dr. Judy Marshall—seek to answer fundamental questions about how spirituality and psychology interact, the reality of mental health and illness, coping with the challenges and tragedies inherent in human existence and achieving actualization and fulfillment. For more information, contact Dr. Judy Marshall, Psychmaster, P.O. Box 401, Beverly Hills, CA 90213, 310-286-0443, www.psychmaster.com

Spiritual Weight Lifting

By Robert Elias Najemy

When we want to strengthen our muscles we lift weights. During this process our muscles become stronger in response to the need to cope with the strain, which is put on them.

However, if we increase the weight or the number of repetitions abruptly, we not only will not strengthen our muscles but we might seriously damage them.

On the other hand, if we do not lift any objects at all, our muscles will atrophy. If we lift the same weight everyday, they will remain at their present strength without any improvement.

The same holds true for our emotional, mental and spiritual muscles. If we continually avoid facing problems by hiding from them, or ignoring them, or by seeking external and superficial solutions such as tranquilizers, drugs or other external "security blankets", then our emotional, mental and spiritual muscles will atrophy daily.

We will become weak, fearful and dependent with a poor self-image. This leads to an ever-accelerating vicious circle of weakness, fear and dependency.

On the other hand, if we suddenly try to throw away every external support, we may fail so painfully that we shall fear trying again. This may then support our basic belief that we cannot make it on our own, that we are not strong enough. Of course this is not true. That would be like saying that, because we fell the first time we tried to walk, we would never be able to walk.

The solution, then, is to choose our weights correctly. We must continuously choose new goals of greater self-sufficiency, developing our inner strength gradually.

Life itself offers us from moment to moment the opportunities, which we need in order to grow. We need only to respond to these opportunities. We do not need to look for problems or difficulties. We can, however, examine our lives to check for problems which we have been hiding or avoiding. We can start working on these.

Also very important for weight lifting is regular practice. In our case this means daily exercise of the body, breath and mind.

So you might want to choose a challenge that you want to deal with more consciously and create a plan for meeting it.

Answering the following Questions will help:

1. Make a list of your present life challenges – such as problems, goals etc. (Consider health, family, profession, economics and social and spiritual life)
2. Chose the one you want to work with this week.
3. What will be the first step you need to make?
4. Are there any inner obstacles (fears, procrastination) which have obstructed your progress in the past?
5. If yes, what are they?
6. If yes, What will you do to overcome these obstacles?
7. What will be your first step this week towards that growth and change which you desire?

Daily positive projection, prayer, meditation, self analysis, and other mind strengthening techniques, are an absolute for those who would like to eventually lift the heavier weights on our

evolutionary path.

Practice, Patience and Perseverance

About the Author

Robert E. Najemy, author of 25 books and life coach with 30 years of experience, has trained over 300 life coaches and now does so over the Internet. Over 600 free articles, lectures, relaxation and positive projection as mp3 audio. Become a life coach. At <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>

Four Steps to Spiritual Growth

By William Rand

For spiritual growth to take place in your life, you must change. You must let go of some areas in your life and personality -- especially the areas that are not working well or are out of balance -- and allow them to heal. This process of change and transformation is not always easy and often takes courage -- but the rewards are more than worth the effort. The following are four areas of spiritual growth that have proven to be valuable.

1. TRUSTING IN HIGHER SELF

The Higher Self is that part of God which is looking out for you. It is present to help you and, having all the resources of God to work with, is able to do so in many powerful ways.

The Higher Self knows all about you. It knows everything you have ever done, in this life and in all your past lives. It knows everything that has ever taken place in the past, everything that is happening now and everything that will happen in the future. It is fully aware of all the resources that might be useful to you now, and the best course of action to achieve any worthy goal. It is entirely positive and is always present to help you.

The Higher Self loves you more deeply and completely than you can imagine and, because it is part of God, the Higher Self is actually the source of Love itself. All miracles that have ever occurred have come from the Higher Self. Since it is all knowing and all powerful, it can be a source of absolute protection, healing, and guidance.

Learning to trust the Higher Self for guidance is the most important step you can take in your spiritual growth. The Higher Self is completely aware of your unique life and what you need in order to progress spiritually. Once a working relationship is developed and maintained, the Higher Self will guide you unerringly to fulfillment.

2. SOLVING PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Many people want to ignore their problems and pretend they do not exist. Yet, their life would be easier if they would simply see them from another perspective, accept them, and be willing to do something about them. They are not something to ignore or avoid, but something to accept, understand, and master. In fact, you might say that spiritual growth involves being willing to look directly into the areas of life that are not working, or are out of balance, and realize that these situations actually contain the lessons you came into this life to learn. They are situations you chose to have in your life to help you progress.

The universe is always in a state of balance. A problem cannot exist without its solution existing at the same time. By dealing with your problems directly and asking the Higher Self for help in solving them, you will be brought into contact with the solution and in the process, learn important things about yourself and about life.

3. RECOVERING LATENT TALENTS

Having lived many times before, you have had experiences in past lives that could be useful to you now. Research indicates people have had hundreds of past lives. For most people, it is just like having a book shelf with several hundred books on it and only having read part of one of the books -- your present life. It is possible to gain access to all the books on the book shelf and start using the valuable information from your past lives that they contain.

People have had many experiences and developed many talents and abilities in past lives. Often

they have been more successful in past lives than in their present life -- the reason being that a block was developed around the talent that prevents them from using it now. (Sometimes the talent was misused or negative feelings became associated with it such as guilt or fear or pain, so the person has a subconscious block that prevents them from accessing the talent now.)

These valuable past life experiences are just below the level of conscious awareness and through the use of past life therapy, a person can quickly release the blocks and begin using past life talents now.

4. DISCOVERING YOUR LIFE PURPOSE

Just before this life, there was a time when you were contemplating and planning what you wanted to achieve in your present life. Often you had help, perhaps from your guides or a special council. You could look forward in time and actually choose from a number of possible life times, knowing in advance who your parents would be and the major events of each possible lifetime. During this process, you chose your present life and you knew what your purpose would be.

It is possible through a process of guided meditation or self-hypnosis to go back in time to when you were planning your present life. During this process, you can remember what happened and rediscover your life purpose.

Knowing your life purpose and acting on it will give your life direction and is a necessary step in achieving true happiness.

When you look at your life, perhaps you will find value in the thought that it is not so much what you think that is important or even what you do, but what you become. Create your life so that each day you become a clearer expression of your own Divine Self.

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About The Author

William Rand has a broad background in metaphysics as a hypnotherapist, a Rosicrucian, a Reiki healer, an astrologer, and a certified NLP programmer among other talents. He is the founder of the International Center for Reiki Training, the author of *Reiki, The Healing Touch*, *The Reiki Touch Kit*, editor of *Reiki News Magazine* and over forty articles and tapes on Reiki. He teaches Reiki Classes worldwide. You may reach him at: 21421 Hilltop Street, Unit #28 ? Southfield, Michigan 48034. (800) 332-8112. E-Mail: center@reiki.org This address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it.

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Spirituality vs. Prosperity

By Lauri Cloud

Prosperity is a gift already given to you from the universe. It swirls around you like an eddy in a river. It is abundant and available for the asking. So the logical question would be, Why isn't everyone prosperous? The answer is simple: the majority of us view prosperity as illusive, intangible and unattainable. They may not admit it to others, but many people's internal dialogue, emotions, and patterns continually create financial failure. Have you ever heard of the old adage, "If you work really, really hard, you may get lucky and become successful"? Who on Earth put that concept out there?

When I first began to experience myself as a spiritual being, I still believed that spirituality and prosperity were like oil and water; they just didn't mix. You could have one but not both concurrently; therefore, in order to access my spiritual path, I had to settle for poverty, or just getting by. In my previous career, I was a tax accountant, well versed in having prosperity; poverty was not on my agenda.

Nevertheless, as I began my new career as a spiritual healer, I felt like I was going upstream against the financial current. If I charged for my services, I had fewer attendees. If my events were free, lots of people showed up. Of course, one is never given a challenge that one is not equipped to tackle, so I began to delve more deeply into the concept of spirituality vs. prosperity. The following are my discoveries:

Financial abundance, love, joy, bliss, and success in business are readily available to everyone. That definitely does not sound like the belief system within which the world currently operates, but it can be a reality. It is a matter of belief; if you truly believe that something is, it will be. You must be willing to shed the old patterns and beliefs of scarcity to make room for abundance. That's the beauty of making this new prosperity work: all you have to do is be willing to allow a new direction or concept, to embrace something different.

I was sure the "fake it till you make it" theory was a lie, until I went beyond my conscious mind and began to listen to my unconscious thoughts.

Words, thoughts, and actions are incredibly powerful.

Most of us are aware of the concept that what we think, we create, but many aren't taking the time to fully pay attention to their internal dialogue. I know I had a very difficult time in this area. I was frustrated because no matter how many affirmations I said, things kept happening the same old way. I was sure the "fake it till you make it" theory was a lie, until I went beyond my conscious mind and began to listen to my unconscious thoughts. It was here that I discovered my alter ego, the side of me that constantly voiced my humanism; I was incapable, undeserving, and uncommitted. What I found was an array of unwanted feelings about myself that were being expressed in my unconscious thoughts, thus working their way into my words and actions and creating self-sabotage.

It is said that awareness is ninety percent of the process. Once I was aware of what was going on, I eliminated self-sabotage from my experience, freeing the way to prosperity.

Unconditional acceptance of situations, others, and self creates an effortless path.

Now, I don't know about you, but I decided a long time ago that effortless was the only way to go. However, unconditional acceptance of myself was another matter altogether! Awareness of my unconscious dialogue pointed me in a direction of self-discovery. I processed a huge amount of emotional baggage, cleared out many hidden closets, and came to the profound experience that I am

perfect just the way I am. Once I saw myself as perfect, I no longer needed to criticize or judge others, and I now know that every situation is my creation and perfect in its entirety.

The power to see more in others than they see in themselves illuminates my path. This is probably the greatest gift I give to myself. By using this power, I have discovered a place within that holds an extraordinary amount of beauty and love. I share this place with everyone I meet, and I find only beauty and love coming back to me. It is amazing how deeply you can touch another by seeing and sharing his or her truth. It graces the world with a blanket of light and love, and isn't sharing love what we are truly here to do?

All of these discoveries have affected my life in a phenomenal way. I have found no difference between prosperity and spirituality; they are one and the same. It is the shift in myself that has opened the effortless door to financial abundance, success, love, joy, and bliss. Every day I am willing to receive what is already mine to attain, and every day I am given all of these.

Lauri Cloud, a certified spiritual healer, is an author and intuitive life coach. She travels around the world giving lectures, workshops, and seminars. She will be in the Seattle area during June and July on her Northwest speaking tour. For information about Lauri's schedule or to book her for a speaking engagement, call (888) 769-8967.

Finding Spiritual Guidance

By Marie T. Russell

For some people spiritual guidance comes while sitting quietly in meditation. For others (and I am one of these), spiritual guidance comes while taking a quiet walk, or taking a long shower, or washing the dishes quietly, or doing anything quietly... There is no "right" way to attune to your spiritual guidance. The right way for you is whatever works for you. We are all each unique, and we may each have a unique way of connecting with our guidance.

For some, they need to sit in a church to receive spiritual guidance, for others the middle of the forest is the place. And for yet others, it is on their meditation cushion. For others looking at angel cards or tarot cards helps provide their connection. For others, no external tools are necessary... They simply "hear" their guidance. There is no "one" place or not "one" way where spiritual guidance can be found. I used to think that something was wrong with me because I had no interest in sitting for hours in meditation, as others do. I felt guilty for not being interested in doing that. Yet for me, my spiritual guidance came in the moments when I was doing the dishes, or taking a long walk down the beach, or driving alone down a long highway.

Look for spiritual guidance everywhere and at any time... Spiritual guidance is not restricted to one area, or one particular day, or one particular time of the day. While you may be more open to receiving your guidance in the quiet hours of the early morning, or the late night, your spiritual guidance is always present. It is present in books that you "happen" to come across, articles you are attracted to reading, things you hear that when looked at from that perspective apply to your situation.

Perhaps if we expected to receive spiritual guidance at each and every moment of our lives instead of simply in church on Sunday, or when we sit quietly in meditation, we would receive many more messages throughout the day. Sometimes we make the mistake of overlooking spiritual guidance because it does not come in the "package" we are expecting. Yes, your guidance is within in the silence, and it does come from our spiritual teachers, but it is also everywhere we choose to look for it (and everywhere we don't look for it too).

Sometimes, spiritual guidance comes in the form of an overheard conversation which really has nothing to do with us, but yet when applied to our context is the perfect message for us at the moment. Everything we hear can be a spiritual message. You can try the following. Hold a question in your mind and then open a book, or even a newspaper, and let your finger fall on the page and read where your finger has "coincidentally" landed. You'll be amazed at the guidance you can find in this way. Or, before you turn on the radio, ask the question you have in mind and expect to hear the answer when you turn on the radio, and lo and behold, the next song you hear (or the comment from the radio announcer) will be perfectly attuned to your situation. Spiritual messages are everywhere after all, most spiritual teachings tell us that God is everywhere, so why would the voice of God not be everywhere? It is! It is found in the voice of children, of birds, or accidentally overheard conversations, in books that fall into our hands, in "wrong" numbers, in everything you hear. In the TV shows you watch, in the people you meet, in the people whose paths you cross in the street. If you hear something more than once, then it may be a message for you. If you keep hearing of people having candida, or hypoglycemia, (or whatever) perhaps you need to investigate this for yourself, for perhaps the Universe is sending you messages for you to pay attention. Whatever we hear, a song, a conversation, a story, all are to be applied to ourselves. We can ask, how does this apply to me?

If someone tells you a story about their friend who is so angry, or righteous, or whatever, then the

question is "how does this apply to me?" "Am I like this?" "Is there something I need to learn here?"

The Universe is always sending us messages but the messengers are not always wearing wings, or dressed in holy robes, as a matter of fact, they usually are not wearing wings or holy vestments. Sometimes they are wearing rags and are panhandling on the corner sometimes the messengers have an attitude and are a "royal pain" sometimes they are your next door neighbour sometimes they are the person you like best or like least... sometimes it is that thing that REALLY aggravates you...

The spiritual guidance is all around us are we listening?

About The Author.

Marie T. Russell is the publisher of InnerSelf Magazine (first published in 1985 originally as Mighty Natural Magazine) and The Natural Yellow Pages (1987-2002). She produced a weekly South Florida radio broadcast, Inner Power, from 1991-1995 which focused on themes such as self-esteem, personal growth, and well-being. Her articles focus on transformation and reconnecting with our inner source of joy and creativity. Marie can be reached at marie@innerself.com with personal comments and feedback, or to be placed on a mailing list to be advised when her book becomes available.

Spiritual Psychology of Work

By Robert Sardello

The Symptomatology of Work - From The School of Spiritual Psychology

A. The Difference between work and a job

We live in a peculiar time with respect to the question of work: while there seems to be fewer and fewer jobs available, at the same time there is more work to be done in the world than ever before. If you look in the OED, a striking difference between the words - work and job - is immediately apparent. Work is something whole; it refers not only to the act of doing something, it also refers to the product of what is done, such as a work of art, or a work of architecture; the word, work, also carries a moral connotation, such as good works. While one can also do a good job, that simply means that the specialized operation was carried out in such a way that it was brought to successful completion. The word job is defined as a part or a piece of a work, particularly a part that is done as one's specialization or profession. We see immediately that a job can quite easily lose its connection with work; one can easily get lost in the specificity of what one is doing so that it loses imaginative connection with the whole to which it rightly belongs.

B. Work and Life

Very few people today feel that they are involved in a work. Why is this the case? In order to come to an understanding of your relationship to work, it is necessary to look at the influences of the past in your life. The particular aspect of importance is the extent to which you were absorbed into the influences of others and the degree to which you were able to remain relatively independent of your surroundings - not isolated from them, but affected by them while not becoming united with them. In order to experience being involved in a work, it is necessary to be united with life, not someone else's life. Work concerns the acts that one does in the world that are united with one's life. A job concerns the acts that one does that require that one becomes forgetful of their own life and labour that serves someone else's interests - whether this be an individual, a business, or a large corporation. This distinction can quite readily become blurred. It is not likely that having a job at the local Burger King is an expression of doing something in the world that brings the fullness of one's life into the world. However, having a job at the top local law firm does not necessarily fully express one's life in the world either. The distinction becomes blurred when one's talents and abilities are called upon for a task, but these talents and abilities are harnessed to accomplish what someone else wants in the world rather than what is demanded by your life. A job originates from and intensifies a one-sidedness that often requires relinquishing the true creativeness that characterizes spirit and the true depth of individuality that characterizes soul. Receiving a salary is the compensation for forgetting who you are. Work, on the other hand, comes from and intensifies the labour involved in becoming a complete human being.

The difference between work and a job has been drawn in this rather exaggerated manner in order to help us in our task of re-imagining work. I am not saying that this opposition is always present. If the distinction were as clear as that pictured above, the answer would seem to lie in the necessity of working for oneself rather than for others if one really wanted to stay in connection with the unfolding of life. However, working for oneself can just as easily become caught up in the desire for external rewards. In addition, being involved with others in work offers the promise of doing much more in the world than could ever be accomplished alone.

The conditions of work have changed radically since the 15th century. Before that time, in whatever one did in the world, there was some connection with the whole of the cosmos. What to do in the world came from a larger connection that was maintained with the cosmos. The evolution of humankind since the 15th century has to do with gaining independence from the larger cosmos. In the domain of work, this gradual independence concerns work becoming more and more bound to the physical world. In work, maintaining a connection with the larger cosmos meant that a person

could find in his vocation the connection between what he/she was producing and what this meant for the world. One therefore, took an interest in the shaping of his product because he/she saw clearly what a production would become in life. What one made and what one did helped the world retain an imagination of the larger cosmos - because what one made and did was always in the image of the larger cosmos. This way of imagining work is no longer present. And, as can be easily recognized, the future evolution of vocational life will consist in the ever increasing differentiation and specialization of vocation. People will increasingly lose interest in the work that occupies the greater part of their lives.

C. Soul and Work

I am maintaining this distinction between work and a job as a way of first approximation, a way of getting close to what seems to be missing in our labours in the present world. It seems to me that it is not by accident that when something whole and beautiful is made in the world, we speak of that thing as a work of art, a work of architecture, a work of literature, music. For this reason, what we do in the world, I want to hold, deserves the name work, only when it involves the full participation of our being in body, soul, and spirit. When the word, work, is used in present times, it really refers to being worked rather than being creatively engaged with our life with something that is larger than someone else's self-interest. As David Whyte points out in his recent book, *The Heart Aroused - Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America*, a job does not ask enough of us, and yet it exhausts the narrow parts of us we do bring to its door. For Whyte, preserving soul means coming to recognize, honor, and foster the presence of some sacred otherness in our labours; then, preserving soul, for him means secondly, preserving the desire to live a life a man or woman can truly call their own. It is these two essential dimensions that are fast fading in vocational life.

We can begin to see now even more clearly the difference between work and a job. Soul refers to the inner qualities of life. When what we do has inner qualities that are brought to expression in what we do in our labours, when those inner qualities are birthed into the world, as the word labour suggests, then we are engaged in work. When we are only pushed from the outside, made to do things that fulfill a needed function, then we are doing a job.

Reading Job Symptoms

A. Job Addiction

The right relationship between work and life is by no means simple. Since a true imagination of work is more or less absent in the world, for most of us, our jobs are considered as separate from our life; when we go to a job in the morning, we put our life on hold; and when we come home in the evening, life resumes. Whether this characterization is true or not, it is true that this is what we feel. I remember when I was young, in my twenties, trying to decide on a career. At the time, I was seriously considering becoming a geophysical engineer. I distinctly remember a moment of true horror when I imagined what that career would actually be like. I had a terrible premonition of sitting in a large room with row after row of drawing tables and desks, working on some small problem, seeking for a solution to something, the significance of which would be completely unknown to me. I imagined doing this day after day, year after year. The imagination made me nauseous. Even though I had a strong attraction to the study of the earth and of minerals, it was very clear to me in that moment that I could never do this kind of work. I could simply not work in that kind of situation, and something within me made that very clear. What I most feared was that my life would be separated from my work, and I could not stand such a thought. Thus, I began a long search for a vocation, a search that is still in process, a search that has become increasingly more clear only in the past few years. But even now, I cannot say that I know what I am doing, primarily because there is nothing outside of what I am doing that from day to day affirms that the work I do belongs to the world. I make no salary, have no retirement plan, am not on a career ladder, am not covered by any benefits, do not work regular hours, do not have a daily place to go to work, do not get raises, have no title. At the same time, I work virtually all of the time. If I had a job, I would

definitely be called a workaholic. Yet, I am not addicted. What is the difference?

Let us look for a moment at job addiction. Matthew Fox has recently written a fine book on work, *The Reinvention of Work*. He indicates that the difference between work and job addiction revolves around whether the burdens that accompany our work are greater or lesser than the joy that results from it. If the burdens of work do not result in joy, then we are on the way to job addiction if the line between job and life become blurred. Notice, Fox does not say anything about external reward. Taking on the burdens of a job without joy may result in external rewards such as increased salary, advancement, and praise by the employer. These external rewards, particularly salary advancement, may seem to make it possible to buy more of life, but this false view of life takes one even further into the circle of job addiction. One learns to work harder, rewards oneself with material things, which require more work to sustain and increase. While it is possible for one's work to be fully the same as one's life, it is not possible for one's job to be one's life in a healthy way. Fox then specifies three soul qualities that comprise joy in work; delight, creativity, and transformation. Job addiction lacks these three qualities. One cannot make their job their life; one can make a work their life. Job addiction may be looked at from yet another viewpoint, from the viewpoint of the doubles of delight, creativity, and transformation. An addiction of any sort occurs when something external produces sensations that resemble those brought about through development of inner capacities. Since these sensations, however, disappear when the external means of generating them are not present, we become addicted to those external things. Thus, job addiction produces certain sensations that resemble delight, creativity and transformation, but in fact are doubles of these qualities. I suggest that the three doubles of delight, creativity, and transformation are pleasure, power, and accomplishment. Job addiction carries with it a certain sensation of pleasure. It is the pleasure of repetition and sameness, of doing the same thing over and over, which gives one the sense of being in control, while in fact, one is being controlled. It is the pleasure of feeling that one is the master while in fact one has been mastered. Power is related to this sensation of pleasure. While it is tremendously important to take true hold of one's power, in the instance of job addiction the power is completely illusory. Rather than allowing a sacred power to enter into one's work, producing unplanned-for transformations, in work addiction, one needs to feel a sense of power, of control, usually over a very small domain that nonetheless is exaggeratedly imagined as being of tremendous importance. Thus, people who are work addicted set up their own little kingdoms. And then, rather than transformation, instead of finding oneself continually changed by what one does, a person addicted to work lives in the illusion of having accomplished something in the world. What is accomplished, however, cannot be anything really new, but is only the imposition of a form on others.

B. Job Boredom

If one's job becomes fairly completely separated from the sense of belonging to one's life and one also determines that their job will not take over their life, then one becomes condemned to job boredom. Boredom occurs when one cannot let go of what he/she is doing, but at the same time refuses to fully become engaged in what is being done. Only two possibilities present themselves as way out of job boredom; the first is to quit the job; the second is to find a new relationship to what one is doing. The first alternative will probably result in boredom in a new job, once the nature of what is required is mastered. The second alternative requires more than deciding to put oneself into what one is doing. If the situation in which one works does not look favourably upon those who bring their full individuality into their work, then one's relationship to work must change in a more subtle way. The Bhagavad Gita speaks of the necessity of finding the inner life in work: "What is work? What is beyond work? Even some seers see this not aright. I will teach thee the truth of pure work, and this truth shall make thee free. Know therefore what is work, and also what is wrong work. And know also of a work that is silence; mysterious is the path of work. The person who in her work finds silence, and who sees that silence is work, this person in truth sees the Light and in all her works finds peace. One whose undertakings are free from anxious desire and fanciful thought, whose work is made pure in the fire of wisdom: that one is called wise by those who see.

In whatever work she does such a person in truth has peace: she expects nothing, relies on nothing, and ever has fullness of joy..."

Here we touch upon a very deep mystery of work. What we think we are doing in a job is not the true work. Further, we must also begin to see that if one feels that the drudgery of a job has been avoided and one has had the fortune to be engaged in a work rather than having a job, there are still much that we have to understand concerning work. One must not be bound to work any more than one is bound to a job. For work to work in the world, it is necessary to be able to let work work; this means the work of work is letting go of our work. Paradoxically, letting go as essential to work doing its mysterious work (more about which we will speak later), is more difficult to do when one's life is their work. The Bhagavad Gita here speaks of the essential quality necessary in order to let work do its work - it is the quality of silence; this means inner silence of soul; this means letting go of all desire of a personal nature in what one is doing; this means work is actually a spiritual path; the path of work. It is easier to see that indeed work is a spiritual path when our life and our work cohere. On the other hand, when one has a job, it is somewhat easier to get out of the way and let what one is doing work because the personality is not so involved. We must avoid the nostalgia of trying to reinstate the imagination of work as participation in the Great Work of creation. If one has that particular karma, then one must in the present world work with all the difficulties that brings - the possibility of pride, egotism, specialness, inflated significance, and so on. If one instead has a job, then that too brings with it particular things that need to be worked with - the tendency to become automatic in what one does, the tendency to see a job as meaningless except as a source of money and other rewards, the tendency to seek other things in a job that have nothing to do with the job - power, prestige, acknowledgement, advancement.

The Mythic Background of Work and Jobs

The contrast we have been developing between work and job has come to the point, where I hope you can see that the point of making this contrast was not in fact to put forth the view that work is superior to a job. In the present time there is great danger that an imagination of work could be lost, and that would be disastrous. For that reason, I have put a particular emphasis on work, primarily by showing that mere jobs increasingly bring symptoms to the human being. But, a fuller understanding of the relation between work and job needs a picture, an imagination, that shows we are here dealing with an archetypal reality, a reality consisting of a polarity of work and job. If either side of the polarity is forgotten, then tragic consequences follow for the future of humanity.

A. Cain and Abel

An archetypal picture of the relation between work and job can be found in many myths. We could, for example, work with the Prometheus myth. With this myth, however, only one side of the polarity is really clear - an imagination not of work, but of the job of transforming the earth through technology, a job that comes about because of the gift of fire, that is, technology, (as well as the arts and the sciences) given to humankind by Prometheus which makes possible independence from the divine realm. The other polarity, that of work, is given as well in this myth, but it is not as clearly pictured as the myth I am going to explore with you. In the Prometheus myth, the other side of the polarity, is pictured through the figure of Pandora. Pandora, you recall, was a gift given to Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus. In accepting this gift, all the ills and woes of humankind were bestowed upon humankind from out of Pandora's box. The one gift retained in the box is hope. Prometheus brings to humans the capacity to plan in advance, to have foresight, to progress, which makes technology of all sorts possible. But, at the same time, along with the capacity to make progress in transforming the world, the related aspect is that the world acts on one and one thinks about it afterward- the Epimetheus aspect. Along with progress, there is always the very deep feeling that everything is getting worse. This feeling is actually the feminine soul gifts, working as yet more or less in a background way, continually reminding humans that something needs to be taken into account besides progress, namely soul transformation must accompany world

transformation.

The polarity of work and job, however, is much more clearly presented in the legend of Cain and Abel. We are told this story in the Book of Enoch, an Apocryphal (that is, officially doubted) book of the Old Testament. This myth was further elaborated by the Rosicrucians. Here is the myth: There was a time when one of the Elohim created a human being called Eve. That high spiritual being united with Eve and she gave birth to Cain. After this, another Elohim created Adam. Adam united himself with Eve and from this union came Abel. Adam and Eve united again, and from this union came Seth. The sacrifices Abel made to the divine world were pleasing to the gods because his birth came about in the way ordained by the divine worlds. But the sacrifices of Cain were not acceptable by the gods because his birth was not to have happened in that way - that is, the union of a spiritual being with a human. Cain, out of anger that his sacrifices were not accepted, while those of his brother were, killed Abel.

Among the descendants of Cain are all those who are creators of science; for example, Methusala is the inventor of script; Tubal-Cain taught the use of metal ores and iron; and most important, Hiram, who was the inheritor of all that had been learned by others concerning technology. Hiram was the most significant architect that ever lived. Cain himself was said to have 'tilled the ground', meaning that he produced something from the physical world out of his own efforts. Abel, on the other hand, 'tended sheep', that is, he worked with the natural order of the world - it does not say, for example, that he cultivated sheep. Thus, the difference between Cain and his descendants and Abel and his descendants is that the line of Cain is concerned with the transformation of the world through science and technology using their own efforts, while the line of Abel is concerned with maintaining connection with the great work of the universe.

From the line of Abel-Seth came Solomon, who approached everything with clear, calm, objective wisdom. However, he was unable to produce anything of a technical nature. Solomon wished to build a temple and called upon Hiram, the descendant of Cain to be his master builder. At that time, Balkis, the Queen of Sheba, was visiting Jerusalem because she had heard of the wisdom of Solomon. When Solomon made love to her, she consented to be his bride. She heard about the building of the temple and wanted to become acquainted with the builder. When she met Hiram she was captivated by his glance. Solomon thus became intensely jealous of Hiram, but was dependent upon him to build the temple.

It came about that the temple was nearly completed. Only one thing was lacking, which was to be the crowning masterpiece: the Molten Sea, which was to represent the ocean and was to be cast in bronze. Three very inept apprentices were to be assigned to casting the Molten Sea. Solomon knew they were inept but did not say anything; because of his jealousy he wished to destroy Hiram. The apprentices were angry because Hiram refused to promote them from apprentices to masters. The casting was thus made of the wrong ingredients, and as it was being poured it was disintegrating. Hiram tried to quench the flames by throwing water on the casting, but this made things worse. Just as he was about to despair, Cain, his ancestor, appeared and told Hiram to jump into the fire, that he would be invulnerable to the flames. Hiram did as he was told, and as he entered the flames, he was taken to the center of the earth. Hiram was initiated into the mystery of fire. There he was given a hammer and a Golden Triangle. Then he returned and was able to complete the casting of the Molten Sea.

The Queen of Sheba consented to be Hiram's bride. However, before the marriage took place, Hiram was murdered by the three apprentices. But, before he died, Hiram managed to throw the Golden Triangle into a deep well. Before he died, Hiram uttered these words: "Cain had promised me that I shall have a son who will be the father of many descendants who will people the earth and bring my work - the building of the Temple - to completion."

B. Understanding the Myth in terms of Work and Job

It is still the case that those who are concerned with the realm of wisdom are primarily involved with the preservation of soul in the world. Such individuals do not for the most part, come up with new inventions, new devices, new technologies. The whole realm of soul work, of inner work, has a large dimension of holding onto a deep understanding of individual soul and world soul.

Increasingly, there is little place in the world for such people. Look in the want ads in the Sunday paper. You will never, never, find there an ad for some business, or even academic institution that says something like: "Needed: a person with a liberal arts education, conversant in philosophy, literature, depth psychology; acquaintance with ancient esoteric traditions a must; experience in one's own inner development required; meditation skills a help." The want ads are job ads, not work ads. Thus, in the present world, there is a danger that the Solomon soul will be forgotten as important for the future of the world. And yet, it is quite assuredly so that this line will continue, even if done only privately, by individuals, who do this work along side of, in addition to whatever job they do in the daily world.

The more interesting part of the myth concerns the line of Cain. When Hiram is initiated into the mysteries of fire, this is not physical fire, but rather the realm of wishes, desires, and instincts. Thus, the line of Hiram is capable of showing passion, enthusiasm, interest in what can be developed in the world out of purely human capacities. They are interested in building the temple of the world. But, there is an adversarial relationship between soul work and job work.

The Queen of Sheba represents the soul of humanity. She must choose between a kind of wisdom that does not involve itself in the conquest of the world, and a kind of technical capacity that is capable of transforming the world through human effort. She chooses the latter, and we shall have to try and understand what that means.

The myth also indicates that there is in fact a coming together of these two seemingly opposed tendencies. The Molten Sea is created when the appropriate amounts of water and molten metal are brought together. The apprentices do this wrongly. When Hiram descends to the centre of the earth and is initiated into the mysteries of fire, he learns what to do to bring the waters of wisdom together with the fires of worldly transformation. This in turn leads to the Golden Triangle. The Golden Triangle symbolizes the next stage of evolution of the human being, and is something that will not come about for a very long time. It is the transformation of the human being from a being of body, soul and spirit, to a fully spiritualized body and soul and a fully conscious spirit. We will not here be concerned with the Golden Triangle, but with the question of what can bring about a union of work and job. A union of water and molten metal must be brought about, and it produces something durable and lasting, that is, 'bronze'.

Re-connecting Work and Job

A. What does your Job have to say?

Because work and job are fast becoming separated, there is great danger that building the temple of the world can now go off in a completely wrong direction - and, indeed, it has been going in an unhealthy direction for a long time. In the context of the myth of Cain and Abel, the stream of Cain gives an imagination of the transformation of the earth into a work of art. The earth at this time, rather than being transformed is being turned into a desert of ecological disaster coupled with technological advances that serve only materialistic desires. As a first small step, something each of us can do, to bring closer together work and job, we can bring our job into the imagination, and there let it have a voice. I suggest the following exercise. As all exercises, the aim is to do this small task daily, which gradually builds up the forces of the soul:

Exercise: Picture in your imagination a scene that is typical of your daily job. You may, for example, picture writing at a computer, or teaching a class, or preparing a legal document -

whatever your job consists of in its most daily way. Then, when you have this inner picture and have stabilized the image so that it does not disappear or change into something else, dissolve this picture into a ball of light. Then let this light re-form into a figure - a human figure, a man or a woman. Then ask this person - What is your work in the world? Do not be concerned if you feel like you are making up an answer out of your own head. Just let it happen. What does this figure say to you? (This exercise is based upon what Jung developed as the process of active imagination.)

On the Transformation of the World into a Work of Art

A. The Soul in our Job

We now want to ask how work and job can come into a new unity. The little exercise merely serves as a small beginning to bring work back into relation with our job. That is still a far way from what might be a unity of work and job. I want to describe something of the tremendous value of what we speak of as a job when understood spiritually. In order to get at this value, we must point out a very large difficulty with inner soul or spiritual work. To embark on inner work of any kind requires a kind of egotism. Some begin inner work because they feel it will be of benefit to them - reduce stress, get to know oneself, take the place of outer religion, etc. Even those who begin inner work from what seems to be altruistic motives - such as being of help to the world, are usually veiling an egotism. Egotism is more or less unavoidable because one turns toward oneself. On the other side, with respect to a job, there is always a strong aspect to a job that is not for oneself but for others. For example, if a person has a job of building houses, he builds them not for himself, but for someone else. The difficulty with a job, however, is that we are now getting to the point in jobs where while someone seems to be doing something for someone else in a job, he/she is really doing it for himself. That is the point at which the job symptoms we spoke of earlier begin to enter strongly. A lawyer, for example, seems to be working for his clients. Part of his work may be selfless in this way, but now even a larger part is his working to earn a living. Even if he is not primarily interested in his own living, he most likely works for a firm which has as its primary aim the making of profits. Thus we see that the way for soul to come to enter into the wider world from out of the individual is in fact being blocked.

The aim of a job, the way in which jobs could bring about the transformation of the world into a work of art involves becoming of service in the world. How does service in this sense bring about such a transformation? We need to look at this questions carefully, and not in terms of vague notions. Look, for example at what happens when stones are made into a house. The stones are taken from a quarry; then they are shaped by a machine, and then they are laid in place by a builder according to a plan. What is happening in this process is that the human spirit is being joined with the raw material. When a new machine is made, in a similar way, the human spirit is joined with the machine; it is there in the machine. It is there in an objective manner. Now the house will eventually wear away, and so will the machine. However, and this may be somewhat difficult to imagine, but in a moment I think it will become even more clear, the atoms which compose the machine have been changed from the atoms of the metal or other material from which the machine is made because they have been united with the human spirit. While the machine may be thrown away and eventually disintegrates, the atoms do not. And these atoms are forever changed because of having been united with the human spirit. (This was known, for example, by the Rosicrucians - the early 15th-16th century Rosicrucians. Present day Rosicruciansism has mostly lost this knowledge). What is blocked in the way jobs are presently imagined - as a way of making a living, as a way of making profits, as a way to advance, get a promotion, as a way to save for retirement - concerns understanding that the human spirit that enters into the materials with which we work daily - pens, pencils, computers, paper, iron, steel, wood, telephones, televisions, etc. The human spirit now does not fully enter into the materials of our jobs and the world is not being spiritually changed; rather, it becomes more and more materialistic. Soul can only enter into the world in a way that actually changes the very structure of matter through relinquishing egotism. Soul is really very objective and

does not have to do with our personality or our personal desires.

On the other side, without the objectivity that is involved with having a job, inner work of a soul or of a spiritual kind cannot produce anything in the world because it has unknowingly gotten trapped in a veiled kind of egotism. In passing we might note that the monastic tradition is one place we can look where there occurred a perfect balance between inner work and job. For the monastic, prayer or contemplation was absolutely of equal value to working in the garden or in the kitchen and visa versa.

When I mentioned earlier that inner work involves a necessary egotism, I do not thereby mean that it is not to be undertaken. It is absolutely necessary. But, inner soul or spiritual work can never be undertaken for one's own benefit. And, in our time, inner work must be constantly balanced by some work in the world. Because there is a great decline of soul in the world, much inner work is needed in the present world. Inner soul and spirit work widens and deepens the soul, not for our sake but as preparation for participating in the affairs of the world. Only through inner work is it possible to bring something into the world that is original. But that work must find its way into the world. A very small first step involves trying to bring work into conjunction with soul. This conjunction has very little to do with the content of one's vocation. Many people today are turning away from their professions - lawyers, engineers, teachers, architects, etc. to enter work which they consider to be more soulful - counselling, therapy, art, massage, wholistic healing, herbal medicine, homeopathy, etc. Little do they know that in fact they are merely changing one job for another. Why? Because in all these seemingly soulful professions are rapidly being turned into jobs - by managed care systems, by regulations, by licensing and accrediting, by the need to make a living at what one does.

B. Thinking, Atoms and Electricity

As the imagination of work diminishes and the unemployed soul left wandering in private fantasy while jobs become more and more specialized functions, a concomitant event is also occurring in vocational life - it is rapidly becoming electrified. Through computers, faxes, copiers, cellular phones, communications satellites, E-mail, pagers, we have entered the electronic hi-way. We must try to enter into this development imaginally to see what is going on there with respect to the human soul and spirit in relation to work. What does it mean, for example, that a person can have a thought in New York and that this can be transmitted virtually instantaneously to London, or any part of the world? In terms of the way we have imagined human thought entering into the matter of the world, what is most interesting about this information revolution is that it requires no work. It is just a part of one's job. It is necessary to go beyond the surface and see what is involved in this revolution is more than technological advancement. That one can change a thought into a bit of electronic impulse is possible only because the nature of thought is essentially the same thing as electricity! If the two, electronic impulse and thought were not similar, it would not be possible to use one in place of the other. Even more, human thought, in the form of electricity is thus being imprinted upon the atomic world very directly. The entire earth is being turned into a kind of self-functioning electrical apparatus. This electronic apparatus begins even to function on its own, without the need of human thought. For example, when the stock market reaches a certain point of decline, investors do not have to contact their brokers to buy or sell; this happens automatically through electronic sensors which put into operation buying or selling. Further, almost all that goes on through these electronic means is oriented toward materialistic aims. Materialism thus acquires its own life. A vast web of electronic impulses directly and immediately connected with the atomic structure of the world is transforming the world, not into a work of art, but into the realm of greed.

I put forth this imagination, not as a way of saying that one must stray away from electrical devices; this is impossible, and since we are now surrounded by this web, we are all in any case affected by it. What is important in this imagination is the act of becoming aware that this is going on. The

question becomes one of finding the way to meet this circumstance. But first, it is necessary to fully experience the effects of what is going on in this realm of electricity. Keeping this imagination of the web of electronic information that completely encircles us, try to imagine now how this effects soul work. We must, I think, conclude that soul work, the very moment that it enters the world, is subjected to the influence of this invisible electronic web. The result is that seekers keep seeking without experiencing an effect of their inner work. That is to say, inner work may be gratifying to individual life but we are in fact not seeing this have much effect in the world.

There is an answer to the dilemma just presented. It is an answer that involves a radical change in attitude both toward inner work and outer job. The answer hinges on the inescapable fact that the forces of materialism rely completely on egotism. The change in attitude is this: the primary value of inner work is that it makes possible a direct facing of one's own egotism. Look and see: what is the aim in meditative work, in dream work, in analysis, in soul work, in shamanism, in channelling - it is all filled with egotism, with saving oneself, with saving the world. Then, look and see what is involved in a job - surviving, making a living, being able to buy things, advancement, titles, saving money for retirement; it too is all filled with egotism.

If we can face the inevitable fact that inner work is just as egotistical as outer job, it begins to be possible to gradually change our attitude toward both. The task involves becoming completely involved in both without expecting anything from them for ourselves. This is the true meaning of service. But, who will enter into this kind of service, once it becomes clear that it requires relinquishing wanting anything at all for ourselves? What is the sustaining force for such service?

C. The Holiness of Work and Job.

In order to get at what sustains real service, it is first necessary to bring to an end the existent strife between work and job. Since the shadow side of work and job are their mutual involvement in egotism, we see that the strife is no more than one form of egotism opposing another form. Work tries to hold fastly to an imagined belongingness to the work of the cosmos. Job tries to hold fast to changing the world through one's own efforts. If we ask - why is there this effort to hold fast, we come to something interesting. Work seeks to hold onto an imagination of the world and of oneself as belonging to the untainted world. Job seeks to hold onto an imagination entering fully into the guilt of having emancipated oneself from the larger order of the cosmos and to create a cosmos independent of any imagination of a divine order. However, as long as the one is in opposition to the other, each is a reaction to the other. And, as reacting to each other, they both become trapped in egotism, which is nothing other than the inability to imagine things in but one way.

In addition to work and job, there must be a third principle, a uniting principle. The uniting principle is life. I do not want to speak the word 'life' abstractly, so we must try to see exactly what this uniting principle concerns in the realm of work and job. The myth of Cain and Abel contains an important image that can help us. In the building of Solomon's Temple, there was to be a main pillar made from the trunk of a mighty tree. This tree had been earlier planted by Adam's son, Seth, and was actually a shoot from the Tree of Life. But, this pillar would not fit in any way into the temple, so it was laid across a brook as a bridge. When the Queen of Sheba came to the temple, she crossed over this bridge, and immediately saw the worth of this wood. It served as the bridge between the ordinary everyday world and the new world that was being built, the world as a work of art, the world as Temple. This bridge also symbolizes the connection possible between work and job, between remembering the holiness of the earth as belonging to the whole of the cosmos and the possible holiness of the new earth which is a transformation of nature into a work of art. It is of significance that it is the Queen of Sheba who perceives the importance of this tree. Solomon did not see it. When the tree did not fit into the temple, he cast it aside; Hiram did not see it. When the tree did not fit into the temple, he built something else to take its place. And thus, it lay there silently bridging the two worlds. The Queen of Sheba in this myth represents the soul, the soul, not

as individual soul, but the soul of the world. She sees that what was discarded by both Solomon and Hiram is Life. Those who side with the realm of work try to hold onto an imagination of the spiritual sense of the cosmos. Those who side with the realm of job hold onto an imagination of world transformation. Both are forgetful of the ground they stand on. The thought that tries to hold onto the past, an imagination of the wholeness of the cosmos, is dead thought. The thought that tries to hold onto transforming the world through technical progress is also dead thought. Only when they both come to the point of serving life itself will both be changed. What would such a new imagination look like in practice?

D. Working at a Job

We are all given life as a gift. We did not create our own life, and thus become forgetful of what we have been given; we merely use it. Some use their life in order to try and find a connection to the eternal world. Others use their life in order to make something in the world, even if this is no more than money. And still others, try to find some semblance of balance between these two. But, what serves life itself does not come either from soul and spirit work alone nor from labour in the world alone. Only what occurs as relationships between people, free and open without the intent of getting something from someone or using them for some purpose serves life. True relationship between individuals serves as a bridge. By this bridge spirit and soul enter the worldly and the worldly enters soul and spirit.

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The Stage of Contemplation

From Intellect to Intuition

By Alice A. Bailey

We are entering a realm of realization now which is much handicapped by two things: the use of words, which only serve to limit and distort, and the writings of the mystics themselves which - while they are full of wonder and of truth - are colored by the symbolism of their race and age, and by the [133] quality of feeling and emotion. The mystics, as a general rule, drift to and fro between moments of high illumination or of vision, and "the misty flats" of intense feeling and longing. They are either undergoing the joy and ecstasy of realization that lasts but a fleeting moment, or the agony of desire for the continuation of the experience. There seems (in the majority of cases) no sense of security or certainty of repetition, and only a longing for the attainment of such a state of holiness that the condition could be continuously present. In the ancient technique and the orderly meditation with which the East has lately dowered us, it seems possible that through knowledge of the way and through understanding of the process, the mystical experience may itself be transcended, and knowledge of divine things, and identification with the indwelling Deity may be brought about at will. The race now has the necessary mental equipment and can add to the way of the mystic that of the conscious intellect.

But between the stage of prolonged concentration, which we call meditation, and that of contemplation, which is of an entirely different category, there comes a transition period, which the Oriental student calls "meditation without seed," or, "without an object." It is not contemplation. It is not a process of thought. That is past, while the later stage is not yet achieved. It is a period of mind steadiness, and of waiting. Fr. Nouet describes this perhaps as well as anyone in the following words:

"When the man of prayer has made considerable progress in meditation, he passes insensibly to affective prayer, which, being between meditation and contemplation, as the dawn is between the night and the day, possesses something both of the one and of the other. In its beginnings it contains more of meditation, because it still makes use of reasoning; ...because having acquired much light by the prolonged use of considerations and reasonings, it enters at once into its subject, and sees all its developments without much difficulty... Hence it follows as it perfects itself it discards reasoning..." - Nouet, Fr., *Conduite de l'Homme d'Oraison*, Book IV, ch. 1.

The versatility of the rapidly moving and sensitively responsive mental substance can be brought, we have seen, into a stabilized condition, through prolonged meditation. This brings about a state of mind which renders the thinker unresponsive to vibrations and contacts coming from the outer phenomenal world and from the world of the emotions, and so renders passive the sensory apparatus, the brain and that vast interlocking network which we call the nervous system. The world in which man usually functions is shut off, yet he preserves at the same time an intense mental attention and a one-pointed orientation to the new world in which that which we call the soul lives and moves. The true student of meditation learns to be wide awake mentally, and potently aware of phenomena, vibration and states of being. He is positive, active and self-reliant, and the brain and the focused mind are closely coordinated. He is no impractical dreamer, yet the world of practical and physical affairs is temporarily negated.

If the student is not naturally of the positive mental type, some serious, persistent, intellectual training (designed to create mental alertness and polarization) should be taken up along with the practice of meditation, otherwise the process will degenerate into an emotional reverie, or a negative blankness. Both conditions carry with them their own dangers, and, if prolonged, will tend to make a man an impractical person, impotent and inefficient, in daily affairs. His life will become less and

less useful to himself or to others. He will find himself dwelling more and more in uncontrolled irrational fancies, and emotional fluctuations. In such a soil the seeds of egoism easily sprout, and psychism flourishes.

The mind, therefore, positive, alert and well-controlled, is carried forward on the wings of thought and then held steady at the highest attainable point. A condition is then brought about in the mind which is analogous to one which has already taken place in the brain. It is held in a waiting attitude, whilst the consciousness of the thinker shifts into a new state of awareness and he becomes identified with the true inner and spiritual man. What is technically called the "perceiving consciousness" waits.

Three Stages in Spiritual Growth

By Ezra Merrill

-)A Working Knowledge of Duality.

The discovery and exploration of duality seem to be basic to all conscious growth. As one's experience of the phenomenal world unfolds, one learns that it encompasses pairs of opposites which are without end—warm and cold, soft and hard, sweet and bitter, and many more, most of which are associated with the basic reactions of pleasure and pain. One's early life, even before the development of conscious intelligence, is largely dominated by the attempt to discover and enjoy those experiences which are pleasurable and to avoid those which are painful. Some psychologists describe this phase of development as controlled by the pleasure principle.

In seeking pleasure and avoiding pain one discovers casual relationships. The hot stove is pain to touch; one must avoid it on penalty of a burn. Somewhat more complicated, the candy which one likes can be had if one pleases the adult. These are laws which govern the enjoyment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. One must discover them and learn to observe them. Gerald Heard has remarked that one must first know the God of Law before he can know the God of Love. Before the Soul can awaken and initiate the personality into the life of the Spirit, the personality must in the first instance learn discipline, discipline at the physical level to begin with and later discipline at the level of the emotions.

Another writer, Dr. M. Esther Harding, quotes an Eastern source to the effect that first one learns the law of cause and effect and then one learns the law of opposites. After the struggle for discipline, the long training in learning to achieve the good and avoid the evil, one's understanding of the opposites is considerably broadened and, finally, modified. One discovers two things—first, that every supposed good or evil has its polar opposite which is at least latent in one's own experience, and, second, that each opposite is in fact a mixture of good and evil. This insight is a major contribution (though not an original discovery) of modern depth psychology to the development of individual self-knowledge and self-acceptance. One achieves through hard struggle a reasonable facsimile of the virtuous character which has been his ideal, only to discover that the opposing qualities are still present, though probably disguised, in his nature, and that these repressed qualities are not entirely bad, nor, on the other hand, are the desired qualities entirely good. And so one is led to seek a middle way in which the opposites are held in a creative equilibrium. One tries to be true to his entire nature, with its negatives and its positives.

This accomplishment appears in prospect discouragingly difficult. How can one be the same time aggressive and submissive, creative and destructive, gentle and rough? For the person still deeply involved in life of the personality there is here indeed a baffling paradox. And, in fact, this Way is fully feasible only for the person whose point of reference is in a realm beyond the perspective of the personality and its three worlds. When the mind is dominated by what we call for convenience the Soul impulse, which is aspiration for fulfilment in a non-material unity outside, oneself the creative synthesis becomes possible in all departments of one's life.

It is in working out his reorientation that one discovers a new duality, the opposites of phenomenon and noumenon, form and essence. It is the working knowledge of this duality to which the text refers, and one is led to it by the evolutionary movement of the Soul using the mind as its instrument. A gradual disenchantment occurs in the personality as the discriminating mind discovers that the pleasure and pain experiences are always mixed and that, therefore, the goals of the personality are in fact illusory. With this realization the attachments of the personality weaken and at last the higher mind is freed, first to entertain the possibility of a realm of intangible reality subsisting the phenomenal world, and, finally, to explore this realm. The form aspect of

experience, formerly the one certainty, loses reality, maya is weakened, and one enters into the creative freedom of the Spirit.

-)The Soul-Personality Relationship.

Meditation involves chiefly the mind, service the physical body, aspiration the emotions. Each of these three personality vehicles must be correctly oriented before the soul-personality relationship can be established.

Of these three activities, the key one for the disciple is meditation, for the mind is the principle instrument of the soul as It draws the personality toward the long, upward Path of Return. Meditation is mental work, the development of thought which is analytical and discriminative at the lower levels and synthesizing and unitive at the higher levels. It is through the thought process finally that the emotions are influenced, and then in turn the effect of the conditioned emotions at the physical-etheric level as well as at the level of the lower, concrete mind, strongly reinforces the work of the soul-intellect upon the whole personality.

Service involves the personality in an activity centred in a goal beyond the desire-aversion system of the personality. And because the whole personality is involved, the other vehicles, the emotions and mind, are influenced by this physical activity, as William James pointed out many years ago. In a considerable measure, one thinks and feels the way he acts. Thus at this lowest level of the personality it is possible, and necessary, to initiate action towards alignment with the Soul. To be sure, so long as the personality is unregenerated, the service will be imperfect, for it will be governed by imperfect, mixed motives. However, imperfection of the result does not dishonour the effort, nor, certainly, excuse one from responsibility for trying. On the contrary, just as the beginner at the piano must work at prolonged practice and try endlessly to correct his mistakes, so similarly must the disciple try continuously to purify his motives and improve his performances as a server.

In aspiration one succeeds in raising to a level above the personality the focus of his feelings. The emotional drive is transmuted from preoccupation with the lower desires of the personality to the creative, imaginative and self-giving promptings of the Spirit. It would seem, in fact, that the preliminary, tentative stirrings of the Soul are responsible in the first instance for developing aspiration. For it is the influence of aspiration at the start, whether or not it is recognized as such, that the personality is induced to make the effort of meditation and service. Later, however, once the process has begun, the personality can contribute, joining in the work of the Soul toward the further growth and refinement of aspiration.

-)The Emergence of the Subjective Aspect is Our Goal.

This means that the goal of one's effort is the emergence of the Soul from its "capacity" in the personality. For a long time the extent of the Soul's direct influence over the personality is to have fertilized it, so to speak, with a potential for growth. In so doing the Soul has yielded its form life to the personality, and It remains consequently completely imprisoned in the personality during the prolonged process of personality development. Quiescent in its form aspect and heedless, as it were, of the activities of its captor host, the Soul remains as though deeply preoccupied during the involutionary phase. The personality, on the other hand, as if it had been granted complete autonomy, pursues its own development. This development is in the direction of refining and specializing its aptitudes and broadening and enriching its experience, until finally it has approximated the fulfilment of its potential as a personality.

It is at this point that there occurs a crisis of development and following it an initiation into a new realm of existence where, for the first time, the Soul is overtly active in relation to the personality.

For growth to stop with the flowering of the personality would be contrary to the principle which the Soul has implanted in the personality. It is the destiny of the personality, after it has reached its full development in the evolutionary phase, to yield back its autonomy to the Soul and finally to surrender itself to the Soul as Its instrument. This transformation, this death and rebirth, does not ordinarily happen abruptly, but rather it extends over a considerable period of time. It begins with parallel endeavour on the part of the Soul and the personality. On the one hand the Soul, unknown to the personality, is seeking to detach Itself from the personality as a preliminary to its struggle for control. The personality, where consciousness is still fully centred, is working at the same time toward that discipline and integration of its three vehicles which will ready them for later alignment with the Soul. Gradually the personality becomes increasingly aware of the Soul as it aspires increasingly toward union with It. Consciousness begins consequently to evolve upwards, so that awareness shifts back and forth Soul's attraction increases and the personality is able to overcome its own inner resistances and yield itself to the Soul. The Soul, the subjective aspect, has emerged victorious. One's consciousness, captured by the victor, functions at the level of the Soul in discerning meaning within form and in apprehending the vision of the free Spirit.

States of Consciousness

By Jorge Waxemberg

Everyone wants to unfold, but we cannot always do it because we do not clearly know what this process entails.

The first thing for us to do is to recognize our state of consciousness. This recognition is the fundamental basis for our point of departure and is the direction for our unfolding.

We all have a state of consciousness. But we cannot really group people according to their states of consciousness, because that would lead to arbitrary classifications. And, besides, who can say what another person's state of consciousness is? It isn't always the same: at one point in life we express ourselves as though we have one state of consciousness and at another moment we act according to a different state of consciousness. Our inner world is also apparently contradictory, for it manifests various sometimes opposite tendencies simultaneously, which could indicate that there are different states of consciousness operating in us at the same time.

We could say that each of us is a soul, and the soul is a composite. Mind and heart, reason and passion, instinctual voices and spiritual yearnings are forces in us which struggle to predominate and don't always let us have a clear vision of who we are. Yet it is possible to outline certain stages of spiritual unfolding in the soul. Here we call these stages "states of consciousness." In spiritual life, each stage is really a state of consciousness.

Positive state of consciousness is what we call the stage in which we develop our personality, improve our will, develop rational thought and learn to categorize within the system of pairs of opposites. Most of us spend a long time in the state of positive consciousness.

Let us look for a moment at the state of consciousness of human beings long ago, when humanity first began to develop self-awareness: Early in our development, life was only an expression of the instinct for self-preservation. To live was to survive. The instinct of self-preservation was (and continues to be) the manifestation in human beings of the will of nature. At that stage, the human will is the will of nature. Love, at that stage, means obeying that law. Self-awareness is yet to be developed. Our state of consciousness, at that stage, is "I am-as-species."

But in order to survive, we needed to learn to defend ourselves. Such defense tenuously points to "something" we defend myself plus my first or foremost extension: weapons, tools, other people I identify with. This instinct of self-preservation has been necessary it bonded the first human groups. In time, the group became the family, peoples, races, nations.

We have evolved a lot in the course of the centuries of human development. We have expanded our notion of the group. But the growth of the group of the "greater I" doesn't necessarily mean that there has been a fundamental change in our states of consciousness. We still, as individuals, tend to identify with a group to the extent that that group is useful and that it protects us. This means that the number of people forming our groups expands or contracts according to circumstances. It is rare to find a person who loves everyone; we tend to love all the ones who are in our group. When the group changes, for any number of reasons, our love can also change, even to the point of becoming hate.

At one time we identify with the family, the people, the race or the country around us, at another time our feelings can completely change. Our identification isn't real; it is the identification of personal interest. Sometimes it seems complete, as happens in war or persecution which threatens the survival of our nation or race. But once danger is past, people so often again reduce their

identification to the small group which, within their race or country, coincides with their personal interest. This means that our identification is not only partial but also superficial and temporary.

How do we develop this identification and this personality? Our personality is formed as a by-product of our self-defense. Since we don't yet have a deep self-awareness, we identify with what we defend: our bodies, possession, progeny, group. We tend to think: "I am all that." We don't yet have a real personality of our own.

If we remain in this early state of consciousness, the thing we identify with most tends to be our bodies. We then do everything we can to satisfy what the body demands. Satisfaction of physical needs leads rapidly to identification with the body. Will is at the service of a physical self. To love means loving a self which is mainly physical. The satisfaction of desires and of that self is the basic need, which is the basis on which the laws that rule life are structured.

This is the way we have developed the consciousness of being a separate, differentiated being. Human consciousness incarnates: I am-in-a-body. We create divisions: we divide races according to physical characteristics. Physical differences likewise accentuate our personalities. The meaning of personal property is defined. The personality acquires precise limits. Reason divides and separates in order to know and classify.

But each of us is left alone when we delimit ourselves within a personality. Before we were like the group; now we are facing the group. Instinctual love brings us together but doesn't unite us. We then seek encounter, communication. The need to share gives rise to reciprocal affection, which endures beyond physical need. We recognize others: "neighbors," someone like us.

An attitude of self-defense entrenches us deeply in a personality. We don't want to die, but since death is unavoidable, we entrench ourselves in life through children: they prolong "my" life. We entrench ourselves in posterity as a way of projecting ourselves beyond death, beyond time. Human beings want to escape from the prison of time. But the yearning to be free of time is a way of wanting to be free of the personality. The personality is not only limitation in a self, it is limitation in a particular time: during the lifetime of the self's physical body.

The desire to be free marks the beginning of the expansion of the state of consciousness. To discover another human being means perfecting love. When we discover our neighbor, charity is born. Charity is the capacity to sacrifice oneself for others. We suffer for them, work for them. Our consciousness expands.

But still, we do not know what real love is. We protect our neighbor, but we still attack and destroy our enemy. By fixing ourselves in a personality, we have fixed our vision of life in a system of pairs of opposites: myself and others; people like me and those who are different. Charity is the beginning movement of expansive love, but we are not yet able to see everyone as someone to love. Our consciousness has expanded, but it still sees existence through a dualistic vision, in which good and evil exist in a world of "good people" and "bad people." We only conceive of compassion toward good people. At this stage, our conception of God is that of a military god who protects the good himself included and destroys the bad.

The positive state of consciousness has allowed human beings to become masters of the world, nature, and space. But it has also perfected our capacity to destroy. It gave us material wings but did not teach us to fly inwardly. We can travel the cosmos with our spaceships, but we still cannot transcend our anguish or inner problems, or find the way out of the vicious circle of the problems created by our progress.

Yet love is like a flower which opens and expands until revealing all its beauty and releasing its fragrance. Love is the door which leads the soul to transcend the positive state of consciousness.

When love stops asking for something, mysticism begins.

To stop asking means to stop expecting, to stop pursuing personal objectives. The personal self interprets the perfecting of love as a renouncement, because the personal self is an expression of separateness. Our positive attitude prevents us from understanding that our consciousness won't expand unless we, individually, begin renouncing from now on.

The expansion of Renouncement is of a different nature from the positive expansion we were used to. The expansion that comes from Renouncement is a negative expansion. The word negative, of course, is incapable of explaining the nature of spiritual expansion. But it is the closest we can come to describing an expansion that is not positive. Positive expansion is an increase in extension; it's something that happens on the exterior. Negative expansion happens inside the self, it's an expansion in depth: it is the spiritualizing of the state of consciousness. From the moment negative expansion begins, our state of consciousness acquires a new dimension.

When we transcend the dualistic representation of existence, our love expands inwardly until it embraces everything: people, the world, the Divine. It turns into participation.

Until then, the act of loving was a movement—something we gave, something that came to us. In contrast to this movement, participation is spiritual identification: others live inside us. Communication is no longer a movement: communication is established through the expansion of self-awareness. To be is to be in all souls.

When we expand, we participate, and our life is Presence. We no longer spend life darting from one experience to another. Our awareness consists in having the Divine reside within us and ourselves in the Divine. We become the expression of the harmony between what is limited and human and what is Divine and limitless. Exteriorly our life is rhythm and measure; interiorly it is simple movement.

Every human being has a state of consciousness. Within that state of consciousness there are many possibilities which, when fulfilled, provide the knowledge of the range of things we embrace from our state of consciousness. But we begin to unfold when we expand our state of consciousness, transcending our limited, personal identification. We unfold when we learn to love without limits.

Reprinted from *Mysticism and States of Consciousness*
By Jorge Waxemberg

SUPPORT OTHERS in TRANSITIONS

By Rinatta Paries

Is someone you care about going through an ending or a difficult transition, feeling sad or grieving?
Are you?

Everyone experiences changes in life. With most endings and transitions -- such as job changes, the ending of a relationship, or the death of a loved one -- grief and sadness are a normal part of the process.

Unfortunately, people experiencing grief and sadness are often given the message that they should do so in seclusion. While in public, they're encouraged to hide their emotions, put on a happy face, get on with life, etc. This is mostly because the rest of us are not comfortable with and don't know how to deal with grief and sadness in others.

Think about the last time you had a conversation with someone experiencing sadness or grief. Once the person started sharing his or her emotions, didn't you immediately want to offer encouragement, inspiration or a solution? Most of us do, and we believe we are being supportive by doing this.

But while we are busy fixing the person's problems, he or she has just lost the opportunity to be listened to. Telling his or her story and being listened to is vital during times of transition.

The following are some ideas to really help someone experiencing the grief or sadness of a transition. Follow the steps outlined below and you will be giving those you cherish a priceless gift.

If you are the one experiencing an ending, grief or transition, share these ideas with your friends and family to create a supportive environment for yourself.

1. Listen Without Judgment.

If your friend told you he lost a job, has financial problems or just ended a relationship, would you automatically assume it was his fault? And perhaps it was. However, even if your friend did cause the change, pointing out who is at a fault does not make it any easier to bear. He knows who is at cause. Your contribution is to listen while trusting that he will own the responsibility in time.

2. Listen Without Telling Your Story.

When people are in transition, they need to talk about emotions, thoughts and concerns. It's possible you may have had a similar experience and have great ideas to share. But the transitioning person is not ready for these just yet. He or she first needs to talk and be heard. No matter how close you are to the person undergoing sadness or grief, it is not your place to provide unsolicited solutions or stop his or her pain. Share your experiences only if asked.

3. Handle Yourself in the Face of Sadness or Grief.

Emotions are not contagious. If someone is sad, there is no requirement for you to also feel sad. If you take on the sadness of others, you take away their opportunity to experience their own feelings. If you become sad as a result of listening to grief, the grieving person will immediately feel guilty and try to make you feel better. Listen to another's grief without taking it on and feeling it yourself.

4. Be Prepared to Deal with Your Fears.

When listening to another's difficult emotions, you may experience fear. You may become afraid of someday having to deal with a similar situation and wonder how you will handle it. You may not want to hear what is being said because of this fear. If this situation were to happen to you one day, you would deal with it to the best of your ability. Meanwhile, listening to another does not make it

any more or less likely that something like this will happen to you.

5. Take Responsibility for Yourself.

If you feel emotionally full after listening to a grieving person, ask him or her to stop sharing. Simply saying, "I care about you and want to listen, but now is not a good time. Can I listen [give possible time]?" will do the trick. Unless you let others know you are not ready to listen, you are sending a message that could be easily misconstrued. If you force yourself to listen when you can't, the grieving person will sense your inability to be fully present. He or she may interpret your "vibe" as a message, something like: "Your sadness or grief is not ok. No one wants to hear about it, not even me. Please put on a happy face." He or she will likely shut down negative emotions to accommodate you. This is not good for either of you, as it makes the grief last longer.

6. Allow Sadness.

Emotions are not deadly. And unless your emotions are of a clinical intensity, they cause no harm and are a good and natural part of life. If you suspect clinical depression or any other mental health issue, please get help from a qualified professional. Most dark emotions, such as sadness and grief, are just as natural and healing as joy and laughter. Allow the person undergoing change to feel sad; it is good for the soul. It's also his or her right.

7. Don't Determine the Time Limit on Another's Emotions.

We often want others to hurry up and get over their emotions so that our life can get back to normal. It is not up to you to determine when it's time for another to get over his or her emotions. Emotions have their own time table.

If someone you care about is going through a transition and feeling sad or grieving, simply listen. By listening you will be giving him or her a vital gift.

If you are the one going through a difficult transition and feeling sad, grieving, find supportive people to simply listen to you.

Your relationships will be richer and fuller for the experience.

Your Relationship Coach,

Rinatta Paries

www.WhatItTakes.com

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Creating Timelessness

By Von Braschler

Becoming a master of time and space requires a change in personal perspective. To experience timelessness, you need to focus intently on the moment at hand. You cannot allow your mind to wander over events of the past or wallow in deep concern over the future. You must be in the present moment, fully alert, and clear-headed. In short, you must be totally involved in the "now".

This was the message of teacher and author Alan Watts, who longed for an Eastern teacher to teach Zen meditation to Westerners. Watts considered himself a sort of "advance man," or prophet of a teacher to come. Ironically, Watts himself became that teacher.

Watts taught people in the West how to meditate. He encouraged people to still their internal dialogue and stop the chatter inside their minds. This is a fundamental problem for most of us. Animal behaviourists tell us that we have lost the ability to communicate with other species in our world, because other animals are confused by the seeming contradictions between what we verbalize, our body language, and our thought forms. Indeed, most of us seem at times locked in debate with ourselves with endless internal chatter. We are so preoccupied with our inner thoughts that we are not fully focused on the present situation that confronts us.

Stilling the inner voices might sound easy, but for many it is not. The Buddhists say that the mind must willingly shut itself down before our super consciousness may engage itself without distraction. In fact, without distraction, our super consciousness could not engage itself at all. The Buddhists have an expression that the mind is "the slayer of the mind." Moreover, it is the gatekeeper. You might be tempted to think that the mind is the "top cop" in charge of everything. Another way to look at this, however, is that your mind is your jailer. It keeps you confined, in a sort of straightjacket. It's a sort of petty tyrant, claiming to be the big brains -- the one in charge. Sadly, it imprisons the higher self, or higher consciousness, which transcends the physical self.

This gate cannot operate half open or half shut. In this sense, it is like a floodgate. Our physical mind jealously guards what it considers to be its rightful territory and role. It wants to be always in charge, because it believes that it is most analytical. But the mind must totally and willingly shut down for our higher consciousness to operate on a higher plane. This is what's required to meditate. Like a lot of people, however, you probably had the idea that you needed to focus on a dot on a wall, or on a certain sound or thought. These are little ways to trick the mind to shut down and allow the higher consciousness to operate. Really, what you need to do is still the mind.

Obviously, this is not easy. The lower mind is a jealous dictator and will not surrender easily. So you must appeal to its reason and allow it to analyse and adjudicate. Once the mind is satisfied that you will be safe and perhaps even rewarded in this proposed encounter, then it should surrender temporary control.

To meditate and enter a state of higher consciousness, however, you also must still the clatter of sound and other distractions around you. Quietening the world around you might seem even more difficult than stilling the inner chatter that runs through your mind. After all, we can hope to have some personal influence over our own bodies, but little influence over the world outside ourselves. Or can we? Remember that the object here is to change our personal perspective. We don't need to stop a bell from clanging to tune it out. We simply need to control our perception. This requires training, practice, and particularly, will power.

In short, we need to stop the world. This is not to say that we can stop the wind, the rain, or a roaring train. We can change our perception of all of this, however. We can tune out the outside

sounds. We can tell ourselves not to be distracted by the fragrances around us. We can control our sensory perception.

We do this not to be dead to the beauty and majesty of the physical world around us, but to focus on attaining another higher level of consciousness, without outside distractions. The beauty and aroma of a daffodil can be overpowering. The chatter of children can be either amusing or bothersome, but always hard to ignore. We are not turning our backs on the world around us, but exploring higher consciousness from time to time. It's almost amusing at times how hard some people work at meditation -- even in the East. Krishnamurti told the story of Indian men, serious in their attempts to meditate, who would become angry if children's loud play would disrupt them in their quiet times. The challenge is to tune out the world around us and within us as a prelude to meditation. We can do this very selectively and creatively, in accordance to our needs. We can learn to meditate while simply sitting, walking, or even washing the dishes with proper practice and discipline. In time, you can do it without your eyes shut and hands folded in a quiet, dark room. With practice, you can do it at a moment's notice.

Sometimes this is very useful. Star athletes can sometimes tune out distractions and hear just what they want to hear. They can tune out everything except what they want to see and focus intently on that. That becomes the focal point of their meditation.

If you think about it, you've probably tuned out sounds and slowed down things around you on occasion, too. For example, have you ever been in a crowded, noisy room full of people and tried to shout to somebody in the crowd? They couldn't hear you very well. So then you focused hard on that person and found that you could filter out distracting noises around you to hear what that person was saying. People around you seemed to move in slow motion, as you focused on your friend. That's because you were meditating only on that subject, and only seeing that person's body language and hearing that person's voice. This is selective perception.

I'll never forget the time I first experienced this in a crowded banquet room at a local chamber of commerce gathering. It was an open reception in the little town in Oregon where I was publisher of the community newspaper. The room was crowded with people milling about, elbow to elbow, and extremely noisy. What I heard in walking through the room was a hundred voices at once without focusing on any one, and it was maddening! There was also the rattling of dishes and silverware being set down for a dinner to follow, as the restaurant's wait staff hurriedly set up. On top of this, music filtered into the room from stereo speakers overhead. It was a madhouse.

I was just beginning to wonder how anyone could carry on a conversation with anyone else in that room, when something incredible happened to me. I saw somebody I thought I knew at the opposite end of the room. Suddenly, I honed in on this person. It was like radar tracking. Her back was turned to me. I projected a focused thought at her. She turned around to face me, as though she had heard me. As I walked toward her, we started to talk. We could hear each other perfectly. Somehow we filtered out the other sounds in the room. When we were face to face, we heard only each other. The surrounding room noise had completely disappeared! It was magical, and we both sensed this. It was one of those big "Aha!" moments in life, where you grin ear to ear, your eyes twinkle, and the hair on the back of your head stands on end.

Later, when we finished talking, I walked back across the room. I wondered whether I could make all the voices in the room go away again, all on my own. I concentrated on tuning them out. What happened was almost as amazing as the quiet conversation with my friend. The voices disappeared, and I heard only the music from the stereo speakers! I wondered then whether I could control the volume of the stereo inside my head. That's how I spent the rest of the time in that room -- turning the volume of the stereo up and then down in my head. It was astounding how much control I had, when I really tried. I could make the music very quiet, and then very loud, and then very quiet

again.

As we sat down to eat, I momentarily shifted my attention to my fellow diners. I concentrated on their hands working the knives and forks on their plates. Suddenly, the sound of silverware scraping against plates became very loud. I heard nothing but the sound of silverware scraping against plates. I did not hear their voices. Then I shifted my attention back to the music, and heard nothing but the music. It was as though I was alone in a quiet room, except for the stereo.

How strange it was! I looked at their mouths moving and heard no sounds coming out of them.

Even the people seated next to me made no sounds that I could hear. I became almost frightened that I would never hear the same again, so shifted my attention back to a hearing mode, and heard everyone perfectly. In time, the sound grew deafening again, so I tuned it down just a little.

I realized toward the end of the dinner that I could modulate how much I heard. I could tune in more volume or less volume. It took a certain amount of focused intent to do this. If I let my focused intention loosen even a little, I lost control over what I heard. It felt a little like concentration or attentiveness, but it was more a matter of a shift in my consciousness. I was very aware of something tightening on my spine, beginning at the base of my neck and anchored at the base of my spine. Castaneda used to refer to refer to this shift in conscious awareness as a shift in the assemblage points of the spinal region. All I know is that I seemed to have great control over my hearing.

No one else in the room seemed affected by what I was doing. It was just my own perceptive awareness that I was modulating. But it became very clear to me on that occasion that I was stopping the world.

Castaneda wrote endlessly about stopping the world, a term he may have picked up from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the early twentieth century author of *Phenomenology of Perception*. The mystic stops the world by selecting shutting down sensory awareness of the immediate, physical world around him. He does this to leave the ordinary world around him (to use Castaneda's terminology) and enter a non-ordinary reality. The brain no longer processes the physical sensations of smell, touch, hearing, or seeing in the ordinary manner. It is much the same as being asleep and not being conscious of the sounds and smells around you.

This is not to say that being inside your body and fully aware of the beauty and majesty of nature is a bad thing. On the contrary; learning to listen and learn from the sights and sounds of nature around us is very important and advanced training for the shaman to be. Our immediate exercise here is to learn to enter a meditative state and shift your perceptive awareness away from the ordinary world and ordinary reality. You will need to stop the world. The ordinary world is like a mixing bowl that gets you all caught up inside it. It grinds you up and spits you out in its image. You must learn to control your perceptive awareness if you want to seize the moment and become a master of time and space.

Once you have learned to enter this state of heightened consciousness, you will be able to enter a state of timelessness, where almost anything you can conceive is possible. You must first position yourself to enter this state of heightened consciousness, however. Unless you learn to focus your perceptive awareness and enter this state of heightened consciousness at a moment's notice at will, you will not be able to seize the moment and stretch time. Zen masters and warrior athletes do this all the time, as opportunities arise. It takes practice. I began to practice after I left the chamber of commerce banquet, where I first learned to control the sounds around me and stop the world to a degree. Flushed from my success, I went on a walk later at dusk in the woods along the river where I lived. At first, I allowed myself to enjoy the sound of the wind through the trees, the rushing of the river, and the chirping of the birds. Then I started to shut down all the sounds around me, muting out the external sounds of nature as well as the internal dialogue inside my own head. When I got very quiet inside my head, I left myself open to whatever might enter the void. For a while, I heard

nothing whatsoever and experienced total quiet and calm. Quiet can be beautiful. But what I heard next was incredibly beautiful and most unexpected.

I started to hear what I can only describe as "pan pipes." I had only heard something like this once before, in a recording by the great flutist Jean-Paul Rampal. These riverside pan pipes were even more beautiful and out of this world. This truly was the non-ordinary world; perhaps they really were Pan's pipes. All I know for certain is that I could walk through the woods and modulate the volume of the pan pipes by focusing my attention on them or allowing my focus to wane. I walked through the woods for what seemed like hours, listening to the pan pipes and hearing nothing else. It probably was more like a few minutes at best, because it was fast becoming dark outside. When the woods became very dark, I wandered off for home, dumbstruck by this amazing out-of-this-world experience.

Wonderful things can happen to you when you clear your mind, stop the world, and allow yourself to enter the "now". The present moment is pregnant with potential, if you will open yourself up to it fully. The sacrifices are small. You must be willing to forego the shopping list of haunting memories that lock you into the past, and your concerns that try to trap you into a contrived future. You must be open to the moment at hand and all that it offers you. You must seize the moment. In this special state of heightened awareness, you may experience insight from your own higher consciousness, receive higher wisdom from the universal intelligence around you, or even step outside of yourself and explore a non-ordinary world of unlimited possibilities. In this state of heightened awareness, you will experience a personal sense of timelessness. Mystics and warrior athletes have been doing this for years. All it requires is discipline and practice. You may want to try various meditation exercises to start you on your way. To simplify things a bit, I suggest a few meditation techniques that have always worked very well for me.

"Fade to Black" Meditation Exercise

You'll need:

- A straight-back chair
- A quiet, dimly lit room
- Solitude

Close the door to the room, so you can be quietly alone. Remove your shoes and sit erect in the chair with good upright posture and hands open (palms upright) on your legs. Get comfortable. Relax into a meditative state of mind by clearing your mind of internal thought and chatter. Close your eyes. Tune out any external noises or distractions. Begin to take deep, regular breaths. Allow your body to become numb. Let your mind go blank. As your mind goes blank, picture a clean slate in your mind's eye. Concentrate on seeing a black slate. Everything comes out of darkness. Start with darkness and wait to see what comes next. Do not anticipate anything. Simply stare at the black screen. It won't necessarily pop up instantly, but may take a while to appear to you. It's all up to you. Once you see the black slate, be open to what comes next. This is an opportunity for great insight and personal discovery.

Did you see the black slate in your mind's eye? It might not appear to you the first time you try. If you have difficulty with this approach, you might try picturing a white board instead, the kind of white board used for writing with colored grease pencils. Once you see the slate, you begin to might begin to see things written on the slate, things important to you. Your higher consciousness or soul might be speaking to you. Or perhaps you are receiving information outside yourself. Did you see anything on your slate? Keep trying. This is not the only way to meditate, but it's a good way to start.

"Stopping the World "Exercise

You'll need:

- Many people gathered together
- Many conversations or activities going on at once in a confined area

Step One

This exercise is done in two steps. In the first step, you should observe people's conversations and activities as best you can in ordinary fashion, by simply listening and watching as best you can to see what you can comprehend. (It's important, for the sake of this experiment, that many people be talking at once in a confused, noisy atmosphere, similar to what you might find at a party or social gathering.) Stand more or less in the middle of the group and look around, trying as best you can to understand what people are saying and doing.

Step Two

In the second step, remain in the middle of the group with the noise and confusion the same as before. For the sake of the experience, in fact, it would be ideal if you simply stayed in the same location and did the second step of this experiment immediately after doing step one. In short, this is a continuation of the same confused scene. In this step, however, you should attempt to focus your attention on only one person talking at a time. Try to tune out everything else. You will need to shift your awareness and enter a heightened state of consciousness. Quiet yourself. Focus intently on one of the people talking. Project your personal energy to that person, as though you were hooking on to them like a magnet. Project your energy from your will centre. Picture it leaving your body from the region of your abdomen. Listen with your head, not your ears. Concentrate on the person you are watching speak. See and hear nothing else. Tune out everything else.

Were you successful in "stopping the world" around you and selectively focusing your sensory perception? This requires great discipline and practice, but is something you can learn to do to your great personal advantage.

Aspects of the Soul: Telepathy

Source - <http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/t/telepathy.html>

The psychic phenomena by which communication occurs between minds, or mind-to-mind communication. Such communication includes thoughts, ideas, feelings, sensations and mental images. Telepathic descriptions are universally found in writings and oral lore. In tribal societies such as the Aborigines of Australia telepathy is accepted as a human faculty, while in more advanced societies it is thought a special ability belonging to mystics and psychics. Although not scientifically proven, telepathy is being increasingly studied in psychical research.

*** History:**

"Telepathy" is derived from the Greek terms tele ("distant") and pathe ("occurrence" or "feeling"). The term was coined in 1882 by the French psychical researcher Fredric W. H. Myers, a founder of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR). Myers thought his term described the phenomenon better than previous used terms such as the French "communication de pensees," "thought-transference," and "thought-reading."

Research interest in telepathy had its beginning in mesmerism. The magnetists discovered that telepathy was among the so-called "higher-phenomena" observed in magnetized subjects, who read the thoughts of the magnetists and carried out the unspoken instructions.

Soon other psychologists and psychiatrists were observing the same phenomena in their patients. Sigmund Freud noticed it so often that he soon had to address it. He termed it a regressive, primitive faculty that was lost in the course of evolution, but which still had the ability to manifest itself under certain conditions. Psychiatrist Carl G. Jung thought it more important. He considered it a function of synchronicity (1). Psychologist and philosopher William James was very enthusiastic toward telepathy and encouraged more research be put into it.

When the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) was founded in 1885, after the SPR in 1884, telepathy became the first psychic phenomenon to be studied scientifically. The first testing was simple. A sender in one room would try to transmit a two-digit number, a taste, or a visual image to a receiver in another room. The French physiologist Charles Richet introduced mathematical chance to the tests, and also discovered that telepathy occurred independent of hypnotism.

Interest in telepathy increased following World War I as thousands of bereaved turned toward Spiritualism attempting to communicate with their dead loved ones. The telepathic parlor game called "willing" became popular. Mass telepathic experiments were undertaken in the United States and Britain.

*** Experimental findings:**

Most often telepathy occurs spontaneously in incidents of crisis where a relative or friend has been injured or killed in an accident. An individual is aware of the danger to the other person from a distance. Such information seems to come in different forms as in thought fragments, like something is wrong; in dreams, visions, hallucinations, mental images, in clairaudience, or in words that pop into the mind. Often such information causes the person, the receiver, to change his course of action, such as changing his travel plans or daily schedule, or to just call or contact the other person. Some incidents involve apparent telepathy between humans and animals.

Telepathy seems to be related to the individual's emotional state. This is true of both the sender and receiver. Most women were receivers, as case findings showed, and one possible explanation is that women are more in touch with their emotions and rely on intuition more than men. Geriatric telepathy is fairly common, this may be due, it is speculated, to the impairment of the senses with age.

Telepathy can be induced in the dream state. It appears to be related to some biological factors: blood volume changes during telepathic sending, and electroencephalogram monitoring show that the brain waves of the recipient change to match those of the sender.

Dissociative drugs adversely affect telepathy, but caffeine has a positive effect on it.

During his 1930 ESP experiments J. B. Rhine also made some discoveries concerning telepathy: It was often difficult to determine whether information was communicated through telepathy, clairvoyance, or precognitive clairvoyance. He concluded that telepathy and clairvoyance were the same psychic function manifested in different ways. Also, telepathy is not affected by distance or obstacles between the sender and receiver.

A telepathic experiment conducted during the Apollo 14 mission in 1971 proved distance is not a barrier. The experiment was not authorized by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), nor was it announced until the mission was completed. Astronaut Edgar D. Mitchell conducted the experiment with four recipients on Earth, 150,000 miles below. Mitchell concentrated on sequences of twenty-five random numbers. He completed 200 sequences. Guessing 40 correctly was the mean chance. Two of the recipients guessed 51 correctly. This far exceeded Mitchell's expectations, but still was only moderately significant.

*** Theories:**

Although over the centuries various theories have been advanced to describe the functioning of telepathy, none seem to be adequate. Telepathy, like other psychic phenomena, transcends time and space. The ancient Greek philosopher Democritus put forth the wave and corpuscle theories to explain telepathy. In the 19th century, the British chemist and physicist William Crookes, thought telepathy rode on radio- like brain waves. Later in the 20th century the Soviet scientist L. L. Vasiliev proposed the electromagnetic theory. The American psychologist Lawrence LeShan proposed that each person has his or her personal reality, and the psychics and mystics share separate ones from other people which allow them to access information not available to others.

In conclusion telepathy, like the other forms of psychic phenomena is elusive and difficult to test systematically. Enough evidence is available to reasonably substantiate the phenomenon does exist. But, quantifying it seems to be another matter. The phenomenon is closely connect to the emotional states on both the sender and receiver which creates difficulty in replicating experimental results. Attitudinal factors also influence the phenomenon. The best that researchers can hope for is to have supportive and receptive subjects in experiments that produce similar results. A.G.H.

Striking Implications of Tension

By M. E. Haselhurst

It seems beyond doubt that any interpretation of tension depends on the quality, mental calibre, and intuitional capacity of the interpreter. Even sustained consideration as to what this particular word symbol implies leads to considerable mutations of awareness. Ideas expand and flow into one another; new ideas arise; new relationships are established and new recognitions made clear. In short, as mental effort is sustained and carried to more abstract levels, so what is used in occult philosophy, touches ever expanding arcs of consciousness. The result is that today's truth becomes tomorrow's limitation.

Allowing for this inevitable trend towards modification and enlargement, it would seem that tension is the result of the impact of energy on force (or vice versa). It arises when all the forces of immediate, conscious being meet and take the impact of energy flowing in from the next level of awareness to which consciousness aspires.

Understanding of the implications of this word demands a conception of man as something other and greater than his daily, demonstrable self, since the suggestion is of a state which arises when the known self gathers all its forces for an upward reach into some wider or higher or more inclusive state of being.

Tension is an essentially Active state. It represents the tremendous potential livingness which results when force and energy act upon one another to produce that which is new, whether it be a leaf, a human body, a universe or an idea. It is the womb of creativeness, a state in which invoked energies fill the "evoked" beyond the limits of normal capacity to the end that some fragment of eternal truth may be given new form.

Tension has a true significance on the soul levels rather than human, yet it is linked most closely with all phases of man's life, irrespective of the particular sheath which the Self happens to be using. Long before individual man emerges in his latest physical body, there has been points or crises of tension by means of which the Ego has carried forward his pressure towards externalisation and Appearance. As is stated in "Treatise on Cosmic Fire" (p787) "This work of passing on to a plane for purposes of incarnation marks a definite crisis and is characterised by the exertion of the will in sacrifice, the appropriation of the substance in love, and its energising into activity."

Tension, the point of equilibrium at which force and energy fuse into pure being, is linked in our human lives with the power of the creative imagination. Men use the energy which they know or believe to be available. Lacking knowledge concerning the spiritual energies which impel them forward, the power of imagination makes possible that upward thrust of consciousness which releases spiritual potentialities, thus creating ever wider fields in which force and energy meet and form which activity can be carried forward. As is laid down in the book "Heart" (page 36) "one can continuously create new rhythms", but this creation depends upon an understanding of the basic principle that the process of intensification of energy is similar to the action of a pump, in as much as the upward flow is absolutely conditioned by the downward pressure.

From this angle, tension emerges as the point of balance between the downward and upward drives; it is that moment of eternity wherein the essence of the past is gathered to a focal point to meet the inflowing energy of the future, with a resultant radiation of inspired activity in the present. Most wisely does the Doctrine of the Heart enjoin aspirants to "Become accustomed to a state of constant labour", pointing out that "labour, not to secure rest, but for limitless perfection". ("Heart", page 106).

Tension involves recognition and true evaluation of the forces of destruction. The two great destruction which liberate man's consciousness (of the etheric web and of the casual body) take place through the right direction of force and the right release of energy, in other words, through tension so perfectly established that the unreal drops below the level of consciousness and the Real is recognised, realised and demonstrated. Thus, as "Heart" again bears witness, "people will find their place in Cosmos" realising that "the so-called state of Nirvana is not rest but the highest tension of energy."

World tension may yield a great pooling of cultures with consequent emergence of people who are world citizens in their everyday consciousness, despite differences of race or nationality.

The Techniques of Thinking Through And Speaking

By A Teacher

[We have long since known that the teaching of the Tibetan should be "stepped down," put in everyday language, for those who are questing but are not familiar with the esoteric vocabulary. These outlines seem admirable to that end. They are used in a junior college course for speech classes and Mental Hygiene. While the work is done specifically with professional speakers, it is also used for those who apply for introductory speech training for daily living. We all need to learn how to guard our speech! This project seems to us admirable and meets a long felt need. It will also be useful to all students in the endeavour to spread the teaching among friends and acquaintances, in terms that are familiar as many "shy off" from any presentment of occultism as such or as they think it to be. A.P.]

The Stage of Intention

By intention is not meant a mental decision, wish or determination; rather, it is the focusing of energy on the mental level at the point of greatest possible tension.

Intention signifies the bringing about a condition in your consciousness analogous to an imagined condition in the Creator of the Universe when he might determine his desire sphere of influence, and put in that sphere the energy necessary for the purpose he is manifesting.

Gather your forces into the highest point of your mental consciousness, and then hold them there in a state of absolute tension.

Now you understand why you are sometimes asked to "raise your consciousness above the belt" or "hold your consciousness at the highest point you can" or "endeavour to hold your mind steady in the light."

All these remarks are concerned with the task of bringing you, the thinker, purposer, speaker, to the desired point of tension and energy focusing.

Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics often use the word "intention" when preparing candidates for communion. We use the word here in a different sense, for we refer to the use of will, of purpose, or as some would say, spirit.

In your intention, which is the carrying out of your purpose by a literal making, forming and using of tension, there are several steps to be taken:

- a. You must achieve the right orientation: First, you will achieve an orientation towards your own soul, if you think of yourself as having or being a soul. Next comes a still higher orientation to Deity, if it is part of your faith to believe in a noble, powerful and beneficent Deity.
- b. Next achieve a mental understanding of the task you are to carry out. This involves the use of the mind in two ways: responsiveness to the highest impressions you can touch, and second, an act or acts of creative imagination. (Not the wild ride of fancy but the careful, accurate imaging of the determined achievement, and the means to that achievement.)
- c. Go through a process of gathering energy or absorbing force, in order that these may be confined in the pattern prior to a later process of visualization and projection.
- d. Observe an adequate period of clear thinking about process and intention, so that as you dedicate yourself to the achievement of transferring thought, feeling, purpose to others through speech, you may clearly perceive what is being done.
- e. It is necessary meanwhile to steady preserve the tension entirely without any strain on the brain

cells. This is important.

The Stage of Visualization

Through the stage of intention, your activity has been of a mental nature. The creative imagination has been relatively quiescent; you have been occupied within the mind on the mental levels, and you have looked neither up or down.

Now at last you have reached the right point of tension; you have restrained the reservoir or pool of needed energy within your carefully delimited pattern of form or ring-pass-not; you are ready, as a bridge-builder, to take the next step.

Therefore at this point you proceed to construct the blue print of the work you are going to do; you draw upon the imagination and the facilities as they are to be found at the highest level of your emotional or sensitive nature.

More accurately, let us omit reference to the emotions and retain the term "sensitivity." Think of that imagination activity, which as its lowest functioning, sometimes is called "intuition." Sensitivity as an expression of the feeling nature is far different from, and may be contrasted to, what has been called spiritual sensitivity. You should purify and refine your imagination so that your imagination is now responsive to spiritual influences, or more precisely what is called at times intuitive perception that is, perception apart from physical sight or any real or imagined "visions" such as are recorded in the Bible.

You will have to step up your creative imagination in its power impact so that it can affect the "pool of energy" which you have gathered for the project you are about to accomplish.

I am about to make an important and significant statement, and so it will be important for you to ponder upon it: the creative activity of the of the imagination is the first organizing influence which works upon and within the "pool" of accumulated energies, held in a state of tension by your Intention.

The creative imagination is in the nature of an active energy, drawn up into relationship with the point of tension; it there and then produces mental effects, or more accurately produces effects on the "material" you have gathered.

The tension is thereby increased; the more potent and clearer your visualization process, the more beautiful and strong will be your production.

Visualization is the process whereby the creative imagination is rendered active, and becomes attracted by and responsive to the point of tension at the mental level.

You are now at this stage occupied with two energies: one quiescent and held within your pattern, but at a point of extreme tension, while the other is active, picture-forming, outgoing, and responsive to your mind, the mind of the builder.

The Stage of Projection

The task of the thinker and speaker has now reached a critical point.

Many speakers having reached this particular stage, and having developed a real capacity to visualize, and having therefore constructed by its means the desired form or outline, and organized

the substance which is to be employed in this later phase of the building process find themselves unable to proceed any further.

What then is the matter?

Primarily, an inability to use the Will in the process of projection. This process is a combination of will, further and continued visualization, and the use of an outpouring of active determination, or the use of outgoing Power.

The exact method of this use of power depends upon the nature of the speaker; there are at least seven major kinds of speakers who have to vary widely for the highest success in the use of what might be called amiable aggressiveness.

Each speaker, having successfully organized the material which he will use in building, brings into activity the will aspect; and now he will use in building, brings into activity the will aspect; and now being consciously aware of process and performance, he proceeds to move the organized substance forward, so that from the centre of force which he has succeeded in accumulating, there appears a projection of his building material.

This is set forth by and in the expression or outpouring of Power. This is a creative process. That which has first come into the so-called head and heart of the speaker is now hurled forth from thence. The speaker is focused in the centre which has appeared on the mental level, and draws on all his resources, that is, his mental, emotional and physical resources; he activates them, and projects them towards his listener or listeners.

You see, then, upon what line the withdrawal of the message takes place as it passes from speaker to hearer. It might be called a great renunciation, in which a message of supreme value to the speaker is seemingly given away. At times the speaker seems to come out of his Holy of Holies to make public what is most sacred. The implications of all this is clear to you if you will ponder upon it.

The speaker in a sense makes a great sacrifice; do not, however, think of sacrifice as giving up, and losing what makes life worth living. The speaker gives what he speaks, but he keeps it also. The sacrifice of the speaker is a sacrifice in the etymological meaning of the word, the making sacred. The speaker achieves a high state of enjoyment, almost ecstasy at times, because he has revealed truth with a majesty or sublimity rarely realized except under the spell of a powerful speaker.

It is the dynamic speaker, not the weak and well-meaning speaker, that achieves this goal. "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." The powerful speaker achieves will to good, not just merely good will.

When you have gained the fruit of experience, which is knowledge, and are beginning to transmute it into wisdom, when your objective is to live truly and in reality, when the will to good is the crowning goal of your daily life, then you can begin to evoke the Will.

Invocation and Evocation

The speaker links what is lower and what is higher in his mind; he will make the link between his personality or character and his mechanism an existent fact; he makes the closest possible contact between himself and his message, then between himself and his hearers, eventuating in making the closest possible contact or fusion of his message with his listeners.

The process of the speaker is a living process, growing out of conscious daily experience, and dependent on the expression of the highest aspects of life upon the physical plane as far as is possible.

Where there is an attempt to approximate the personality life to the demands of the Higher nature, and to use the intellect on behalf of humanity, love, friendship or philanthropy is beginning to control and then the significance of "high sacrifice" is increasingly understood, and becomes a natural, spontaneous expression of the speaker's Intension.

Then it becomes possible to project the message, that is, to give it a "happy landing". The activity set up on lower levels of noble manifestation becomes strong enough to produce response from higher levels. Then, when the method of uttering Power is known and rightly used, the object of the speaking is rapidly accomplished.

The speaker should feel in no way discouraged by his ambitious plan. Much happens on the level of preparation where there is right intention as well as scientific tension (purpose and tension combined) and your results reach stages of definite significance before you can yourself be aware of your success.

Intention, visualization and projection, already discussed, are in reality stages of the work of your personality. There are three others which, particularly if you are a clergyman can be expressions of response from higher levels.

Naturally, invocation is based on previous intention, visualization, projection, you are in some measure at least aware of the work you have done; therefore you are yourself invocative. Your life effect is registered on the highest levels of your consciousness; you are recognized, even by bystanders, as "a point of invocative tension."

What sets in motion this tension, and this reservoir of living energy which is yourself? It is set in motion by projected thought, the use of the will, and the definite operating of the power you consciously possess.

Now it is possible for you to use the developed potency in the radius of your influence to call out a response from the highest source you can reach. It is the tension of the lower that evokes the attention of the higher.

We have described but scarcely discussed the dual process of invocation and evocation. The call of the lower becoming stronger, the response of the higher becoming greater, there is finally a contact made, which once made will grow in reciprocal action until the project is completed.

The Process of Stabilization

We have explained the technical process of invocation and evocation. There is a gradual approach between the power aroused from below and the power descending from "on high." There is a contact between the mechanism of the speaker and the highest nature which he can call his own or which he can reach.

It is in a sense of a crises in a beneficial sense when the speaker is aware of liberation, when he recognizes that in a sense he himself is the message which he is giving.

A time comes when the speaker no longer know the dual lower and higher nature, but is simply One, functioning in all ways as a point of sublime energy and arriving triumphantly at the planned

activity which he has undertaken. Not only his listeners, but sometimes even the speaker himself "comes down from the mount of transfiguration" with something adazzle in the eyes and the echo of heavenly music ringing in the ears.

Some times a speaker is aware only of the great pull of humanity as a whole, and to this need of humanity there is a response of divinity, and the speaker feels himself to be only a bridge as it were over which help comes, or a voice which is really the voice of another.

A rare privilege it is when a speaker can know that he is a servant of Higher Ones serving humanity, that he as a speaker is carrying out a Higher Will and leading or encouraging his hearers also to carry out a Higher Will.

Do not expect such rare perfection in speaking to be achieved "in the twinkling of an eye." There may be a long period of the gradual approach of the two aspects, the lower and the higher, before they come completely together.

Eventually a mechanism is provided, stable and strong, and capable of being used. And it must be used, for the speaker now knows that he has identified himself in large degree with humanity in need and with the universe of supply from which that need may be supplied.

Happy indeed that the speaker who feels himself "at-one" with his own highest nature, "at-one" with needy humanity, and "at-one" with the supply that meets humanity's need.

Your major need is for an intensification of your inner high aspiration. You need to work more definitely from what might be called a point of tension.

If finally you intensify yourself at your highest point, this may produce a galvanic upheaval of your inner life. Are you prepared for this? Can you make dynamic decisions affecting your inner and outer life, or would you prefer to progress by a much slower way?

If you would excel as a beneficial speaker, not the necessity for speed; the necessity for reorganization of standards of thought and living, and finally, life itself, as well as thought and speech, as an expression of sincerity, sacrifice, and simplicity.

TIME: Obstacle? Opportunity?

By M.E. Haselhurst

(Learn to do something else with time besides organise it and use it . . . !

(Treatise on White Magic, pp.207/8)

The Transience of Time

Time has to be grasped in its cyclic nature. It has to be recognised that the pendulum swings from past to future, and in its swing produces the present. But also to be realised are the adjustments which need to be made in the present in relation to both past and future. The present directs the future but is rooted in the past. There is much wisdom in the old adage: 'Today will be yesterday tomorrow.'

This compels attention to a word so commonplace in esoteric thought that it fails, frequently, to carry its due significance: Discrimination. Because so much work is carried forward within the glamour of the time sense, the workers fall victim to such other glamour's as disappointment (when 'results' are slow to appear); dejection (when plans 'fail') or fear (when a task looms larger than the equipment and resources available to implement it). All such states are glamour's produced by the sense of time. When consciousness breaks through the ring-pass-not of daily time, the glamour's fade out in realisation of the fact that the Plan goes unerringly forward. All that one does, in giving house-room to such negative states of consciousness, is drop a stone into the demonstrating stream of energy, thereby temporarily creating an eddy which disturbs it. 'Each life sees the initial Purpose clarified and time is literally the length of a thought.'

In all true spiritual effort the worker has the problem of working in the realm of the timeless and from that point of awareness employing time to produce predetermined results. So he comes upon the dilemma of a consciousness operating in realms beyond time limitations but compelled to express what is there discovered through and by means of a body that is very much subject to time. Here, again the Tibetan offers practical advice: 'Be the ruler of your time and make the hours of each day your servants, exacting from each hour its full quota of work or rest, without the sense of undue pressure or rush.' He adds that solving the time problem leads to greatly increased usefulness.

It is in dealing with time, we are told, that disciples make most of their mistakes, especially in the early stages of their work. This is because they fail to realise that 'time is naught but a succession of events as registered by the physical brain consciousness'.

The mistakes run in two main directions; failure to consider time as immortality, which intimately affects personal attitudes and relationships; and time as an agent of creative action, which closely concerns all aspects of daily living and is especially potent in regard to efforts planned to tune with work of the Hierarchy as it strives to help mankind. Studying in reference to the future, to immortality, reveals where the thought life needs modification. It shows up incipient prejudices; reveals blockages in energy flow which are due to incorrect time values. Studying time in relation to the daily task produces synthesis, tends to the conservation and right use of energy, and produces vital and creative action.

In his book *Men and Time*, J.B. Priestly puts forward the interesting and evocative idea that time is both intensely private and yet widely shared. 'Superficially', he says, 'in the world of clocks and watches and appointments, we share time; then, on a deeper level, it seems intensely private; and then, on a still deeper level, perhaps we begin to share in ways we cannot yet fully understand.'

It seems probable that this deep level sharing of time is one of the factors that make for harmonious

and successful group work. One has known the intimacy of a sort of private timelessness; has experienced rare moments when time and eternity mingled and one knew life whole, complete, a total, all-inclusive experience. Some memory of this remains when one comes down from the mountain to walk once more upon the plains of daily life. And some shadow of the knowing, some overtone of the experience, lingers, and is projected into relationships, attitudes and objectives. It is as if, having contacted super-physical planes, some true recognition of things as they are has been achieved and is now being given correct interpretation. 'When the time factor no longer controls, the interpretations registered are infallibly correct.' It is worthy of note that the Tibetan calls this a major piece of information. Moreover, he expands it by pointing out that 'when a true perspective, and a balanced point of view have been attained, and some awareness of the eternal Now is beginning to penetrate into man's understanding, then the past, the present and the future will be lost to sight in the consciousness of the inclusiveness of the moment that IS'.

Here is a point on which groups need to focus as they seek to create the forms through which the new age will be made manifest. Without this tremendous point of achieved conscious awareness, how shall they rise above the frustrations, the disappointments, the heart-breaking delays, incidental to the building processes men needs must undertake as they seek to materialise in stone and wood, in bricks and glass, the vision towards which they strive? This work of creating the 'forms' of the future makes it imperative that those who attempt it enter into shared awareness of time, because what is being attempted transcends the limitations time imposes. The work is of itself eternal: studying, presenting, sharing the ageless truths which shine undimmed by the veils time flings around them. The more this truth is apprehended, the deeper one enters into it, the clearer is the realisation of timelessness: the more positive is the response to the cyclic flow of energy instead of to its specific demonstrations as a sequence of events. Thus labour takes on a different, non-substantial quality; experience passes beyond expression into pure knowing.

A Wider Field of Study

Time is frequently described as a succession of states of consciousness. And with the innate arrogance of the human race, this is then considered in relation to human levels of consciousness. But if the description be true, and if we are in any degree seriously taking up this hint about studying, doing something with time, then the matter has to be considered in a far wider context; to be studied, maybe, as it relates to the consciousness of the mineral and, of all intermediate states of consciousness, right up to that of the Logos of our system. A major undertaking, certainly, but one that the future will almost certainly demand of those who consider time as 'the cycle, greater or lesser, in which some life runs some specific course; in which some particular period begins, continues and ends, in connection with the awareness of some Entity. . .'

Coming back to the sphere of human effort and individual experience, there is urgent need for would-be-helpers of the Hierarchy to study their innate tendencies, as these emerge in present interests and activities. It is needful to realise that these tendencies have their full roots in the past and will come to their full flower in the future. Rightly recognised, these tendencies can be cultivated as the soul directs, those that are desirable being steadily strengthened and those that are undesirable being left to die of inattention. In such fashion the individual forms himself to the group pattern and begins to vibrate at the group rhythm, thus facilitating creative work. All of which kinks to that 'art of spiritual compromise' which involves, amongst other things, comprehension of the time equation.

These unfoldments ensure the eventual successful expression of planned spiritual purpose. The worker learns to organise his time so as to derive from each day its full quota of inspiration, mental work, and physical plane activity, knowing that thereby maximum results will be obtained with minimal expenditure of energy.

The Tibetan calls this the development of a time consciousness which does not limit, but rather conserves and organises the 'gift of the days, hours and minutes. There is a divine aspect of time'. So those who would work in tune with the Hierarchy are urged to discipline their time, making each moment count. They should 'perfect each life episode and even (which is only another word for time) making these as constructive in expression of the group will as possible'. This right understanding, and right use, of time becomes, in due course, a major significant lesson, driven home by the clear statement: 'The more your soul grips you, the more assuredly you will learn to use time as a responsibility.'

Such soul-directed effort produces a reorganisation of the entire life, not necessarily in the actual techniques of daily living, but most certainly in the realms of inner attitudes towards time. These are the attitudes which determine where the emphasis of any particular life will be placed, and which control its dominant direction. They lead also to revelation, which demonstrates when there is true comprehension of the time element, and consequent wise discrimination between essentials and non-essentials; between the unreal and the real.

Time wise, that which is real can be difficult to judge. There is a story, mistily remembered, of a young novice in a certain convent, whose duty it was to open and close the door for visitors. She kept to hand a piece of lace, into which she worked one or two stitches as she waited, quietly serene, for folk to pass. In reply to scoffing, criticism or curiosity she had only one reply: 'Beauty is eternal: eternity is now.' When she died, she bequeathed to her Order an altar cloth that was lovelier than any dream.

Did she merely use time? Did she organise it? Or had she discovered that something else, that beyondness, that converted time into an eternal moment and made the eternal Now a matter of daily experience?

Time-dominated efforts are a phase of human unfoldment. Action, the creation of 'forms' (whether these be material or the expression of organised, formulated ideas) represent time-dominated work. Yet even such activity takes on some quality of the eternal when the action conveys intention and so becomes meaningful in ways beyond the ring-pass-not of actual performance. It is a characteristic of spiritual work that, no matter how commonplace its outer appearance, it carries values which are not inherent in the normal structure of what is accomplished. The actual action may be 'small' or 'large', meaningful or seemingly meaningless, yet still convey the idea of willingness to cooperate; of the will to help; of the wish to share; in other words, of love in action. Action so coloured and qualified is an expression of time-free living: it indicates movement into time, expanding time as air expands a balloon. It is action in tune with that aspect of the divine Plan which will, we are told, 'eventually annihilate time'. It is action, a way of life, that may well lead in due course to the discovery of how to do something more with time than organise and use it.

Touch and its Overtones

Some significances attached to the sense of touch

By M.E. Haselhurst

Perhaps because this is an age conditioned to complexity, the simplicity of the sense of touch blinds men to its tremendous importance. On the lowest level, touch is a source of protection to the physical vehicle. By its means men can reach out, even in silence and darkness, to make contact with the world in which they live and to establish relationship between themselves and their fellows.

Touch is one of the five senses that are, in essence, the media whereby the Self or Thinker comes into contact with his environment. These senses serve to reveal the not self, enabling the indwelling Self to differentiate between the unreal and the real. Of these five senses of contact, the sense of touch was the second to be developed by humanity. It followed hearing and was succeeded by sight, taste and smell. The two latter are sometimes considered as minor senses, closely allied to the important sense of touch and, for all practical purposes, subsidiaries of it.

The three major senses are each definitely allied to, or aligned with one of the three Logoi. Touch, the second sense, has particular relationship to the second Logos, "who gathers the atoms into forms and by means of these forms gains the needed contact and develops full consciousness on the five planes of human development." (A Treatise on Cosmic Fire p. 143).

Touch is the innate recognition of contact through the exercise of manas or mind. It has a correspondence to the astral plane and is of outstanding importance in this, the second solar system, which is a system of astral-buddhic consciousness, characterised by emotion, feeling and sensation, which have eventually to be transmuted into intuition, spiritual perception and unity.

Touch, in common with other senses, has to be fully developed on all five planes of human evolution. There is deeply evocative significance in the corollaries of this sense on the subtler planes, particularly from the point of view of the disciple who is pledged to world service. These higher expressions range from psychometry and planetary psychometry, to healing on the buddhic plane, and active service at atomic level.

At first sight this appears to be an astonishing apotheosis. Reflection will reveal it as a process of orderly, very beautiful unfoldment, with some faint trace of future perfection evident in immediate achievements.

Consider the service that touch has rendered to human beings deprived of the other major senses, sight and hearing. By its means such people have been put into purposeful relationship with their world and with their fellows. They have been given entry to mankind's accumulated knowledge and have been enabled to join the community of thinking men and woman. This miracle is repeated on the higher planes. Disciples who have not developed spiritual hearing (clairaudience) or spiritual sight (clairvoyance) can learn to touch the subtle substance of higher worlds, and from such touch to achieve meaningful recognitions and establish the relationships necessary for further growth. This touching of the higher worlds is brought about through meditation and those who sometimes rebel at the apparently fruitless daily discipline involved in the practice of meditation would do well to ponder deeply on this subjective effect.

What is it that occurs in meditation? The Tibetan says quite clearly that it is a touching of matter of a quality rarer than that usually contacted. He elaborates this by adding:

"By dint of strenuous effort and due attention to rules laid down, the aspirant contacts his casual body: in time he contacts the matter of the buddhic plane. By means of this touch, his own vibration is temporarily and briefly quickened."

(A Treatise on Cosmic Fire p. 197).

There is nothing uncanny or frightening about this progressive extension of touch, through psychometry to healing and the final consummation of the work of the Self for the not-self as expressed in the concept of service at the atmic level. Just as a master musician can detect harmonies which would make no impression whatever on the untrained ear, so the individual who systematically practices meditation becomes aware of, puts himself in touch with, substance finer and more ethereal than the senses of untrained men can recognise. And just as wider knowledge in any sphere throws new light on old facts, and discloses relationships which were not at first apparent, so persistence in meditation leads to the recognition of spiritual potencies hitherto veiled by commonplace conditions and a realisation of widening, more inclusive, more universal concepts of the one truth which men call reality.

Revelation of Simplicity

One result of this is the revelation of simplicity. Truths which originally appeared to be isolated, separate and contradictory are revealed as fragmentary evidences of an underlying whole; as scenes from a picture not yet fully revealed. As this extension of awareness continues, it becomes possible to trace underlying patterns and to recognise the essential unity into which all diversity fits in due time, producing significance, order and beauty in place of the confused ugliness which ignorance perceives.

Touch, to the esotericist, is considered in terms of communication. He touches, manipulates, uses energy, thereby extending his areas of contact in all directions. Sitting quietly alone, or working with groups of like-minded people, his influence reaches out to touch lives which may be far removed from his physical existence, but are yet capable of responding to the vibrations emanating from him. The disciple's greatest problem is to keep open, despite all outerplane responsibilities, the channel of communication between the soul or the Spiritual Triad, when he can touch that higher consciousness, and the brain, via the mind, so that when the Master seeks to communicate, he can do so at once and easily. That which men call inspiration, the result of the touch of the soul, is entirely egoic. It utilises the mind as the medium of transmission to the brain of that which the soul knows.

Consider the very great range of touch, even in our human experience. When this is extended through the infinitely greater reaches which open as activity is lifted to the astral and mental levels, man discovers the science which is known as psychometry, the science of the soul of things. By its means the soul is put into touch with every aspect and quality of things. Any object in the hands of a trained and competent psychometrist, can be made to give up its history, to reveal its past and present surroundings and the story of those who have come into contact with it. All this is possible because psychometry is the science of sensing by touching the inner life which the form veils and hides.

This is a startling yet evocative concept, for psychometry is merely the first extension of the sense of physical touch. When consideration is lifted through the mental equivalent of this effort (known as planetary psychometry) which defies our present powers of imagination or vision, to the buddhic corollary of touch which is healing, man begins to perceive something of the urgent importance of rightly unfolding this sense on all planes. This linking of touch and healing also indicates the close affinity between the astral and buddhic planes and suggests some of the lines of enquiry which esoteric students might well follow in the effort to produce bodies capable of giving full expression to the ensouling life. To the esotericist it seems highly probable that, in the foreseeable future, psychometry will play a quite major part in the diagnosis of disease. By its use it will become possible to indicate the particular channels along which healing energies should be directed in

specific situations, and the balance which needs to be achieved between different energies.

Any endeavour to acquire even elementary skill in translating touch into its higher expressions calls for limitless patience. As it is stated in the little book, "practical Psychometry" by O. Hashnu Hara, (p.35):

"The finer senses cannot be dominated in a moment, but call for gradual unfoldment. The necessary condition of passivity is not easy to acquire, for it necessitates a positive mental attitude towards material objects, so that you are able to repel all material thoughts and at the same time hold a receptive and negative attitude towards spiritual objectives, so that you attract the vibrations of spirit and become en rapport with the 'Spiritual Self' and so able to receive its communications."

Touch and Service

Herein lies a clue as to the connection between touch and service. Touch enables man to penetrate to the essence, the life, by means of due recognition of the veiling sheath. As the Tibetan points out, this sense enables the Thinker or Self to become en rapport with the essence of all selves at all stages, an awareness which makes possible the vital service of aiding in the due evolution of the sheaths, whilst at the same time entering into creative contact with the ensouling life.

A further link may be found in the statement that a Lord of Compassion is one who, by means of touch, feels with, fully comprehends and realises the manner in which to heal and correct the inadequacies of the not-self and thus actively to serve the plan of evolution.

It is a fact of common experience that man best serves his fellows when his life flows out in living touch or contacts with them. This is touch as it finds its apotheosis on the atmic plane, the highest level to the human comprehension can possibly stretch. Having been stretched to these imponderable heights, having soaked into self something of the aroma of these far regions, the elastic mind must needs snap back to human level, finding service expression by means of the physical brain. The creative core of this returning lies in the word "impersonality". Service is rendered in the essential atmosphere of the atmic experience when it is impersonal, wisely designed to meet existent need and so planned that the recipients play an active part in the service project. "Not what we give but what we share" is much more than a poetic exposition of the ideal service. The simple words provide a ladder whereby man's imagination can climb from one level of comprehension to another, finding on the way further links between touch as one of mankind's sense tools and service as an expression of divine realisation.

Service, in common with most forms of human activity, carries within itself the incipient danger of becoming formalised, stereotyped, habitual. To avoid this pitfall, effort must be always from soul level, no matter how humble the outer action may be. Realising that the soul acts in and through the personality and recognising that the soul is group-conscious, it is perceived that service lies in allowing the Self to flow into the common life in shining, steady streams of which are dramatic but not enduring.

The whole field of the higher correspondences of the sense of touch lies wide open for esoteric research. Certain hints are available, though not obvious. There are some clues, if diligent search is made, which offer direction and suggest methods. Moreover, students have the opportunity, by right thought and living of a soul-directed life, to unfold the spiritual capacity which such effort will demand. Given the will to experiment, experience should multiply and the capacity rightly to interpret and express should increase. Eventually it should become possible to trace the process whereby the sense of touch is transmuted into those divine contacts which epitomise the work of the Self for the not-self, contacts which, for want of a better word, are designated as service.

It is appropriate to remember that true service, in our present connotation of the word, has been described as the effect of a man's being what he truly is, a divine Son of God. As such, he touches other lives and so doing serves the divine plan by drawing into creative expression the divinity which lies at the centre of each human life. Herein lies the very crux of discipleship service. Man touches, whether physically or by emotional or mental contact, and by that touch releases the life of God into the life of man.

Touching a Moment

By Howard Gontovnick

Do you recall ever having an experience when you felt as if you were immersed in a very powerful state of mind – something akin to a feeling of oneness with the universe? It might have been the kind of experience that even moved you to tears or heightened your emotions so that everything seemed to make sense; meaning you felt good and suddenly aware that everything would be fine. Does this seem familiar to you?

Whatever the situation you experienced, you sensed a whole new reality. Whether it was triggered by a particular vision or a musical selection, your awareness was heightened. If you could describe it, you might use words like absorbed in, filled with happiness or overcome with joy. Either way, it was as if something very powerful touched deep inside. A strong body feeling where you felt complete serenity, peacefulness and calm.

So what do these moments mean? What do they really do for us anyway? And how can we make them happen more often? Question after question we search for an understanding but no matter what the question, any kind of answer seems hard to find. Yet, deep inside, we continue to search for ways to interpret these powerful moments. Within each of us, there is a desire to know more and discover the real purpose behind this kind of experience. However, more often than not, we are unsuccessful and thus settle for a vague estimation of what has happened.

In hindsight, it seems that during these special moments it is as if we have opened our hearts to that which is the source of all that was, is and will be. A situation as if we have touched something that also resonates within us and is a part of our nature. Unfortunately, most people are frightened by the implications and withdraw from the moment, breaking the link. Even so, the experience leaves us with a special feeling. It is something that gives us a sense that all is possible and, yes, we can achieve the unachievable.

Some people have described these rare moments as doorways to higher worlds or a place located perhaps in a dimension inaccessible to our conscious mind, but open to our souls. It might be a place where one can touch the source of greater knowledge and turn on a transformative spiritual energy within one's body; a state of being where one can and will enhance the inner nature as one moves toward its source. Finally, maybe it's the realization that there is a unity in the universe and each spirit is, in fact, one link in a greater chain.

This notion of a link in a greater chain represents an understanding that each one of us has an important role to play in this life. Of course, on the surface the role of one person may seem greater than that of another person. Even so, the reality is - everyone is of equal importance. Therefore, if you change one aspect of the plan – whatever its magnitude - everything is thrown out of sync. Hence, for this very reason, maybe you should reconsider how really important you are and how vital your presence is to the larger scheme of things. In the end, it could be that these special moments provide a sense of this higher reality as a glimpse of how everything is related and meant to happen in life? Think about the things you have done in life and in how many ways you have touch the lives of others. In other words, whatever the magnitude of your presence, it remains vital to the way things are.

In the end, we will come to realize that we are all moving toward a higher level of consciousness. Each one of us is moving at our own speed and within our own time. As such, these special moments not only introduce us to this reality but, provide us with sense a greater oneness, or connection with the source of all that was, is and will ever be. Knowing that life does have a deeper meaning and yes in fact each one of us does have a higher purpose, then becomes a helpful source

of endearment through the negative experiences we encounter.

After reading this, I hope you will keep these thoughts in mind and enjoy those special moments as you proceed forward searching for your own answers to life's questions. Keep in mind, that you have an important role to play and that life is much more than it seems at any given moment in time. It's important to remember that overall our experiences are really joyful and deeply enriching. Unfortunately we are often too busy dwelling on the negative aspects while disregarding the positive. Life is a joyful journey where each one has an important contribution to make; a contribution that has far greater significance to the way things can be rather than the way we understand them to be. Considering all this, remember to open your heart and empower yourself with this knowledge that touching these special moments provides. In every moment in our lives, there is something to be learned – something to be given and something to be taken away – realizing the importance of this is helpful in your transformation as a human being. Remember that in the end you will find meaning through your actions and becoming more aware of the importance in the greater scheme of all that was and will be.

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Transcending the Cosmic View

Beyond the Veil

By Michael Lamas

You embrace the Cosmic view whenever you see that everything is passing: Cosmic time spans billions of years; individual forms, even galaxies, last for a moment. If, like a Broadway show, the universe begins and ends, then ultimately, nothing within it matters.

Alternatively, if the multidimensional universe is eternal, then it doesn't matter either. This is difficult to understand, because our minds cannot fathom eternity and infinity—limitless time and space. From a strictly humanistic standpoint, playing an insignificant part in the drama is depressing. Having an inflated or damaged ego, or being attached to a finite role, makes it worse. On the smaller scales, futility rules.

Fortunately, another view overshadows this: the Present view or "Living in the Now." From there, you don't feel that your actions are futile. Instead, you concentrate on whatever is in front of you, and that fulfills you. If you stay focused and grounded in the Now and keep the Cosmic view in the background, then futility disappears. Yet, you can reach an even higher level with the Beyond the Veil view.

Beyond the Veil is a state where a vast consciousness exists just on the "other side" of this reality. It's as if a dimensional membrane separates our world from an immense Mind. Picture a pulsing, luminous cocoon of light submerged in an infinite ocean. The ocean is the Infinite Mind. The small cocoon is this universe, and we live inside it. Other cocoons, billions of them, drift in the currents with us. They have different shapes, sizes, and colours. In this ocean, nothing is futile: everything is creation.

Porous Brains

As humans, we are dense. Our brain—the organ that interprets the data that our senses perceive—is dualistic and limited. No matter what anyone can say, no matter how profound the truth, someone can always offer an opposing view that makes that truth look absurd or, at least, questionable or implausible.

As a biological filtering device, nature designed the brain to screen out most non-materialistic information. That includes information from Beyond the Veil. This helps us survive on this relatively primitive planet. For example, if we knew (rather than believed) that our essence was immortal, then our physical survival would become unimportant.

The human brain is more developed than that of other animals. Being dimensionally porous, it allows us to catch glimpses of that higher reality. Scientists are mapping the regions of the brain that are active during religious or mystic experiences. They believe that these regions are the source of those experiences. Conversely, spiritually oriented people believe that these regions are bio-receivers responding to incoming spiritual frequencies, like an antenna receiving radio waves. We call receiving this other-dimensional information mysticism, revelation, spiritual insight, or delusion, depending on how we have oriented ourselves spiritually.

Alignment

Knowing that everything is a temporary gift from God is a sign that you are aligning with this state. Your life, family, job, possessions, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions—anything you think that is yours or that you identify with—are gifts for the moment.

Love helps us align with this reality too. If the love is pure enough, then it can act as a window to the Divine Mind. High art can help as well. Many say that the arts, especially music¹, are the best bridges to this state. To hear this music, though, you need to concentrate. Your body and mind can't be busy or disturbed. However, Western fatalistic society discourages peace and contemplation; instead, it trains us to stay busy and to be afraid. We have much to overcome—just to hear!

Beyond the Veil

What can you expect to find beyond the Veil? You will find non-ordinary reality. This reality can be either frightening or exhilarating, depending on several factors. One factor is your image. If you are trying to play the role of an oh-so-together, modern, materialistic person, then these experiences won't help. Ruling out non-ordinary possibilities is a good idea—you'll appear normal and sane (more or less).

Conversely, if non-ordinary identities and realities interest you, then you will enjoy that world. For example, say that on another plane of reality you are an angel. This represents an aspect of your multidimensional wholeness. By allowing that aspect to influence you, life becomes richer. Ironically, it keeps you sane (more or less). If you rule out this possibility, then you effectively limit its influence, or at least, its full expression.

In any case, an important factor in dealing with non-ordinary reality is how your ego handles it. If you are grounded, then you won't go crazy or become arrogant. You can enjoy the spectrum of wonder and possibilities that this reality offers.

Conclusion

As spiritually oriented people, we strive to understand the spiritual and material nature of the universe. Beyond the Veil is a metaphysical state and consciously tapping its energy is a profound experience. A face of God is clearly there, immanent, permeating everything. The point is to get a feel for it. After that, you don't need to catch it directly. When you need to, you can glimpse it from the corner of your Third Eye.

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Transcending Mass Consciousness

By Frances Segraves

On level after level, on plane after plane, we are immersed in mass consciousness, and we struggle repeatedly to emerge onto solid ground. We are involved, to become evolved.

Just what do we think of as "mass consciousness"? We think of it perhaps as a vast sea of awareness, receptive to the stimuli of light, heat, darkness, cold, and pressure, blindly acting and reacting to impulses arising from some kind of natural automatic direction, caught forever in its own inchoate anonymity. It is all of these. But it is also our first field of experience beyond our own periphery. All of us are units in this mass. Communities are only larger clusters of these units, nations still larger, and continents and planets larger yet.

Considering the mass consciousness thus puts in a new context. Often we are inclined to comfortably look down upon what we term the "mass", and with some smugness assure ourselves and anyone else who will listen that we are certainly not part of it-this is not us-it is just all those other people, from whom we are somehow different.

So our first shell is constructed, our little house of separateness which sets us, so we think, apart, and protects us from those unlovely aspects of human living which we find particularly distressing. This shell, however, turns all too quickly into a prison for the little "I" hiding within it. Fear and anxiety add to its constriction - fear to lose the shelter, and fear to lose identity within the mass. We are caught in the squeeze, and for survival, have to escape before we are smothered.

Cautiously, then, we extend a few feelers a little way outside to see if we will be attacked, or if by some miracle we can make a new place for ourselves within a larger community than our own tiny, carefully surveyed area of living, once so satisfying, now so limited. If we negotiate this transition successfully, we discover to our astonishment that what seemed a mass, remote, terrifying, ignorant, and apart, is the very stuff of civilization and culture itself. It is the human race striving, hoping, dreaming, struggling and frequently achieving. Mass consciousness is, then, ourselves.

Once we can tolerate the idea that we are part of the human race, and admit that in the interests of our own survival we must act and submit to being acted upon, as a part of growing, we encounter a real problem: our degree of vulnerability. How open need we be to mass experience? Must we go the whole round time after time? Well, it depends on how smart we are. That is, we cannot protect ourselves in our little shells from life experience, for that is our school, our kindergarten. But we don't have to stay in kindergarten forever.

First, then, we reject the mass through fear, and separate ourselves from it. Moving on, we become part of it, and find our second refuge identification. This shell is harder to get out of. It is comfortable at first. There are others in it, who do what we do, and appear to think as we think, have the same things happen to that that we experience. We do feel that we are not alone, but are indeed a part of humanity, a part of one another. And in this conformity seems to lie security.

Why is this not sufficient? It is, until we discover, through the questing and questioning which is an inevitable consequence of the thinking process, that not only are our own answers unsatisfactory, but those of our new-formed brothers are no better. Again, we are threatened, this time by a conformity that at first was comfortable, is now constrictive. Again we must break out of our shell, to continue our search.

If we can no longer accept conformity to mass consciousness within our chosen area as sufficient or satisfactory, where do we go next? And how? Detaching ourselves from identification with crowd

values is not easy. David Reisman, in his fine book *The Lonely Crowd* divides society into three categories: the inner-directed group whose source is tradition; the other-directed group which is "people minded", so sensitive to what the "others" think and feel about them that their total life is anxiety-ridden in an attempt to conform to some vague idea of group adjustment, based usually on the lowest common denominator; and the autonomous group, the balance, whose acceptance of social and political authority is always conditional they can cooperate with others in action while maintaining the right of private judgment. These three divisions seems valid, but limited. We would add another one: "upper-directed" to express the potential of the individual who by his own effort lifts himself out of the mass, towards the light, but who remains, to redeem it. He is inner-directed in a truer sense than Reisman implies.

How does this effort to separate from the mass arise? There is a certain pattern that each life experience inevitably takes. It begins with an impact. Physical impact of one kind or another. This is followed by an emotional response, which is usually in two parts, attraction and repulsion, or advance and recoil.

Here the average person stops unable to take the next step of analysis and evaluation, which is a mental one, and requires effort, and detachment. He is still more unable to take the next one, to open himself to the spiritual impression which will retain the essence the synthesis of the experience in the storehouse of the permanent atoms.

So that, for the average person, sensitive to and a part of mass consciousness, life experience is a series of explosive incidents containing two elements physical impact and emotional response. These he repeats and repeats, much like the Corinthian king Sisyphus who as punishment for revealing divine secrets, was condemned until the end of time to roll a huge stone to the top of a hill, only to have it fall back again. We are better off than the unfortunate king. Finally, because we can think, we reach a saturation point the well of the unconscious spills over and the conscious mind awakes.

We examine in ourselves and our environment with new eyes. We discover that our limited reactions are made up of outworn patterns, suitable for our ancestors, but no longer useful to this present life, and they had better be traded in for some new models. We see that we are enclosed by these habitual responses, as in a shell. That they were once our protection, but are now our prison. And at last we begin to use our minds to free ourselves from this prison.

Thus, following separation, then identification, comes the rejection of mass consciousness as a directive force. At the same time, the individual, having gotten this far, knows that he cannot stand alone, and once more seeks out a group of like-minded people. To the average individual a group is something to join, where we attend meetings, pick up a few friends and generally have a pleasant happy time. What is a group in the sense in which we think of it? It is a collection of units, born within and rising above the mass consciousness, to come into an awareness, together, of the service they can render to humanity. It has a strong inner subjective life, out of which its objective service grows. It knows its destiny.

Groups reincarnate together to learn certain lessons, to do certain work. For some people, the life lessons are the important things, and they are placed where situations will develop in which such lessons can best be learned. For others, the group work is important, the individual progress less essential. Those whose bent is in the learning situation and should be taken as such. By most people, however, group work in this is not well understood. Frequently one leads editorials or articles on the dangers of losing one's individuality in a group the anonymity of the group, the conformity to the group, ect. Actually it is the fear of regressing into the heard-pattern of the mass which makes a person distrustful. And without more understanding he cannot take a step beyond, to

realize the redemptive role of the group.

What, after all, is the cohesive factor in society? What holds it together? A common purpose a vision - first anchored into a small handful of people. Through this channel, into the mass consciousness, that vision is born. The mass provides the soil in which seeds if ideas are nurtured. It provides the abuses that are to be relieved. The ideas spring up in response to the pressures. As these ideas ferment and grow towards the light, they affect the mass, changing its content, redeeming it, integrating it. And out of that mass comes an integrated society, a civilisation. From a civilisation flowers a culture. And what is a culture but seed-groups of enlightened and spiritually oriented individuals through which the energies are channelled that work upon and through the mass consciousness, to up lift and redeem it?

This redemptive work in humanity is, as in the individual, marked by crises, tension and emergence. The crises is the conflict between old ways and new ones between old age tradition and new age vision between outworn patterns and new ones in process of being born. Without such crises, a break-through into a new level of thinking would scarcely be possible. Let us not be too quick, then, to deplore crises. They literally plow up fields of mass consciousness so that in the seed idea the tension of growth can take place.

One of these seed ideas is that of right human relations, and brotherhood. That particular idea has taken a lot of beating, but we are always confronted with the unthinkable alternatives of wrong human relations, and war. So, though our techniques leave a lot to be desired, the mass consciousness now holds the thought of brotherhood. Another idea, more and more emphasised, is the need for better standards and values. Many of our institutions and practises are being re-examined to see what happened where we got off the track. We have lots and lots of committee meetings, but we also have lots and lots of crime and delinquency, loss of religious standards and educational values. This cleavage is wide, and may the more rapidly bring acceptance of a new world religious concept into the mass mind.

Men want a set of beliefs based on logical developments which they can follow. Away from dogma at times so unrealistic as to be absurd, man has turned to science, which can at least prove its conclusions and repeat its experiments to show the life processes at work. These do not, however, satisfy his aspirational needs. To the mass consciousness, symbols, numbers and forms do not necessarily signify beauty or fulfilment. Rather, they puzzle and confuse, and contribute to that chief characteristic of our age anxiety. Man will continue to be anxious and troubled until he finds once more his relationship with the Universe as an integral part of the working of the harmonious Whole, in a way that he can understand.

We have been told that in response to this need, teaching concerning the ancient Mysteries will once more become available. Here, within these timeless living acts man can re-discover his place in the Universe, the purpose of his life, and the goal to be attained. Anxiety is in reality then a blessing in disguise. For man's whole life is a search for meaning, and anxiety is the propulsive power that drives on the search.

Another seed idea now is the intense materialism which our highly developed industries have brought on. We have it, we like it, but we know there is something wrong with it. Inventive and alert human minds will always create things gadgets, automobiles, planes, housing, bridges, machinery, ect. They will invent more things which are better than the old ones. Whitehead remarked that man may not live by bread alone, but neither could he be nourished by the machinery which makes the bread. Nevertheless, this machinery makes products and the products have to be consumed and used, somewhere, sometime, by somebody. This production-consumption cycle is the inbreathing and out breathing of the trade and industrial life of our world. Without this exchange

we could not survive and grow.

We also know that we are attracted by the glitter of all these wonderful things and no matter what we spend we can never possess them all. Intellectually we know better but emotionally, we are caught. Such is the glamour of the materialistic age we live in. Yet it is an illusion which can be dispelled. As we face our world responsibilities, and cope with world problems, we mature. We work out principles on which we can take our stand. We see our need to be free of world glamour. This though, too, then, is being seeded into the mass consciousness.

Transition and Transformation

By Alexandra Hepburn

Let yourself be silently drawn
By the stronger pull
Of what you really love.
— Rumi

Changes, changes, changes — and on top of that, an accelerating rate of change! This is one of the favorite descriptions of the current state of affairs in our world. On an individual level, many people these days describe themselves as being "in transition." It's difficult to know whether, as the Buddhists tell us, life is inherently change, or something is really different about our times.

As a therapist and educator who works with people in transition, I have found it useful to make some distinctions among different kinds of change. Yes, life is full of change; life is flux. In this phenomenal world, everything that has a beginning has an end. This is especially true on the surface of things. Appearances change; the body changes; feelings and thoughts change. But to paraphrase Gregory Bateson, what are the changes that really make a difference?

We can have more or less of something, do something better or worse, feel happier or sadder; we grow older, learn more, forget more, and sometimes become wiser. But as we look beneath the surface, we find that many changes and transitions are more like rearranging the pieces on a game board than amending the rules of the game, or even shifting to a different game altogether. There's nothing wrong with rearranging pieces, but one may begin to find this ongoing process less than satisfying, and ultimately, it does not facilitate the kinds of fundamental changes that are needed if life is to survive and thrive on this planet.

This is where the notion of transformation comes in. This term, too, is glibly tossed around these days, but I want to make the case that true transformation involves radical, fundamental change. I think there are several senses in which this may be true.

The ultimate one is the transformation of self-realization, or awakening to the truth of our being, in which "the self becomes toast," as Ken Wilber puts it. There is a dying to what was before and a rebirth into the essence of being; rather than rearranging pieces or changing the game rules, the game is dropped altogether. This is a relatively rare type of transformation, but seems to be taking place more frequently; this awakening from the whole dream of consensus reality is clearly possible and available, and I know many who burn with a longing for it.

The second sense is a developmental one, and involves a shift to a level of consciousness that transcends and includes what went before. We may be familiar with this kind of deep-structure change taking place several times over childhood and adolescence — as adolescents, for instance, become capable of abstract and hypothetical thinking — but we may be less aware that numerous transformative shifts are also possible through adulthood.

Some of these may be described as taking place at a personal level, some at the transpersonal level, beyond the personal. This kind of developmental change involves a process of dying to an old identity and meaning-structure (dis-identifying) and re-identifying with a new structure of consciousness that includes a new self-definition, a new worldview, and a new way of making meaning. Usually this takes places gradually over time, and like most births, involves some pain and grief as well as joy and celebration.

Finally, there is a kind of transformation that I call an expansion of aliveness. This refers to a

radical increase in the use of human potential. We normally draw on so little of our possible resources: sensory and kinesthetic awareness, extrasensory and physical capacities, creativity, and more. These are sometimes referred to as "multiple intelligences," and Michael Murphy devotes a huge volume, *The Future of the Body*, to exploring the evolution of some of these capacities. In this kind of experience of opening and becoming more fully alive, we discover a different self living in a different world. There is still a player, but it is a whole new game.

It's important to see that these kinds of radical change processes do not just happen to individuals; always there is an interweaving of transformation in both self and world. Under normal circumstances, we tend to be so absorbed in our own personal dramas that we overlook the reality that self and world are always interwoven. Transformation brings this truth from the background to the foreground, because when we undergo transformation, it involves giving birth to a new self living in a new world. We see the world differently, and in Annie Dillard's words, "The gift of seeing is the pearl of great price."

We may not understand the ultimate mystery of how transformations occur, but we may contribute to — and cooperate in — their emergence. This is one of the most exciting arenas for exploration in our time. Through conscious, integral education and counseling, offering both support and challenge, we open up new possibilities and realities for others, for ourselves, and for the world. This is profound work, work of the heart, mind, body, soul, and spirit.

These words are an invitation to consider what lies deeper than the onward rush of superficial changes. Change is always with us, but with some maturity and wisdom (which is not a product of years) — and if we are lucky — we are no longer satisfied with the surface of things. We are called to go deeper, to let go of the old and familiar forms and surrender to the deeper tides of transformation that have their source in the Mystery and pull us home.

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Treading the Path

By M.E. Haselhurst

"The place where we are is the place from which our Journey begins."

It is slightly startling to realise how aptly this symbolic phrase "treading the Path" describes the esoteric effort to become soul conscious, and to move toward Monadic consciousness. An inner urge drives the personal self to make the first tentative movement, to put a hesitating and exploratory foot down in a new direction, and thenceforward each step continues the journey into reality.

There has long been a tendency to wrap this matter of treading the Path in mystery, to think of it as setting apart those who undertake the effort from other men. In fact it does no such thing. In their own way, and time, and circumstances, all men are treading the Path, because all are sparks of the one Divine Life and will eventually demonstrate that Oneness. The only difference is that some men recognise their divine destiny sooner than those around them, and so are able to take up the always present opportunity of starting to walk rather more directly towards mankind's common goal.

In taking up the challenge of this direct approach, men take into their own hands the responsibility for accomplishing their destiny. The "I" of the personality has to be stretched until it becomes the greater "I" of the soul; and that, eventually, must merge into the all-inclusive "I" of the Monad. This stretching process represents self-initiated effort. It is needful to tread the Path by one's own effort, not by hitchhiking a lift in some heavenly omnibus. One can be helped on this journey, but not carried. And it is necessary to keep moving.

The operative word here is "moving." It is extremely easy, especially after many years of esoteric effort, to slip into habits of thought, action and attitude which were helpful when initiated, but which have been transformed by time and use into comfortable arm-chairs, so comfortable, so snugly form-fitting, that the traveller is loath to move from them, or to meet experiences which demand the abandonment of such satisfying anchorages. Yet abandoned they must be. If there is any one thing above all others which is the deadly enemy of discipleship effort, of treading the Path, it is inertia. Only ruthlessly clear and constantly revised elevations can save one from it. Steady, undeviating work is needed, plus willingness to experiment and the capacity to explore. The age-old axiom that "when the pupil is ready the Master will appear" is no excuse for slacking effort. From his own limited viewpoint, the aspirant may be quite ready, poised, alert, watching for the wished-for signal. But from the other end of the circuit there may be obstacles, karma that has to be worn out, relationships that have to be established, or skills that have to be unfolded. If the eagerly longed-for link does not speedily appear, no aspirant has the right to sink back into inertia of discouragement. Each and every sincere student of the Ageless Wisdom, each aspirant to tread the path, is required to keep on trying, actively and constantly engaged in the task of establishing: -

- a. soul consciousness
- b. capacity to use this expanded awareness in world service.

It is encouraging to note the oft-repeated teaching that the master is most likely to appear in the moment when he has been completely forgotten as the man on the outer plane struggles to meet some overwhelming need.

This meeting of world need is a vital part of treading the Path. It need not be glamorous, spectacular or dramatic effort. It is not given to all men to serve grandly, writing in bold letters the history of their times. But it is given to all men to serve in the measure of their highest achieved capacity, knowing that, as need is met, the capacity to meet greater need unfolds. No man is truly treading the

Path who is not, according to the present limitations of his environment, helping other men to find and tread it also.

Robert F. Kennedy once said:

"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope and, crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, these ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

"Few are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential vital quality for those who see a change a world that yields most painfully to change. And I believe that in this generation those with the courage to enter the moral conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the globe."

It needs very little translation to find in such noble words an inspiring yet realisable pattern of public action to guide all outer plane service.

Spiritual Adventure

Treading the path is a spiritual adventure carried forward, at our present stage of evolution, by means of the physical body, and by means of which man functions in the physical world. This involves a responsibility oft-times overlooked, that of the right and intelligent use of this marvellously constructed, living instrument. It has been said that man and the tortoise have more in common than appears at first glance. The tortoise is a life that lives within a form that is both house and vehicle. Man's physical body is both his house and his vehicle of expression. It is a unique instrument, sensitive, strong, beautiful, and definitely adaptable, designed to meet all the needs encountered in any incarnation. An instrument at once so precious and so useful merits care, but not coddling. Disciples have no right to ignore it, because there is much work to be done, and the physical instrument is necessary part of the doing. It is a part of the process of treading the Path that this house which is also an instrument be kept in proper repair, nurtured and protected within reason, and at all times held in right restraint. It is to be used, but not allowed to dominate action, or to intrude unduly on the aspirant's real affairs.

Those who are no longer young in years have a peculiar duty in this connection. It must be remembered that the soul works more easily through the older, experienced body, than that is young and inexperienced, provided there is right motivation and a complete lack of selfishness, pride and prejudice. The Master Djwhal Khul tells such disciples to "Face the future with the same joy as in youth, yet with an added usefulness, knowing that you have the wisdom of experience, and the capacity for understanding that no physical limitation can prevent a soul from useful expression and service. The soul knows no age, and can use its instrument for as long as the instrument is held ready and available for service."

It is wise to give penetrative thought as to just how treading the Path fits into daily life patterns, which are, for most men, fixed and inescapable. It is not always realised, for instance, that there was a period in the life of Jesus when he lived quietly at home with his parents, undergoing the most difficult experience of home life, with its monotony, its unvarying usualness, its subordination to group need, and its lessons of sacrifice, understanding and service. This is the point from which every disciple has to start. Until divinity has been expressed in the home, and amongst those who know us well, it cannot be expected to express itself elsewhere. "The place where we are is the place from which our journey begins, and not the place from which we escape." It is here, in the place where he now stands, that man faces the real test of discipleship. A test is something which

tries one's strength, and daily life does this with searching thoroughness. It is extremely easy for men to imagine they would make a spectacular success of treading the Path being a disciple, living the spiritual life, if only they had different opportunities, somebody's else's capacities, some other person's circumstances. In actual fact, each man has exactly the environment, the type of body and the set of circumstances, best designed to call into active expression the divinity hidden deep within his own being. Every man has those contacts in the world, the kind of work and opportunity, which he needs to enable him to take the next step upon the path of discipleship. It is by taking this next step, and then another and another, that men learn to tread with surety the Path that leads from the unreal to the Real.

With life firmly rooted in simplicities such as these, it becomes possible to achieve more definitely esoteric recognitions. The next necessary steps, easily measured in talking, lead to goal so high that the human mind cannot fully comprehend them. None-the-less, it is wise to give thought to these mountaintop objectives, for toward them the Path inevitably leads. Each effort to comprehend, to visualise, however faintly, the objectives of the journey, sends forth-tenuous threads of understanding. Such threads will eventually strengthen into bridges by means of which man enabled to pass to transcendental experience.

Total Life Expression

This makes clear that the really major step to be taken is a shift of consciousness, a re-orientation of the whole life, a stepping-up of the vibration quality of the total life expression. It is not given to serious students of esotericism to stand still. A recognition achieved, an expression undergone, is the point from which the next expansion of consciousness must be initiated.

The Tibetan Master points out that "some very sincere devotees and promising applicants are so pre-occupied with form and its disciplining that they have no real time to give to soul expansion. They are so interested in their reactions to their self-imposed discipline, that the spiritual truths, seeking entrance into their hearts, fail to make such an entrance. Temperance in all things, the wise use of all sustaining forms, and self-forgetfulness are the hallmarks of the disciple . . . Many disciples are still so earnest over the physical disciplines that the discipline of the soul is ignored."

That this is an aspect of treading the Path which is of over-riding importance is emphasised by further comment of this Master to the effect that "one the world of the soul is entered, the disciple uses all forms wisely, with understanding of their purpose, and with freedom from excess. He is not preoccupied with them or fundamentally interested in them. His eyes are off himself and are fixed on the world of true values. He has no sense of self-interest because a group awareness is rapidly superseding his individual consciousness."

Having thus jolted the mind out of its accustomed self-complacency, the same Master makes things a little easier by pointing clearly to the great shifts of consciousness which will be achieved, and the goals which will be reached and passed, as the disciple treads patiently this ever-climbing Path. "The goal ahead of the aspirant is the consciousness of non-separateness and the recognition of a universal inclusiveness; the secondary goal is the ability to reveal the nature of that reality, Unity; the third goal is the ability to take those measures in the three worlds which will facilitate mankind's apprehension of these fundamentals."

Then, ensuring that the student is under no misapprehension concerning the task in hand, there is the further statement: "You will note how this last definition of the goal removes inevitably the factor of self-interest in its entirety. It might be said that revelation concerns Oneness and nothing else. The practical nature of this truth is only recognised when the disciple attempts to do two things: to realise it individually, and to bring the nature of planetary unity and of non-separateness

to the minds, and into the lives of men everywhere . . . The disciple must reveal to humanity the essential unity underlying all creation."

This is work of an urgent nature. There is no over-all blue print giving details as to how it is to be accomplished. Each aspirant, each student, must make his own choices, implement his own decisions. He must take that inescapable first step, lift a foot and put it down and put it down pointing in the direction it appears to him is the right one; and keep going. It does not matter, in any essential sense, if he gets a little off course now and again. There is always the fixed point of intention within his own consciousness to which he can return. Direction can be altered so long as the goal remains paramount, and the will to achieve it does not falter. It is sloth, not ignorance or ineptitude, which is the greatest enemy to progress. Lack of achievement stems from inertia, plus reluctance to face misjudgement or the possible failure of an envisioned project.

Soul expansion (which, curiously enough is a contradiction in terms) suggests a movement within thought or, perhaps, within consciousness. When men first set out to tread the Path they are like children building sand castles, or making magnificent edifices with brightly coloured blocks. It is work by means of which the inner Self comes to expression because creative imagination is made active in form. But tides wash away the sand castles, and, for sundry reasons, the blocks have to be tidied away. Man has to learn to give expression to these capacities for creation on subtler levels, working in the realm of mind, using thought as his medium of expression. The book Aum contains many evocative hints and suggestions concerning the recognition and use of the energy of thought. "Let thought continue to work. People do not keep pace with the flight of thought, yet none the less thought leads the world." And again: "It is almost impossible to find people who are devoted to the art of thinking. In the simple matter of Olympic Games people are ready to award crowns to winners. But where is there recognition and encouragement of thought?" "Thought has no tongue yet it is all-pervading."

Disciples, individually and in groups, are required to develop the capacity to think sanely, evading no issues, but preserving always a calm, dispassionate and loving understanding.

Creative Activity

This type and quality of thought not only leads to creative activity within the life of humanity; it also fosters recognition and realisation of the soul as the dominating influence within man's individual life. Here, on a higher octave, the positive, active nature of this project of treading the Path is demonstrated. The soul needs the mind and brain as instruments of expression. The more these are sensitised and brought into synchronous vibration with the soul, the smoother and more effective will be the interplay between them.

It must always be remembered that man treads the Path; he does not have nay swift and easy passage over it. When the effort is lifted to the mental plane it is pertinent to recognise that "a trained mind, a well stocked memory will greatly facilitate the work of the soul in gaining a right record and an accurate registering of its knowledge."

With the mind steadily oriented towards abstract mental levels, it gradually becomes possible to perceive the significance of the phrase, right meditation. This meditation, when man is truly treading the Path, becomes a continues expression of soul life. As Mr C.W. Leadbeater points out (The Masters and the Path, p 359):

"We cannot always have our consciousness drawn away from the physical plane to higher levels; yet it is possible to live a life of meditation in this sense, that the higher things are always so strongly present in the background of our minds that they may instantly come to the front when that mind is not otherwise occupied. Our life will then be really a life of perpetual meditation upon the

highest and noblest objects, interrupted now and then by the necessity of putting our thoughts into practice in daily life."

The Master Djwhal Khul sends the concept deeper, drives thought higher. "Meditation," he tells us, "is essentially the highest instrument and the perfected consummation of the third divine aspect, that of intelligent activity, and is from every possible angle carried on within the ring-pass-not of the Universal Mind . . ." "Meditation brings into alignment instinct, intellect and the intuition, as well as conscious identification. It relates in an indissoluble unity the so-called lower or concrete mind, the group mind, the hierarchical mind and the Universal Mind; it leads to a conscious alignment of the disciple's centres and also the three planetary Centres; it is invocative, demanding, fusing, receptive and distributory in nature." He also says that meditation is the outstanding creative agent on our planet.

In the light of these indicated possibilities, giving due weight to the recognitions and realisations which lie open to the serious and persistent student, treading the Path becomes an enterprise so splendid, so creative, so demanding, that nothing less than total commitment to it is possible. Those who would essay the venture are offered opportunity, made aware that they are needed, and assured of significant results. Decision, the actual taking of the required steps, is a matter of individual concern.

The Path is there. It is not found easily, though approaches leading to it are many and various. It is not trodden easily, despite the many sign-posts and directives available for the help of earnest travellers. Yet it can be found, and it can be trodden, and those who follow it, putting one foot after another with purposeful persistence, find eventually the truth of the ancient Scriptures which says:

"Ever the radiance groweth till the Path ends within a blaze of glory, and the wanderer through the night becomes the child of the sun, and entereth within the portals of that radiant orb."

Seven Uplifting Strategies to Reawaken Your Joy and Passion for Life

By Lauren E. Sullivan

If you are suffering from burnout, disappointment, or feeling stuck in a life that's not working for you, take heart! These seven stepping stones will guide you along an empowering path to renewed energy and zest for life.

1. Shore up your energy for change. When you are feeling defeated, resist the urge to push yourself into action to fix your life. Instead, slow down and recharge your batteries. Acknowledge that your resources have been drained by the stress of a life chronically out of whack. Give yourself a nurturing gift by making a conscious choice to rejuvenate your body, mind and spirit. Embarking on a big change when you are depleted of energy and enthusiasm may get you somewhere, but probably not where you really want to go.

2. Resurrect the dreams you left behind. Spend some quality time alone with your thoughts and a journal. Write about your needs, your desires and your dreams. Take a trip down memory lane and remember the things that used to bring a smile to your face, the things you enjoyed when you were younger and life was simpler. What were your hopes for the future? What is your highest aspiration for your life now? If there were no obstacles, what would you be doing with your life?

3. Conquer your inner critic and limiting beliefs. Beware of the ugly inner critic that wants to nip this "flight of fantasy" thing in the bud. Pay attention to the negative, critical messages that stop you from taking steps in a new direction. Become an observer of your inner dialog and decide who you want in charge of your life: your inner critic or your inner coach? Allow your inner coach to expand your belief in what is possible.

4. Find joy in the journey. Short-circuit the "I'll be happy when..." syndrome by choosing to consciously dwell in positive thought and feeling. Make a choice to spend more time noticing what is right with your life and what is right with you rather than feeding the cycle of negativity by magnifying what seems to be wrong or missing from your life. Positive feelings such as gratitude, appreciation, love, and compassion for yourself and others will energize you and propel you toward a brighter future.

5. Imagine you are already where you want to be. Spend time playing in your imagination. Not only is it okay to daydream, it's a vital step in redesigning your life. Allow yourself to vividly imagine the life that would bring you the greatest joy and satisfaction. Then write about what you envision in clear, concise, emphatic, and energizing words. An empowering vision for your future will lift you out of the doldrums and into action!

6. Create an inspiring life plan. Support your vision with a detailed plan for your new life. What needs to change in order for you to experience a rich and robust quality of life? Look at each aspect of your life that is important to you and make a conscious decision to fill in those missing pieces. Declare your intentions in writing, and then make a commitment to take action to carry out your plan.

7. Navigate the bumps in the road. Allow for imperfections! If things do not go as planned, or if something comes out of left field to knock you off track, let it be. Tend to the crisis or detour, but hold onto your vision. The path between where you are and where you want to be may not unfold in a straight line. Look for the gift in the situation and get back on track as soon as you can. Persistence and patience are important keys to transforming your life.

Celebrate every baby step along the way, because in time, each step will add up to a giant leap. And

before you know it, your dreams will have become your new reality!

About the Author

Lauren E. Sullivan is the author of *Give Wings to Your Dreams: Reawaken Your Joy and Passion for Life*. An expert in women's life change issues, she leads "Life Choice Retreats" in Santa Barbara, California, to help women in job burnout, midlife crisis, empty-nest syndrome, or divorce recovery to find a sense of life purpose, work/life balance and to improve quality of life. Website: www.InspiredLifeDesign.com

The Universe, The Planet, The World, And Man

From The Sayings of the Ancient One

By P.G.Bowen

Let every seeker after truth understand the simple fact that though no individual view of life can ever be wholly true, yet every view that can be taken as true in a relative sense, because it is an aspect of itself presented by truth to the seeker. One aspect may be less wide than another, but that does not mean that the other contains no truth at all, or contradicts the first. We seekers of knowledge are like travellers in an unknown country of plains and rivers and mountains, deserts and hills and forests. One stands on the plains and describes what he sees before him. Another climbs a tall forest tree and tells what he observes. A third ascends to a hilltop, and returns with his account. A fourth is not content until he views the landscape from the summit of the loftiest mountain peak. To each observer the country presents a different appearance; and even if two should view from the one point, the accounts of it which they give will differ. Yet such differences do not cause wise travellers to quarrel. On the contrary, they seek for more complete knowledge by weighing and comparing the varying accounts, and will reach a basis from which to make further explorations, not from what any one observer has seen, but from what they deduce from the united accounts.

Those who strive to explore the mysterious worlds of mind and spirit are seldom so wise, and they often quarrel with those bound on the same search who may not see quite as they see, instead of recognizing the most obvious fact in life, that as all men differ one from another, no two can have the same understanding of life. If I claim my own view as right, and those of all others who differ from me as wrong, then I am asserting one of two things; either that I know absolute truth, or else that I imagine that every man stands on the self-same level as every other. If I think either of those things. I am showing myself absurd and childish.

When I find that I differ from my brother I always ask myself this: "Does my brother appear to view life from a loftier or a lowlier standpoint than mine? If the first, may he not help me to rise to where he stands? If the second, perhaps I can help him to ascend." But to become certain either way we must patiently consult together, and measure and compare our views, and see wherein they differ, and in what respects they agree.

The universe is infinite and eternal, without limits, without beginning, and without end. To speculate upon its nature is not profitable, since human mind exists in time, and cannot conceive eternity; and human life is finite and cannot therefore establish any relationship with Infinity. The real universe is not the visible universe, nor any extension of it in space that consciousness can conceive. The universe is Life, and it manifests in and through an infinite host of beings.

Because it is infinite, the beings in and through which life manifests are infinite in variety as well as in numbers. Although they are imperfect in their varying degrees, since limitation means imperfection, yet they are perfect in essence, because that of which they are manifestations is limitless, and therefore perfect. In understanding this, the learner should also understand that in obeying the law of his being, which impels him ever to seek wider and wider knowledge of himself, of his world, and of Life, he is seeking to know that perfection which is the ultimate nature of all things. He is therefore reaching out towards conscious unity with all that is, since perfection cannot be other than One. To know this is to know the purpose of existence. Consciously or unconsciously, all beings reach out after extended experience: experience means knowledge, and the pursuit of knowledge is the pursuit of perfection.

Beings are distinguished by qualities, or attributes which are innumerable in variety; and these are all limitations, or modifications of Life, which the possessor uses, or should be striving to use, to aid him in attaining the object of his existence. Life has one attribute only: that which impels it to

seek knowledge of its own perfection.

All beings are infinite and eternal in ultimate essence, and all are finite in manifestations. The course they pursue through manifestation is a constant reaching out towards knowledge of their essential perfection.

Every aspect of Life which is touched, or which it is possible to conceive may be touched by consciousness, is a being. The universe, as consciousness may conceive it, is a being. So also are the infinitesimal particles of energy, so-called, which, as is taught by men of science, build up every body throughout all space. Because the universe is infinite, for Infinity there can be no Being so vast that a greater cannot be conceived.

The learner should consider with care that which has been said, it may be difficult to grasp but when understood, in any degree, it will help much towards unveiling many of the mysteries of existence. It will lead to the knowledge that through study of the Larger Being within which he exists, man may begin to know himself; and conversely, that man may begin to know himself; and conversely, that by search within himself he may learn to know that which appears to be without and beyond him.

The Value of an Ideal

From A Study in Consciousness

By Annie Besant

An ideal is a fixed mental concept of an inspiring character, framed for the guidance of conduct, and the formation of an ideal is one of the most effective means of influencing desire. The ideal may, or may not, find embodiment in an individual, according to the temperament of the man who frames it, and it must ever be remembered that the value of an ideal depends largely on its attractiveness, and that which attracts one temperament by no means necessarily attracts another. An abstracted ideal and a personal one are equally good, regarded from a general standpoint, and that should be selected which has, on the individual choosing it, the most attractive influence. A person of the intellectual temperament will usually find an abstract ideal the more satisfactory; whereas one of the emotional temperament will demand a concrete embodiment of his thought. The disadvantage of the abstract ideal is that it is apt to fail in compelling inspiration; the disadvantage of the concrete embodiment is that the embodiment is apt to fall below the ideal.

The mind creates the ideal, and either retains it as an abstraction, or embodies it in the person. The time chosen for the creation of an ideal should be a time when the mind is calm and steady and luminous, when the desire-nature is asleep. Then the Thinker should consider the purpose of his life, the goal at which he aims, and with this to guide his choice, he should select the qualities necessary to enable him to reach that goal. These qualities he should combine into a single concept, imagining as strongly as he can this integration of the qualities he needs. Daily he should repeat this integration process, until his ideal stands out clearly in the mind, dowered with all beauty of high thought and noble character, a figure of compelling attractiveness. The man of intellect will keep this ideal as a pure concept. The man of emotional nature will embody it in a person, such as the Buddha, the Christ, Shri Krishna or some other divine Teacher. In this latter case he will, if possible, study His life, His teachings, His actions, and the ideal will thus become more and more strongly vivified, more and more and more real to the Thinker. Intense love will spring up in the heart for this embodied ideal, and desire will stretch out longing arms to embrace it. And when temptation assails, and the lower desires clamour for satisfaction, then the attractive power of the ideal asserts itself, the loftier desire combats the baser, and the Thinker finds himself reinforced by right desire, the negative strength of memory which says: "Abstain from the base", being fortified by the positive strength of the ideal which says: "Achieve the heroic".

The man who lives habitually in the presence of a great ideal is armed against wrong desires by love of his ideal, by shame of being base in its presence, by the longing to resemble that which he adores, and also by the general set and trend of his mind along lines of noble thinking. Wrong desires become more and more incongruous. They perish naturally, unable to breathe in the pure clear air.

It may be worth while to remark here, in view of the destructive results of historical criticism, in the minds of many, that the value of the ideal Christ, the ideal Buddha, the ideal Krishna, is no way injured by any lack of historical data, by any defects in the proofs of the authenticity of a manuscript. Many of the stories related may not be historically true, but they are sent spiritual facts, whether the physical incidents be or be not true historically true.

The thought may shape and direct desire, and turn it from an enemy into an ally. By changing the direction of desire, it becomes a lifting and quickening instead of a retarding force, and where desires for objects held us fast in the mire of earth, desire for the ideal lifts us on strong wings to heaven.

Vertical and Horizontal Living

By M.E. Haselhurst

It is an axiom of spiritual philosophy that the soul's life, its recognition, responsibilities and realities, extend beyond the confines of the personality it happens to be using. Granting this, vertical living is manifested as the personality seeks to reach up into the spreading light and glory of the soul; horizontal living demonstrates as sparks of that light and glory are worked into the fabric of daily life.

Vertical living involves the capacity intuitively to sense an idea; horizontal living results from the effort to bring the idea to expression in the world of form. The former effort is one of being, characterised by detachment; the latter is one of doing, of applied effort, which calls forth the natural tendency of the personality to attachment. Integration, and the achievement of the right balance between inner and outer effort, are achieved when these two tendencies are reconciled.

On the cosmic stage, man appears as a creature who bridges different stages of consciousness. He is the at-one-ment factor in the plan of spiritual evolution. This means that he must constantly meet changing conditions and new emergencies without relinquishing his spiritual aspiration. In other words, the vertical life must thrust up through the horizontal, whilst the horizontal must grow from, and express, the spiritual urge.

Vertical living is related to realisation of the Divine Plan, and to recognition of Divine possibility. Horizontal living takes these realizations and recognitions and applies them in the world of men, adapting the divine potential to the differing needs of human beings who stand on widely varying levels of unfoldment and achievement. Something of this can be seen working out in the planning of nations; five-year plans, three-year plans, aimed at lifting the national level of living, and more specifically, in the work of the United Nations as it strives to reconcile national objectives and an international plan designed to widen the potential of human life everywhere.

Unfortunately, it is easy for words used as name symbols to become reparative in use, creating opposing concepts, setting objectives one against the other. That is one reason why occult teaching places such stress on the need to press through appearance to meaning. Vertical living, horizontal living, these are not separate endeavours. Rather do they represent the complete life of the spiritually oriented individual as expressed in the world of humanity. Two sticks of wood lying side-by-side are just sticks, useful perhaps, but without particular significance. Moved into the right relationship one with the other they become a cross, symbol of the most profound truths to millions of men and women. Equally, significance in life is achieved when the horizontal line of human force is laid across the vertical line of spiritual energy, creating thereby a life which is significant, inspiring, uplifting and compelling within its particular sphere.

Vertical living is not easy: it demand increase with strength and knowledge, as do the demands of the horizontal life. Both efforts must make use of the mind, must achieve constantly more complex relationships, and must realize that the simplicity of Oneness is a synthesis of un-numbered difficult recognitions. There is a tendency for students of esoterism to brush aside the difficulties of occult science, claiming that spiritual living does not depend on prodigious mental effort. Thus is a dangerous half-truth. Granted that even the most ignorant, the most circumscribed, the most ill-equipped individual may live a life notable for its spiritual quality; it is none the less true that understanding enhances the capacity for service, and forges the keys that give entry to states of consciousness at present beyond human comprehension.

Vertical living means something more than the receipt of spiritual energies, more than being merely a channel through which such energies may be directed into the life of man. It demands an

understanding of these energies, knowledge of how to direct them, and an unwavering determination to attain ever-greater skill in applying them to human situations.

Let it be said that this task is too onerous. Most truly it may be unachievable in any one incarnation, even as horizontal living poses problems, requires skills, which cannot be solved or acquired in any one day. Vertical living reaches beyond the confines of the immediate present, demanding of the mind a bridging effort which will relate the human and spiritual kingdoms, which will carry steadily forward through successive life-expressions, and which will lead eventually to conscious co-operation with the Masters of the Wisdom.

Vertical Telepathy

By Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

From Transpersonal Development

The dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis

We will now turn to the relationship between the conscious 'I' and what it can receive or pick up from the superconscious. This ability to receive 'from above' may be called vertical telepathy in order to distinguish it from horizontal telepathy, which refers to signals from outside the subject, emanating from the currents of individual or and collective thought, reaching that person horizontally through the atmosphere. We might also call it internal telepathy because it goes on within a single individual. We need to give a warning here, however: it is very difficult to distinguish what comes from the individual superconscious and what comes from even higher spheres or from the levels of the superconscious outside the individual. The higher one ascends, the more the limits of individuality tend to disappear; the higher one ascends, the more the individual becomes united with the whole. Thus any description or terminology can only be relative or indicative. Language is always symbolic and allusive in nature, and this is even more the case in the psychospiritual realm.

The word 'telepathy' means influence at a distance, referring here to a psychological distance, a distance in level between the conscious 'I' and the superconscious. Here again, as with horizontal telepathy, this type of telepathy can be either spontaneous or experimental, that is to say deliberate.

Spontaneous telepathy consists of receiving impressions from afar, without willing them, and then discovering that they tie in with reality, while in experimental telepathy one person projects a thought or image and another person tries to pick up what is being transmitted. The same distinction can be made in vertical telepathy. The type of vertical telepathy which might be called spontaneous covers all inspiration related phenomena: artistic, literary or musical inspiration; intuition; the higher forms of premonition; the urge to perform heroic deed; and mystical enlightenment. Ideas and energies from the superconscious burst through or come down into the conscious mind and are perceived by the conscious 'I'. But here too the process can be encouraged or even deliberately caused by means of psychospiritual exercises which attract or facilitate the transfer of superconscious messages and influences to the level of everyday consciousness.

Vertical telepathy is of great scientific and human significance. It is important from the scientific point of view because it confirms the existence of this higher aspect to our being; and it is important in human terms in that it is the best part of ourselves which is being encouraged, made conscious and therefore used creatively and to good purpose. Its significance is not recognized, however, or we would live very differently!

An analogy may help us to understand this. If it were known that there was a great sage endowed with great spiritual powers, a loving, unselfish sage, we would certainly feel an eager desire to speak to him and ask his help and advice. And if he lived as a hermit up in the mountains, surely we would be prepared to make the climb to find him. Would we not be willing to submit to the discipline of special psychospiritual preparation in order to win his precious teachings and to be made alive by the energy and love he radiated? We would realize that the help he offered could save us from making mistakes and from suffering and pain, as well as having the power to truly change our lives.

Such a sage or Master does actually exist. He is close at hand, indeed he is present in each of us. He is the Higher 'I', the Spiritual Self. To reach him does require a journey, but it is a journey through the world within. To reach the place where this Self resides means a climb, an ascent to the heights of the superconscious. It also requires proper psychospiritual preparation so that we will be able to

withstand the impact of the force of the Spiritual Self and to pick up its subtle messages, distinguishing them from all the other voices within, so that we can understand and interpret its symbolism correctly. And lastly we need to be prepared to put into effect, with an unswerving, resolute will, what we have been shown.

This preparation is not easy, of course. The Self considers things, events, beings, ect., in a very different way to the personal 'I'. Its value system and its perspective are very different to the way the ordinary conscious mind looks at things, with its 'short-sighted views', as Dante put it. What the Self reveals is consistent with what is truly good, but it can be contrary to our wishes and personal preferences. The Self does not call for sacrifices in the usual erroneous sense of forced, demanding renunciations; it calls for them in the sense of a consecration which results in the gradual elimination of a number of habits and activities that are harmful and of no use, or of less importance, so as to create a space for us to devote our time to things of greater value.

Furthermore, the Self in its wisdom and understanding love does not require that we do this at a stroke and in a perfect fashion. It is patient, prepared to wait, knowing full well that, however slowly, we will reach the high goal for which we are destined, a goal on which the Self has kept its sights since the start of our evolutionary pilgrimage. In other words, the Self has a sense of what is eternal or, to be more accurate, it lives in eternity. But it is the eternal 'now' that it inhabits, not merely a transcendent eternity, cut off from the evolutionary process of development.

'Eternal now' is a paradoxical expression which must be appreciated intuitively; but it provides us with the key to a fundamental truth, and that has to do with the relation between the transcendent and the immanent, between being and becoming. Both of these should be present, conscious and at work in us.

We need to live our lives with a keen awareness of each moment, but against the backdrop of eternity. Now the synthesis of the moment and of eternity is the cycle. Life process in cycles, and these cycles are moments linked organically by something which transcends them: eternity. A synthetic expression of this is the phrase 'the glorious, eternal now'.

To enter into a conscious relationship with the Self requires that one become attuned to it. The analogy of a radio set may help us to understand this better. Initially an attempt was made to build the most powerful receivers possible by increasing the number of valves, but it was soon realized that power was often to the detriment of selectivity and clarity of reception, along with enough power to pick up the transmission.

The same things applies to us. The problem is not so much 'receiving' (there is a sense in which we receive too much and from all directions), it is a case of developing an ever more refined and sophisticated selectivity. This necessary preparation requires overcoming the unwilling rebelliousness of our selfish attitudes and from of our moral lethargy. (We are all morally lethargic, even if we camouflage it with outward activity which, more often than not, is a form of evasion a passivity masked by activity.) But success is possible if we continually remember that it is worth it. The inner master, the Spiritual 'I' is omniscient, it sees into the future and has remarkable powers on which we cannot set a limit. Its guidance, inspiration and multifaceted help can give us light, peace and security, producing joy and love in us, and making us effective instruments of good for others.

There are various symbols of the Self, and each of them portrays or suggests one aspect of it. Among the most commonly used symbols are a star, a sphere of radiant fire, an angelic figure which the orientals refer to as the 'Solar Angel', the inner Master, the Wise Old Man, the Hero, and the inner Warrior.

But it is we who must invoke the Self, we who must take the first step, open the door or create the channel. Only then can the Self intervene, for it will not force us or impose itself on us. We have the gift of free will, and though we make so little use of it, it is the most precious gift we have, because through our experiences, mistakes and suffering, it brings us to reawakening. The Self will not in any way force our hand, but if we address it, it will respond.

Time and time again one is brought up against the paradoxical duality and unity of the Deity. The personal 'I', in the form of a reflection. This fits one of the interpretations of the parable of the prodigal son. The personal 'I' is the prodigal son who has descended to the level of the material world and forgotten his origin, to the point where of his own free will he resorts to all the foolishness he is capable of, all the errors ('errors' both in the sense of making mistakes and of going astray), and only then feels a longing for his father's house, sets out in search of it and eventually finds it.

It is not enough, however, merely to admit or give intellectual assent to this duality in unity: this needs to happen, but it is only one step. One must then make it a reality by living it out. And before attaining reunification there is a time of dramatic 'inner dialogue' appeals, questions and answers followed by a gradual coming together and by ever more frequent and vivid sparks between the two poles as they approach one another until the point where they meet. They then separate again until that moment of great peace when the two become One.

Let Vision Come

By Djwhal Khul

How does the planetary Logos identify himself with the reactions of his created world? How does he participate with full knowledge in all happenings and events?

Two things are the result of thought, and though these may be mentally grasped by the intelligent disciple, they are seldom understood. They are:

1. Thought generates energy commensurate with potency of the thinking, and qualified by the theme of the thinking. You will see from this, therefore some of the implications contained in the meditation I have assigned you. 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he' is a statement of the Christ. From that demonstrating personal centre of thought, energy will stream down into the physical brain, via the etheric body. It will then condition the type of living, the expression and the influence of the man upon the physical plane.
2. As a result of focused thinking 'in the heart' the spiritual eye opens and becomes the directing agent, employed consciously by the initiate whilst doing his work under the Law of sacrifice. What is meant here by the words 'in the heart'? The soul is the heart of the system of the spiritual man; it is the seat of the life and consciousness which animate the personality, and it is the motivating potency in every incarnation, accordingly to the experience conditioning the expression of the spiritual man in any particular rebirth. In the early stages of experience, this 'eye' remains closed; there is present no capacity for thought and no ability to think in the heart; i.e., from soul levels. As the intellect develops and the power to focus upon the mental grows, the fact of the soul's existence becomes known and the goal of attention changes. There follows the ability to focus in the soul-consciousness and so to fuse the soul and the mind that an at-one-ment takes place and a man can then begin to think 'in his heart'. Then also the 'eye of the soul' opens and energy from soul levels, intelligently utilised, becomes directed from those and pours into what is now ambiguously called 'the third eye'. Immediately the personality in the three worlds begins to express itself as the soul upon the physical plane, and will, purpose and love begin to control.

These two paragraphs are important to the disciple and warrant careful attention. As these developments take place, the spiritual will steadily grows into the directing agent, using the right eye as the distributing agent for the energy of love, animated with will. This why the right eye has been called, in the esoteric teaching, 'the eye of the buddhi'. This directing agent uses the left as the instrument for the distribution of the mental energy of the personality, now illuminated and sublimated.

Having these thoughts in mind, I would call your attention to the entire theme of vision, which necessarily underlies our consideration of the points of revelation. It is simple to recognise that in the head of the developing aspirant there is a mechanism of great potency, capable of controlling the life of the personality. There is:

1. The third eye, the pineal gland but its etheric correspondence. This is the responsive mechanism to the directing eye of the soul.
2. The right eye and the left eye, which take the incoming energy, symbolically speaking, and divide it into two streams which are the correspondence in etheric matter of buddhi-mans.
 - a. Right eye. . . spiritual energy. Buddhi. Pure reason. Understanding.
 - b. Left eye . . . mental energy. Manas. Thought substance.

Direction of Force

It is the conscious use of these energies and the intelligent utilisation of this triple mechanism which is the goal of the initiate up to the initiation. He learns consciously to direct force in the correct manner through the needed organ, doing so as the soul working in full consciousness on its own level, but so fully identified with the personality that the mechanism, now developed within the personality, can be used in the work of the Hierarchy.

Let me expand the concept further, reminding you of the phrase so oft employed, 'the All-Seeing Eye'. This refers to the power of the planetary Logos to see into all parts, aspects and phases, in time and space, of his planetary vehicle, which is his physical body, and to identify himself with all the reactions and sensitivities of his created world and to participate with full knowledge in all events and happenings. Through what medium does he, on his own high levels, do this? Through what mechanism does he thus 'see'? What is his organ of vision? What is the nature of the sight whereby he contacts the seven planes of his manifested universe? What is the organ, employed by him, which corresponds to the third eye in man? The answer is as follows: the Monad is to the Planetary Logos what the third eye is to man; this will become clearer to you if you will bear in mind that our seven planes are only the seven subplanes of the cosmic physical plane. The monadic world so-called is his organ of vision; it is also his directing agent for the life and light which must be poured into the phenomenal world. In the same way, the Monad is to the personality in the three worlds, also the source of its life and light.

There are, therefore, three organs of revelation, as far as the spiritual man is concerned:

1. The human eye, giving 'in-sight' into the phenomenal world, letting in the light, and bringing revelation of the environment.
2. The eye of the soul, bringing revelation of the nature of the interior worlds, of the kingdom of God and of the divine Plan.
3. The centre within the One Life which we call by the unmeaning word 'Monad', the spark within the one Flame. In the final stages of initiation, the Monad becomes the revealer of the purpose of God, of the will of the planetary Logos and of the door which opens on the Way of the Higher Evolution. This Way leads a man off the cosmic physical plane and on to the cosmic astral plane, and therefore into the world of divine sentiency, of which we can have no possible understanding, but for which the development of consciousness has given us the initial steps.
4. Man has learnt to use the physical eye and to find his way, by its means, around and through his environment. The stage in human evolution wherein he learnt first to see lies far behind, but when man saw and could focus and direct his course by sight, it marked a stupendous unfoldment and his first real entrance upon the Path of light. Ponder on this. It has also interior repercussions and was indeed the result of an invocative interplay between inner centres of power and the groping creature in the phenomenal world.

The Eye of the Soul

Man is now learning to use the eye of the soul, and as he does so he brings its correspondence in the head also into functioning activity; this produces fusion and identification, and brings the pineal gland into action. The major result, however, is to enable the disciple to become aware, whilst in the physical body, of a new range of contacts and perceptions. This marks crises in his unfoldment of as drastic and important a nature as the attaining of physical sight and the use of the physical eye was in the unfoldment of the curious creature which antedated the most primitive animal man. Things unknown can now be sensed, searched for and finally seen; a new world of being stands apparent, which has always been present though never before known; the life, nature, quality and the phenomena of the kingdom of souls, or of the Hierarchy, become as patent to his vision and as real as is the world of the physical senses.

Then later, upon the Path of Initiation, the initiate develops his tiny correspondence to the planetary 'All-Seeing Eye'. He unfolds the powers of the Monad. These are related to divine purpose and to the world in which Sanat Kumara moves and which we call Shamballa. I have impressed upon you elsewhere that the state of being of the Monad has naught to do with what we call consciousness; in the same way, there is naught in the world of Shamballa which is of the same nature as the phenomenal world of man in three worlds, or even of the soul world. It is a world of pure energy, of light and of directed force, all forming a pattern of consummate beauty, all potently invocative of the world of the soul and the world of phenomena; it therefore constitutes in a very real sense the world of causes and of initiation.

As man the Human being, man the disciple, and man the initiate gradually move onward on the stream of life, revelation comes step by step, moving from one great point of focus to another until naught more remains to be revealed.

In all these spiritual points of crises or of opportunity for vision, for fresh spiritual insight and for revelation (for that is what they are in reality), the thought of struggle is the first one to warrant attention. I used, in this connection, the words 'stage of penetration'; the thought which this conveys to the initiate understanding signifies an extension of the struggle which the neophyte makes in order to achieve inner control, and then to use the mind as a searchlight so as to penetrate into new fields of awareness and of recognition. Forget not that recognition involves right interpretation and right relation to that which is seen and contacted. Into all revelation enters the concept of 'whole vision' or a synthesis of perception, and then comes recognition of that which is visioned and perceived. It is the mind, the common sense as it used to be called, which utilises the physical senses of perception of the phenomenal world, according to man's point of development, his mental capacity to recognise, rightly interpret and rightly relate that which has been conveyed to him by the activity of the five senses. This is what is meant when we use the phrase 'the mind's eye', and this ability is the common possession of humanity in varying degrees of availability.

Later, man uses the 'eye of the soul', as we have noted above; it reveals to him a world of subtler phenomena, the kingdom of God or the world of souls. Then the light of the intuition pours in, bringing the power to recognise and rightly interpret and relate.

As the disciple and the initiate progress from stage to stage of revelation, it becomes increasingly difficult to make clear not only what is revealed, and the methods used to bring the stage of revelation about. The vast mass of mankind throughout the world has no clear idea as to the function of the mind as an organ of vision illuminated by the soul; still fewer, only the disciples and initiates are able to glimpse the purpose of the spiritual eye and its functioning in the light of the intuition. When we come, therefore, to the great organ of universal revelation, the monadic principle, functioning through the medium of an extra-planetary light, we enter realms which are indefinable and for which no terminology has been created, and which only initiates above the third degree are able to consider.

From Discipleship in The New Age
Vol. II pp 289-294

Vision - Prophecy - Inspiration

By Florence C. Peck

From A Journey in search of Ourselves

Vision

We scarcely understand what vision means. Vision is a faculty of the Soul. Like consciousness, it is capable of expansion. It ranges from a vision of the lowliest flower at our feet up to a vision of the Christ. We talk of attaining to vision, but not one of us can conceive of its range. As it arises to take in all aspects of life, that vision may include thousands of forms unseen by the majority, and it may include a clean-cut illumination of great Souls so shining that we, with the physical eye, cannot behold them. Life is full of possibilities. The most far-reaching are sometimes hidden from us, yet the results are here.

We know the importance of vision on the outer plane; now let us see how it enters into every phase of life, existent and subexistent. We visualize the Universe. It is real or a dreamland to us according to the clearness of that vision. Our vision of the spheres may prove an open book to us, but the strength with which we view phases of that life may make it a real thing to us or only a vision. Let us take this into interior mental states. Our minds are drawn to certain fields of knowledge. How far have we the power to visualize that which our mind grasps?

Vision is a very important instrument. It clears our knowledge of life. In finding a key to the reading of our own lives clear vision is most important. We are entering a fresh path of experience, in this journey in search of our Selves, and we may often stumble and grow confused; but if we keep our power of vision, and it acts clearly, we cannot fail to see the way. We may find for ourselves a great, undefinable First cause. This may give us a vision extending through great fields of Stars and Universes, and may help us materially to a clear-cut conception of the processes by which we came into existence. It will help us to work upward, step-by-step, to a fuller recognition of that Supreme Source from which we sprang. Life is of value as we understand its meaning and deeper purpose. We have been led through many leagues of understanding. This understanding will not only not interfere with our daily duties, but it will make their performance more swift, more certain and more satisfactory to ourselves. In all achievement understanding is a great factor. What we need most we often do not know, and what at the moment we need least we strive to get. Therefore, we repeat, let us get understanding understanding of ourselves, of the great processes of life, as far as lies in our power. If we progress, and fit ourselves for it, the value that our services may be in the oncoming years is beyond our highest aspirations and hopes. With our vision cleared and our understanding awakened, we journey on.

Prophecy

It is interesting to see the place that prophecy holds in human life, and also how we can get an accurate gauge of the importance and dependability of any prophecy we may hear. This applies to ourselves as well as to those who are able to see finer thought-forms. Prophecy, if accurate, might give us an established foundation for realizing in what direction we must turn our activity, if we wish to accomplish anything.

When we have gained some knowledge concerning the open Book of Life, we shall know and understand how the first picture upon the pages can tell us something of that which is to follow. As the Soul becomes active, strongly active, in any personal life, the first step that is taken, the first active expression that shows in form, is that which we know as thought-force. Out of its mind-stuff the Soul formulates some idea which it wishes to project into outer form, into the active realization and manifestation of that idea. That thought-form is distinctly engraved upon the fine film of ether

that surrounds the individual Soul throughout all Eternity, that is never destroyed. It is the everlasting Book of Life.

As this thought-force shapes itself more and more clearly towards its manifestation in form, it can be seen by those who have the vision to perceive it. According to the development of the Soul that is perceiving, and the clearness of the thought-form can it be seen accurately. Now, with our intelligence quickened, we can readily perceive that, in dealing with the events of human life, those who see causes impending can gather, from the consensus of the thought-force that arises in them, a very clear comprehension of what effects will follow, of what events will appear in Man's outer life.

When we realize that very fine vibrations of thought ascend to those who can perceive them, we shall understand why the great Masters of human destiny, the great Servers of Divine Life, in shaping that which the Divine Mind has designed, are concerned only with the thought-force that is sent forth by an awakened Soul; by the quality of that thought-force, they can determine the development of the Soul power in that individual. It is here, and here alone, that these Leaders in the awakening of humanity, it is here that they are vitally concerned. It is to the strong Souls of earth that they direct their intelligent guidance, because they know that all great changes must come first through the more progressive Souls, who are to take leadership in every important forward movement. Understanding this, we can know that no Soul thus selected can or will desire to shirk his responsibility. From this standpoint it is an established fact that, for any Soul upon the earth who has reached a point where the quickening of Spiritual power is strongly established, there can be no failure in the carrying forth of whatever work may be apportioned to that Soul, to quicken Man into a more active use of the great edge into lesser fields of development and experience, we can readily understand that results can be prophesied according to the power, the impetus of engaged important activity here.

Taking this survey of prophecy along all planes of thought, we see that those who can enter into human life beyond its mere outward seeming are able to gather the purpose that is in men's minds to be carried out, and, according to the insight used, and the judgment displayed, can prophesy the final manifestation of that purpose. This is a short and general review of the principles underlying what is called the gift of prophecy. We can intelligently take this even into its smallest manifestations. A slight flash of vision showing the trend in one human life will often enable another not highly developed to show to that individual something that is coming to him.

Inspiration

Inspiration is a great incentive to action. It is the mind's ascending scale that reaches something fine and noble and true, and comes back with it to the outer life. It is a great force, a beautiful Spiritual force that fills all the Universe; and as we rise and receive from it, it stimulates something within us and gives us a keener appreciation of the value of everything that we do. We may work and do the things require of us; but there is something inspiring in this ascension of our minds to the Higher Life. It is like touching the keen mountain air, it braces us and sends us back to our work with a stronger incentive to action than we had before. We can go on without it, but we miss something in our lives. Some day we shall know better what all this means to us; and as we look over the past, we shall realize more clearly than now the progress that Man could have made by appropriating this great Life Power and thus vitalizing all his surface life.

We shall have clearer thoughts some day, not filled with bitterness, as some have now when they view their bitterness, as some have now when they view their neglect of things. The stab here is because they reason from the standpoint of the outer mind. That is not the way we shall judge from the inner plane. There it will be for us a sense of loss. We shall see so clearly that certain impulses in our lives make for definite progress; and when we fail to touch those impulses to action, we

simply lose. The loss is ours, and we shall know that we have missed some of the benefits that might have been ours in the Soul's journey on earth.

May we fully realize here and now the impetus that can come to us in this life by touching as far as we may these mainsprings of inspiration. We can rise and touch them, and feel their beneficence, and feel their beneficence, and we shall never fail to notice their effects. Let us value this, and let not one moment of regret or repining enter into our hearts. This struggle is worth while. It is the only road through which any Soul can mount to Mastership. Rest? There will be time for rest. Rest is but a small part of the duty of life. Action is the key that opens every door. Inspiration is like a great wave, which, rising to its height, and returns with quickening powers.

We are touching Life more and more consciously every day. It is a growing relationship that comes by daily contact. We feel this Life all about us, we fill our minds with vibration of the great Intelligence that is within, seeking to mould into shape this creation of Itself. More and more clearly the beauty, the activity, of that Life enters into our mentality. Little by little the flame in our Souls grows more steadfast. It flickers less at every breath from the outer world. It lights the way more surely. It becomes for us, and for all who touch our lives, a signal of the Presence of the Indwelling Spirit. As that centre within ourselves opens to a larger consciousness of this all-embracing Life, we touch that Life wherever It is expressed, - and It is expressed everywhere. We touch it in Nature, we touch It in the human life about us, - we touch It in all great fields of activity. To develop this consciousness within ourselves is to reach every field that we desire to enter. This is the secret of our journey. It is as though for a moment we took the sunlit road, felt the breath of the morning, the glow of the Light that shone, the companionship of understanding; and then, coming back, we see in every face the Divine Fire, we feel the touch of kinship with every human life. Thus, through inspiration, we join the great band of Helpers in the world.

Seed Thoughts on Visualisation

By H. Saraydarian

Visualisation is a high sensitivity on the mental plane. It is the radar which catches the waves in space and records them upon the mirror of the mind.

There are two activities of visualisation the wave that goes, evocation, the wave that comes, invocation, bringing with it the impression of the object through creative imagination.

Visualisation is a bridge-building faculty, and a process of creating relationships. It is an interpreter, a transformer, and a power to bring blue-prints to realisation.

The creative imagination is not the same as visualisation. It is the second step towards ideation, objectification. Its duty is to adjust the received energies to need of environment, giving to them the needed colour, rhythm, form.

Visualisation connects the space-energy world with the mental plane. Creative imagination connects the mental with the emotional etheric-physical planes.

The imagination is not creative if there is no visualisation. Visualisation gives to it the creative faculty. Creativity is the result of the fusion of visualisation and imagination.

Sometimes an impression falls into the ocean of the intuition. It is just a condensed light but a source of unlimited ideas and plans. Visualisation is the process of grasping the nature of that impression, of fusing it and then using it as an energy for a new creation which will be able to carry down the message of the original impression.

In the higher forms of visualisation man works with his Soul ray. In creative imagination he works with his personality astral, mental, etheric rays, and translates the received impression through these rays.

Visualisation is conditioned by:

- a. The point of tension reached upon the highest mental planes, which creates a deep occult
silence in which the impression is absorbed.
- b. The released energies in the subjective world, which may be rays or avataric influences
which obey some cyclic law and work under a plan.
- c. The purity of mechanism, which is a state in which there are no obstacles to the waves
of impression and their expression.

In building the antahkarana visualisation follows the same pattern. The mind reaches to its point of tension, to its point of crises, to its point of highest sensitivity. From the other side the Spiritual Triad radiates its impressions, its energies. Then there is the period of transmutation and transmission between these two poles.

In the higher processes of visualisation comes that period in which the highest mental plane, with the help of the soul, absorbs the highest impressions and energies, thus creating a point of contact. This point of contact itself is a window through which man sees the unlimited reality of higher possibilities, and his identity with the One. If this point of contact is continuous and clear we say that the antahkarana is built.

Visualisation is a process of substantiating of impressions, of energies. Impression can be considered as cause, visualisation as effect. Service results when impression, amplified by visualisation, radiates into the worlds of men, bringing there the energy of right relationship and the vision of the divine Plan.

Service utilises the power of visualisation. Visualisation sanctifies service. Impression gives right direction to service and is a source of energy to face any difficulty along the line of activity.

Visualisation is the act of creating the future. It is planning for the future, and the future is the world of energies and ideas which is waiting for realisation and materialisation.

Impression is a process of getting.

Visualisation is a process of becoming.

Service is a process of giving.

They are Spirit, Soul, Personality, and an initiate will be found standing as a focussed will in the centre of this triangle impression . . . visualisation . . . service.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

An interpretation by Charles Johnston

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are in themselves exceedingly brief, less than ten pages of large type in the original. Yet they contain the essence of a practical wisdom, set forth in admirable order and detail. The theme, if the present interpreter be right, is the great regeneration, the birth of the spiritual from psychical man; the same theme which Paul so wisely and eloquently set forth in writing to his disciples in Corinth, the theme of all mystics in all lands.

We think of ourselves as living a purely physical life, in these material bodies of ours. In reality, we have gone far indeed from pure physical life; for ages, our life has been psychical, we have been centred and immersed in the psychic nature. Some of the schools of India say that the psychic nature is, as it were, a looking glass, wherein are mirrored the things seen by the physical eyes, and heard by the physical ears. But this is a magic mirror; the images remain, and take a certain life of their own. Thus within the psychic realm of our life there grows up an imaged world wherein we dwell; a world of the images of things seen and heard, and therefore a world of memories; a world also of hopes and desires, of fears and regrets. Mental life grows up among these images, built on a measuring and comparing, on the massing of images together into general ideas; on the abstraction of new notions and images from these; till a new world is built up within, full of desires and hates, ambition, envy, longing, speculation, curiosity, self-will, self-interest.

The teaching of the East is, that all these are true powers overlaid by false desires; that though in manifestation psychical, they are in essence spiritual; that the psychical man is the veil and prophecy of the spiritual man.

The purpose of life, therefore, is the realizing of that prophecy; the unveiling of the immortal man; the birth of the spiritual from the psychical, whereby we enter our divine inheritance and come to inhabit Eternity. This is, indeed, salvation, the purpose of all true religion, in all times.

Patanjali has in mind the spiritual man, to be born from the psychical. His purpose is, to set in order the practical means for the unveiling and regeneration, and to indicate the fruit, the glory and the power, of that new birth.

Through the Sutras of the first book, Patanjali is concerned with the first great problem, the emergence of the spiritual man from the veils and meshes of the psychic nature, the moods and ventures of the mental and emotional man. Later will come the consideration of the nature and powers of the spiritual man, once he stands clear of the psychic veils and trammels, and a view of the realms in which these new spiritual powers are to be revealed.

In the second part of the first book, the problems of the emergence of the spiritual man is further dealt with. We are led to the consideration of the barriers to his emergence, of the overcoming of the barriers, and of certain steps and stages in the ascent from the ordinary consciousness of practical life, to the finer, deeper, radiant consciousness of the spiritual man.

The first book of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras is called the Book of Spiritual Consciousness.

The second book is the Book of the Means of the Soul Growth. And we must remember that soul growth here means the growth of the realization of the spiritual man, or, to put the matter more briefly, the growth of the spiritual man, and the disentangling of the spiritual man from the wrappings, the veils, the disguises laid upon him by the mind and the psychical nature, wherein he is enmeshed, like a bird caught in a net.

The question arises: By what means may the spiritual man be freed from these psychical meshes and disguises, so that he may stand forth above death, in his radiant eternalness and divine power? And the second book sets itself to answer this very question, and to detail the means in a way entirely practical and very lucid, so that he who runs may read, and he who reads may understand

and practise.

The most striking thing in it is the emphasis laid on the Commandments, which are precisely those of the latter part of the Decalogue, together with obedience to the Master.

Therefore Patanjali, like every great spiritual teacher, meets the question: What must I do to be saved? With the age-old answer: Keep the Commandments. Only after the disciple can say, these have I kept, can there be the further and finer teaching of the spiritual Rules.

The third book of the Sutras is the Book of Spiritual Powers. In considering these spiritual powers, two things must be understood and kept in memory. The first of these is this: These spiritual powers can only be gained when the development described in the first and second books has been measurably attained; when the Commandments have been kept, the Rules faithfully followed, and the experiences which are described have been passed through. For only after this is the spiritual man so far grown, so far disentangled from the psychic bandages and veils which have confined and blinded him, that he can use his proper powers and faculties. For this is the secret of all spiritual powers: they are in no sense abnormal or supernatural overgrowth upon the material man, but are rather the powers and faculties inherent in the spiritual man, entirely natural to him, and coming naturally into activity, as the spiritual man is disentangled and liberated from psychical; bondage, through keeping the Commandments and Rules already set forth.

The spiritual powers, therefore, are the powers of the grown and liberated spiritual man. They can only be developed and used as the spiritual man grows and attains liberation through obedience. This is the first thing to be kept in mind, in all that is said of spiritual powers in the third and fourth books of the Sutras. The second thing to be understood and kept in mind is this:

Just as our modern sages have discerned and taught that all matter is ultimately one and eternal, definitely related throughout the whole wide universe; just as they have discerned and taught that all force is one and eternal, so coordinated through all force is one and eternal, so coordinated through out the whole universe that whatever affects any atom measurably affects the whole boundless realm of matter and force, to the most distant star or nebula on the dim confines of space; so the ancient sages discerned and taught that all consciousness is one, immortal, indivisible, infinite; so finely correlated and continuous that whatever is perceived by any consciousness is, whether actually or potentially, within the reach of all consciousness, and therefore within the reach of any consciousness. This has been well expressed by saying that all souls are fundamentally one with the Over soul; that the Son of God, and all Sons of God, are fundamentally one with the Father. When the consciousness is cleared of psychic bonds and veils, when the spiritual man is able to stand, to see, then this superb law comes into effect: whatever is within the knowledge of any consciousness, and this includes the whole infinite universe, is within his reach, and may, if he wills, be made a part of his consciousness. This he may attain through his fundamental unity with the Over soul, by raising himself towards the consciousness above him, and drawing on its resource.

Let no one imagine that the true life, the true powers of the spiritual man, can be attained by a way except the hard way of sacrifice, of trial, of renunciation, of selfless-conquest and genuine devotion to the weal of others. Only thus can the golden gates be reached and entered. Only thus can we attain to that pure world wherein the spiritual man lives, and moves, and has his being, nothing impure, nothing unholy can ever cross that threshold, least of all impure motives or self-seeking desires.

Therefore ponder well the earlier rules, and lay a firm foundation of courage, sacrifice, selflessness, and holiness.

In the fourth book, we are to consider what one might call the mechanism of salvation, the ideally

simple working of cosmic law which brings the spiritual man to birth, growth, and fullness of power, and prepares him for the splendid, toilsome further stages of his great journey home.

The last part of the last book needs little introduction. In sense, it is the most important part of the whole treatise, since it unmasks the nature of the personality, that psychical "mind", which is the wakeful enemy of all who seek to tread the Path. Even now, we can hear it whispering the doubt whether that can be a good path, which thus sets "mind" at defiance.

If this, then, be most vital and fundamental part of the teaching, should it not stand at the very beginning? It may seem so at first; but had it stood there, we should not have comprehended it. For he who would know the doctrine must lead the life, doing the will of his father who is in the Heaven.

At this point may come a word of explanation.

Sutra comes from the same root as the word "sew" (Suture) and means, indeed, a thread, suggesting therefore, a close-knit, consecutive of argument.

The Yoga Sutras Of Patanjali

Translated by the Tibetan Master Djwhal Kuhl from The Light of the Soul:

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali by Alice A. Bailey

The Tibetan Master has said that the Sutra's of Patanjali will be the system used to train disciples in mind control for the next 7,000 years (p. 326, Discipleship in the New Age, Vol 2 by Alice A. Bailey).

What makes this translation special is that DK translated the meaning behind Patanjali's writings rather than a literal translation which is impossible from Sanskrit to English. DK was able to tune into the thought form behind the words and render them into English. Now you can use these Sutras to write your own commentaries as you do daily seed thought meditation on each Sutra.

The Problem Of Union

Pada I

1. AUM. The following instruction concerneth the Science of Union.
2. This Union (or Yoga) is achieved through the subjugation of the psychic nature, and the restraint of the chitta (or mind).
3. When this has been accomplished, the Yogi knows himself as he is in reality.
4. Up till now the inner man has identified himself with his forms and with their active modifications.
5. The mind states are five, and are subject to pleasure or pain; they are painful or not painful.
6. These modifications (activities) are correct knowledge, incorrect knowledge, fancy, passivity (sleep) and memory.
7. The basis of correct knowledge is correct perception, correct deduction, and correct witness (or accurate evidence).
8. Incorrect knowledge is based upon perception of the form and not upon the state of being.
9. Fancy rests upon images which have no real existence.
10. Passivity (sleep) is based upon the quiescent state of the vrittis (or upon the non-perception of the senses.)
11. Memory is the holding on to that which has been known.
12. The control of these modifications of the internal organ, the mind, is to be brought about through tireless endeavor and through non-attachment.
13. Tireless endeavor is the constant effort to restrain the modifications of the mind
14. When the object to be gained is sufficiently valued, and the efforts towards its attainment are persistently followed without intermission, then the steadiness of the mind (restraint of the vrittis) is secured.
15. Non-attachment is freedom from longing for all objects of desire, either earthly or traditional, either here or hereafter.
16. The consummation of this non-attachment results in an exact knowledge of the spiritual man when liberated from the qualities or gunas.
17. The consciousness of an object is attained by concentration upon its fourfold nature: the form, through examination; the quality (or guna), through discriminative participation; the purpose, through inspiration (or bliss); and the soul, through identification.
18. A further stage of samadhi is achieved when, through one pointed thought, the outer activity is quieted. In this stage, the chitta is responsive only to subjective impressions.
19. The samadhi just described passes not beyond the bound of the phenomenal world; it passes not beyond the Gods, and those concerned with the concrete world.
20. Other yogins achieve samadhi and arrive at a discrimination of pure Spirit through belief, followed by energy, memory, meditation and right perception.
21. The attainment of this state (spiritual consciousness) is rapid for those whose will is intensely

alive.

22. Those who employ the will likewise differ, for its use may be intense, moderate, or gentle. In respect to the attainment of true spiritual consciousness there is yet another way.
23. By intense devotion to Ishvara, knowledge of Ishvara is gained.
24. This Ishvara is the soul, untouched by limitation, free from karma, and desire.
25. In Ishvara, the Gurudeva, the germ of all knowledge expands into infinity.
26. Ishvara, the Gurudeva, being unlimited by time conditions, is the teacher of the primeval Lords.
27. The Word of Ishvara, is AUM (or OM). This is the Pranava.
28. Through the sounding of the Word and through reflection upon its meaning, the Way is found.
29. From this comes the realization of the Self (the soul) and the removal of all obstacles.
30. The obstacles to soul cognition are bodily disability, mental inertia, wrong questioning, carelessness, laziness, lack of dispassion, erroneous perception, inability to achieve concentration, failure to hold the meditative attitude when achieved.
31. Pain, despair, misplaced bodily activity and wrong direction (or control) of the life currents are the results of the obstacles in the lower psychic nature.
32. To overcome the obstacles and their accompaniments, the intense application of the will to some one truth (or principle) is required.
33. The peace of the chitta (or mind stuff) can be brought about through the practice of sympathy, tenderness, steadiness of purpose, and dispassion in regard to pleasure or pain, or towards all forms of good or evil.
34. The peace of the chitta is also brought about by the regulation of the prana or life breath.
35. The mind can be trained to steadiness through those forms of concentration which have relation to the sense perceptions.
36. By meditation upon Light and upon Radiance, knowledge of the Spirit can be reached and thus peace can be achieved.
37. The chitta is stabilized and rendered free from illusion as the lower nature is purified and no longer indulged.
38. Peace (steadiness of the chitta) can be reached through meditation on the knowledge which dreams give.
39. Peace can also be reached through concentration upon that which is dearest to the heart.
40. Thus his realization extends from the infinitely small to the infinitely great, and from annu (the atom or speck) to atma (or spirit) his knowledge is perfected.
41. To him whose vrittis (modifications of the substance of the mind) are entirely controlled, there eventuates a state of identity with, and similarity to that which is realized. The knower, knowledge and the field of knowledge become one, just as the crystal takes to itself the colors of that which is reflected in it.
42. When the perceiver blends the word, the idea (or meaning) and the object, this is called the mental condition of judicial reasoning.
43. Perception without judicial reasoning is arrived at when the memory no longer holds control, the word and the object are transcended and only the idea is present.
44. The same two processes of concentration, with and without judicial action of the mind, can be applied also to things subtle.
45. The gross leads into the subtle and the subtle leads in progressive stages to that state of pure spiritual being called Pradhana,
46. All this constitutes meditation with seed.
47. When this super-contemplative state is reached, the Yogi acquires pure spiritual realization through the balanced quiet of the chitta (or mind stuff).
48. His perception is now unfailingly exact (or his mind reveals only the Truth).
49. This particular perception is unique and reveals that which the rational mind (using testimony, inference and deduction) cannot reveal.
50. It is hostile to, or supersedes all other impressions.
51. When this state of perception is itself also restrained (or superseded), then is pure Samadhi

achieved.

The Steps To Union

Pada II

1. The Yoga of action, leading to union with the soul is fiery aspiration, spiritual reading and devotion to Ishvara.
2. The aim of these three is to bring about soul vision and to eliminate obstructions.
3. These are the difficulty producing hindrances: avidya (ignorance) the sense of personality, desire, hate and the sense of attachment.
4. Avidya (ignorance) is the cause of all the other obstructions whether they be latent, in process of elimination, overcome, or in full operation.
5. Avidya is the condition of confusing the permanent, pure, blissful and the Self with that which is impermanent, impure, painful and the not-self.
6. The sense of personality is due to the identification of the knower with the instruments of knowledge.
7. Desire is attachment to objects of pleasure.
8. Hate is aversion for any object of the senses.
9. Intense desire for sentient existence is attachment. This is inherent in every form, is self-perpetuating, and known even to the very wise.
10. These five hindrances, when subtly known, can be overcome by an opposing mental attitude.
11. Their activities are to be done away with, through the meditation process.
12. Karma itself has its root in these five hindrances and must come to fruition in this life or in some later life.
13. So long as the roots (or samskaras) exist, their fruition will be birth, life, and experiences resulting in pleasure or pain.
14. These seeds (or samskaras) produce pleasure or pain according as their originating cause was good or evil.
15. To the illuminated man all existence (in the three worlds) is considered pain owing to the activities of the gunas. These activities are threefold, producing consequences, anxieties and subliminal impressions.
16. Pain which is yet to come may be warded off.
17. The illusion that the Perceiver and that which is perceived are one and the same is the cause (of the pain-producing effects) which must be warded off.
18. That which is perceived has three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas (rhythm, mobility and inertia) ; it consists of the elements and the sense organs. The use of these produces experience and eventual liberation.
19. The divisions of the gunas (or qualities of matter) are fourfold; the specific, the non-specific, the indicated and the untouchable.
20. The seer is pure knowledge (gnosis). Though pure, he looks upon the presented idea through the medium of the mind.
21. All that exists for the sake of the soul.
22. In the case of the man who has achieved yoga (or union) the objective universe has ceased to be. Yet it existeth still for those who are not yet free.
23. The association of the soul with the mind and thus with that which the mind perceives, produces an understanding of the nature of that which is perceived and likewise of the Perceiver.
24. The cause of this association is ignorance or avidya. This has to be overcome.
25. When ignorance is brought to an end through non-association with the things perceived, this is the great liberation.
26. The state of bondage is overcome through perfectly maintained discrimination.
27. The knowledge (or illumination) achieved is sevenfold and is attained progressively.
28. When the means to yoga have been steadily practiced, and when impurity has been overcome,

enlightenment takes place, leading up to full illumination.

29. The eight means of yoga are, the Commandments or Yama, the Rules or Nijama, posture or Asana, right control of life-force or Pranayama, abstraction or Pratyahara, attention or Dharana, Meditation or Dhyana, Contemplation or Samadhi.

30. Harmlessness, truth to all beings, abstention from theft, from incontinence and from avarice, constitute yama or the five commandments.

31. Yama (or the five commandments) constitutes the universal duty and is irrespective of race, place, time or emergency.

32. Internal and external purification, contentment, fiery aspiration, spiritual reading and devotion to Ishvara constitutes. nijama (or the five rules).

33. When thoughts which are contrary to yoga are present there should be the cultivation of their opposite.

34. Thoughts contrary to yoga are harmfulness, falsehood, theft, incontinence, and avarice, whether committed personally, caused to be committed or approved of, whether arising from avarice, anger or delusion (ignorance); whether slight in the doing, middling or great. These result always in excessive pain and ignorance. For this reason, the contrary thoughts must be cultivated.

35. In the presence of him who has perfected harmlessness, all enmity ceases.

36. When truth to all beings is perfected, the effectiveness of his words and acts is immediately to be seen.

37. When abstention from theft is perfected, the yogi can have whatever he desires.

38. By abstention from incontinence, energy is acquired.

39. When abstention from avarice is perfected, there comes an understanding of the law of rebirth.

40. Internal and external purification produces aversion for form, both one's own and all forms.

41. Through purification comes also a quiet spirit, concentration, conquest of the organs, and ability

to see the Self.

42. As a result of contentment bliss is achieved.

43. Through fiery aspiration and through the removal of all impurity, comes the perfecting of the bodily powers and of the senses.

44. Spiritual reading results in a contact with the soul (or divine One).

45. Through devotion to Ishvara the goal of meditation (or samadhi) is reached.

46. The posture assumed must be steady and easy.

47. Steadiness and ease of posture is to be achieved through persistent slight effort and through the concentration of the mind upon the infinite.

48. When this is attained, the pairs of opposites no longer limit.

49. When right posture (asana) has been attained there follows right control of prana and proper inspiration and expiration of the breath.

50. Right control of prana (or the life currents) is external, internal or motionless; it is subject to place, time and number and is also protracted or brief.

51. There is a fourth stage which transcends those dealing with the internal and external phases.

52. Through this, that which obscures the light is gradually removed.

53. And the mind is prepared for concentrated meditation.

54. Abstraction (or Pratyahara) is the subjugation of the senses by the thinking principle and their withdrawal from that which has hitherto been their object.

55. As a result of these means there follows the complete subjugation of the sense organs.

Union Achieved And Its Results

Pada III

1. Concentration is the fixing of the chitta (mind stuff) upon a particular object. This is dharana.

2. Sustained concentration (dharana) is meditation (dhyana).

3. When the chitta becomes absorbed in that which is the reality (or idea embodied in the form), and

is unaware of separateness or the personal self, this is contemplation or samadhi.

4. When concentration, meditation and contemplation form one sequential act, then is sanyama achieved.

5. As a result of sanyama comes the shining forth of the light.

6. This illumination is gradual; it is developed stage by stage.

7. These last three means of yoga have a more intimate subjective effect than the previous means.

8. Even these three, however, are external to the true seedless meditation (or samadhi) which is not based on an object. It is free from the effects of the discriminative nature of the chitta (or mind stuff).

9. The sequence of mental states is as follows: the mind reacts to that which is seen; then follows the moment of mind control. Then ensues a moment wherein the chitta (mind stuff) responds to both these factors. Finally these pass away, and the perceiving consciousness has full sway.

10. Through the cultivation of this habit of mind there will eventuate a steadiness of spiritual perception.

11. The establishing of this habit, and the restraining of the mind from its thought-form-making tendency, results eventually in the constant power to contemplate.

12. When mind control and the controlling factor are equally balanced, then comes the condition of one-pointedness.

13. Through this process the aspects of every object are known, their characteristics (or form), their symbolic nature, and their specific use in time-conditions (stage of development) are known and realized.

14. The characteristics of every object are acquired, manifesting or latent.

15. The stage of development is responsible for the various modifications of the versatile psychic nature and of the thinking principle.

16. Through concentrated meditation upon the triple nature of every form, comes the revelation of that which has been and of that which will be.

17. The Sound (or word), that which it denotes (the object) and the embodied spiritual essence (or idea) are usually confused in the mind of the perceiver. By concentrated meditation on these three aspects comes an (intuitive) comprehension of the sound uttered by all forms of life.

18. Knowledge of previous incarnations becomes available when the power to see thought-images is acquired.

19. Through concentrated meditation, the thought images in the minds of other people become apparent.

20. As, however, the object of those thoughts is not apparent to the perceiver, he sees only the thought and not the object. His meditation excludes the tangible.

21. By concentrated meditation upon the distinction between form and body, those properties of the body which make it visible to the human eye are negated (or withdrawn) and the yogi can render himself invisible.

22. Karma (or effects) are of two kinds: immediate karma or future karma. By perfectly concentrated meditation on these, the yogi knows the term of his experience in the three worlds. This knowledge comes also from signs.

23. Union with others is to be gained through one-pointed meditation upon the three states of feeling-compassion, tenderness and dispassion.

24. Meditation, one-pointedly centered upon the power of the elephant, will awaken that force or light.

26. Perfectly concentrated meditation upon the awakened light will produce the consciousness of that which is subtle, hidden or remote.

26. Through meditation, one-pointedly fixed upon the sun, will come a consciousness (or knowledge) of the seven worlds.

27. A knowledge of all lunar forms arises through one-pointed meditation upon the moon.

28. Concentration upon the Pole-Star will give knowledge of the orbits of the planets and the stars.

29. By concentrated attention upon the center called the solar plexus, comes perfected knowledge as

to the condition of the body.

30. By fixing the attention upon the throat center, the cessation of hunger and thirst will ensue.

31. By fixing the attention upon the tube or nerve below the throat center, equilibrium is achieved.

32. Those who have attained self-mastery can be seen and contacted through focusing the light in the head. This power is developed in one-pointed meditation.

33. All things can be known in the vivid light of the intuition.

34. Understanding of the mind-consciousness comes from one-pointed meditation upon the heart center.

35. Experience (of the pairs of opposites) comes from the inability of the soul to distinguish between the personal self and the purusa (or spirit). The objective forms exist for the use (and experience) of the spiritual man. By meditation upon this, arises the intuitive perception of the spiritual nature (the purusa).

36. As the result of this experience and meditation, the higher hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell are developed, producing intuitional knowledge.

37. These powers are obstacles to the highest spiritual realization, but serve as magical powers in the objective worlds.

38. By liberation from the causes of bondage through their weakening and by an understanding of the mode of transference (withdrawal or entrance), the mind stuff (or chitta) can enter another body.

39. By subjugation of the upward life (the udana) there is liberation from water, the thorny path, and mire, and the power of ascension is gained.

40. Through subjugation of the samana, the spark becomes the flame.

41. By the means of one-pointed meditation upon the relationship between the kasha and sound, an organ for spiritual hearing will be developed.

42. By one-pointed meditation upon the relationship existing between the body and the kasha, ascension out of matter (the three worlds) and power to travel in space is gained.

43. When that which veils the light is done away with, then comes the state of being called discarnate (or disembodied), freed from the modification of the thinking principle. This is the state of illumination.

44. One-pointed meditation upon the five forms which every element takes, produces mastery over every element. These five forms are the gross nature, the elemental form, the quality, the pervasiveness and the basic purpose.

45. Through this mastery, minuteness and the other siddhis (or powers) are attained, likewise bodily perfection and freedom from all hindrances.

46. Symmetry of form, beauty of color, strength and the compactness of the diamond, constitute bodily perfection.

47. Mastery over the senses is brought about through concentrated meditation upon their nature, peculiar attributes, egoism, pervasiveness and useful purpose.

48. As a result of this perfection, there comes rapidity of action like that of mind, perception independent of the organs, and mastery over root substance.

49. The man who can discriminate between the soul and the spirit achieves supremacy over all conditions and becomes omniscient.

50. By a passionless attitude towards this attainment and towards all soul-powers, the one who is free from the seeds of bondage, attains the condition of isolated unity.

51. There should be entire rejection of all allurements from all forms of being, even the celestial, for the recurrence of evil contacts remains possible.

52. Intuitive knowledge is developed through the use of the discriminative faculty when there is one-pointed concentration upon moments and their continuous succession.

53. From this intuitive knowledge is born the capacity to distinguish (between all beings) and to cognize their genus, qualities and position in space.

54. This intuitive knowledge, which is the great Deliverer, is omnipresent and omniscient and includes the past, the present and the future in the Eternal Now.

55. When the objective forms and the soul have reached a condition of equal purity, then is At-one-

ment achieved and liberation results.

Illumination

Pada IV

1. The higher and lower siddhis (or powers) are gained by incarnation, or by drugs, words of power, intense desire or by meditation.
2. The transfer of the consciousness from a lower vehicle into a higher is part of the great creative and evolutionary process.
3. The practices and methods are not the true cause of the transfer of consciousness but they serve to remove obstacles, just as the husbandman prepares his ground for sowing.
4. The "I am" consciousness is responsible for the creation of the organs through which the sense of individuality is enjoyed.
5. Consciousness is one, yet produces the varied forms of the many.
6. Among the forms which consciousness assumes, only that which is the result of meditation is free from latent karma.
7. The activities of the liberated soul are free from the pairs of opposites. Those of other people are of three kinds.
8. From these three kinds of karma emerge those forms which are necessary for the fruition of the effects.
9. There is identity of relation between memory and the effect-producing cause, even when separated by species, time and place.
10. Desire to live being eternal, these mind-created forms are without known beginning.
11. These forms being created and held together through desire, the basic cause, personality, the effective result, mental vitality or the will to live, and the support of the outward going life or object, when these cease to attract then the forms cease likewise to be.
12. The past and the present exist in reality. The form assumed in the time concept of the present is the result of developed characteristics and holds latent seeds of future quality.
13. The characteristics, whether latent or potent, partake of the nature of the three gunas (qualities of matter).
14. The manifestation of the objective form is due to the one-pointedness of the effect-producing cause (the unification of the modifications of the chitta or mind stuff).
15. These two, consciousness and form, are distinct and separate; though forms may be similar, the consciousness may function on differing levels of being.
16. The many modifications of the one mind produce the diverse forms, which depend for existence upon those many mind impulses.
17. These forms are cognized or not, according to the qualities latent in the perceiving consciousness.
18. The Lord of the mind, the perceiver, is ever aware of the constantly active mind stuff, the effect-producing cause.
19. Because it can be seen or cognized it is apparent that the mind is not the source of illumination.
20. Neither can it know two objects simultaneously, itself and that which is external to itself.
21. If knowledge of the mind (chitta) by a remoter mind is postulated, an infinite number of knowers must be inferred, and the sequence of memory reactions would tend to infinite confusion.
22. When the spiritual intelligence which stands alone and freed from objects, reflects itself in the mind stuff, then comes awareness of the Self.
23. Then the mind stuff, reflecting both the knower and the knowable, becomes omniscient.
24. The mind stuff also, reflecting as it does an infinity of mind impressions, becomes the instrument of the Self and acts as a unifying agent.
25. The state of isolated unity (withdrawn into the true nature of the Self) is the reward of the man who can discriminate between the mind stuff and the Self, or spiritual man.
26. The mind then tends towards discrimination and increasing illumination as to the true nature of

the one Self.

27. Through force of habit, however, the mind will reflect other mental impressions and perceive objects of sensuous perception.

28. These reflections are of the nature of hindrances, and the method of their overcoming is the same.

29. The man who develops non-attachment even in his aspiration after illumination and isolated unity, becomes aware, eventually, through practiced discrimination, of the overshadowing cloud of spiritual knowledge.

30. When this stage is reached then the hindrances and karma are overcome.

31. When, through the removal of the hindrances and the purification of all the sheaths, the totality of knowledge becomes available, naught further remains for the man to do.

32. The modifications of the mind stuff (or qualities of matter) through the inherent nature of the three gunas come to an end, for they have served their purpose.

33. Time, which is the sequence of the modifications of the mind, likewise terminates, giving place to the Eternal Now.

34. The state of isolated unity becomes possible when the three qualities of matter (the three gunas or potencies of nature) no longer exercise any hold over the Self. The pure spiritual consciousness withdraws into the One.

The Vision of Spirit

From The Poetry of the Invisible

By Syed Mehdi Imam

Pages 213 to 217

The Perception of Poetry

The poet combines the function of the seer and musician. As a seer he discloses the never-ending vistas of life, which are heavily veiled from the human gaze. As a musician he uses the rhythmic word in the place of sound. Through metaphor, through phase, through luminous perception he suggests the inexpressible implications of Spirit.

The Seership of the Poets.

The seership of the poet has its peculiar quality. He receives the physical object with the physical eye the impression of the landscape, the flight of the bird across the sky. The scene is transformed into loveliness by the poet and then presented. It is not the physical scenery of the scientist or the mental scenery of the philosopher. It is the spiritual essence of the whole caught by the spiritual faculty which the poet gives.

Poetic perception interconnected with other perception.

Prophecy, music, poetry and the arts are interconnected forms of sight. All involve from their particular angle the psychic perception. They look at Spirit from the height of Spirit.

No dividing line between perceptions

In the last analysis the dividing line between the physical, the mental, and the psychic perceptions ceases to be distinguishable. The scientist at the moment of discovery acts upon his intuitions. In this sense and at this point of time, he is an artist. In the formulation of his theory, he is a philosopher. In so far as he is a thinker dealing with inferences, with principles and with acts of mind which are necessary for the understanding of the physical world, a philosopher works in the spirit of science.

All perception one

All forms of perception are modes of one perception the vision of the invisible. All enquiry is one the enquiry into Spirit. Every Reality is fleeing from the seen into the unseen. Ever the perception of the sciences is restoring it to the view. The physicist brings the lost sound and sight into physical range through the radiogram and the television. The musician through voice and instrument, the painter through colour, the sculptor through stone, the poet through rhythm, disclose the elusive stretches of Spirit.

Poetry a link in perception

The physical, the mental, and the psychic perceptions are a part of the chain of perceptions. Poetry is a link through the psychic mechanism of the poetic mind, the intuitions and the soul. Poetry is the music of consciousness, proclaiming the vastitude of life which encircles man and his environment.

The poetic perception from Keats to Bridges

Let us now unfold the poetic vision from Keats to Bridges as a single line of seership describing through the intuitions the scenery beyond the senses.

The spiritual kingdom of poetry.

From poetry, at its highest inspiration, the spiritual kingdom is not a haze. It is a world of matter with breathing presences in it. It is in Shelley's phrase "the sensitive extension" of the physical plane a condition of substance governed by the laws of substance. Likewise the soul of poetry is

not a vaporous essence. It is a series of bodies formed of subtle grades of matter through which the Spirit of man evolves into the larger reality. The Invisible is not, as science would have it in her sceptical mood, a void. Space is full of surprises. The earth-body and the earth-plane are but a fraction of experience.

The Astral body

Shelley's eye finely pursuing the Self to its deeper life, senses the astral body.

The Astral cord

Tennyson disengages from the mist the astral cord the link of some tight-chain in the inmost frame, which binds the physical to the astral body.

The subtle bodies

Browning, Swinburne, Abercrombie and Charles Williams visualize three bodies, the physical, the astral, the mental as the residence of the Ego.

The real self

In the poets, man's final deliverance is out of form. His real Self is the fiery force of the Divine Mind in him his Monad. This is the Out-Soul beyond the chequered robes in the works of Browning. It is the bodies existence in the higher mental sphere.

The planes

There are also planes within planes of matter for the Spirit's progress. In Tennyson's poetry man is moving in aeonian evolution through all the spheres. For Browning his passage is through the "successive zones" of air, life expanding in "unlimited series". Mr Williams describes the planes as the "high towns within eternity". The people in the astral world, Planetary Spirits in the "depth of unguessed space", the Lords of Karma, materialize in the writings of Hardy and Byron. The whole heavenly hierarchy, from the past seraph downwards, move by in Mr. Williams's verse as the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

Cosmic Thought

All the bodies and the spheres, the "choir of heaven and the furniture of earth", are the emanation of Cosmic Thought. Mind has the power to make the illusion of substance. The whole of reality is the expression of the Cosmic Will.

The World-Soul

Finally out of the immensity of phenomenal existence, emerges the World-Soul. Hardy exhibits It as a Material Being, body and mind, exercising the function of Will. Abercrombie shows It evolving life and form through acts of imagination. Williams unfolds It as Love; Bridges as the Spirit of Beauty.

The mystic Vision of Poetry

The poet has the eye of the mystic. For him the unseen is seen. The subtle intuition, lit by the psychic illumination within him, reveals in the apparent emptiness of space, the complex bodies, the planes of interpenetrating matter, and the Spirit or Out-Soul in all things to be the manifestation of one Primordial Self. The mystery of the invisible is reduced to its primal simplicity the mystery of the Cosmic Mind.

The unnameable

What rhythm may fathom It? What sound may utter It? What thought may encompass It? Expression by the act of expressing brings in the sense of limit. The Infinite by its nature is beyond the grasp of the finite. Yet there are stirring centres in the psyche of man which give by the intuitive glimpse

hints of the creator and His creation.

The divine Imagination

The poetic act may be a symbol of the Divine act. As the poet prefigures in his mind, character, plot and scenery of his drama, so the All-Self in the silent recesses of Being fashions by imagination Individuality and the stage where Individuality plays its part. The worlds visible and invisible, and the countless Spirits therein, are the representation of the Divine idea. The nature of Cosmic Thought is unknowable. It is more melodious than the sound of lute or lyre; deeper than the unplumbed depths of mind; stronger than the sea in storm; purer than the hills at morning; rarer than the exhalations of the dewfall and the dawn.

The divine imaginaries

As poetic imaginaries burn in the singer's brain, so the fires of the Divine imagination kindle, ceaselessly, fresh forms of life. As the characters of the poet are portions of the mind that gave them birth are yet independent of It, so every creature is in the All-Self and yet independent of It.

Pages 223 to 225

Life learning of its value

Life is learning from tears the value of tearlessness living in shadows to judge the worth of light, dying in order to know itself free of death. Poetry is the cry of its spirit, reverberating the universal rhythm: "I am I no longer, Self is Self no more". It is the intuition of mind speaking aloud that the body is the bondage of matter necessary for the present evolution of man.

End of the Vision

So the vision has run its race from light to light and returns whence it began. From Keats to Bridges, from beauty unto beauty, it has passes in full circle. Such must be its racing for ever and for ever. The wonder of the searcher is not in the goal reached, but in the aim unattained and the unfulfilled aspiration ever, achievement meagre, and The sought lurking far off on the horizon within and always out of grasp.

Poetry and the echo of reality

A great poem is the echo of a higher reality. The poet's mind is sensitivity in tune through inspiration with the finest vibrations of Being. If the resonance seems distorted in transit, the disturbance is due to the distance of the sphere whence the music filters to earth. Just as light travelling from foreign stars unburdens here the mysteries of its beams, so the poet, to sight and unbelievable to mind.

The vagueness of poetry

The cloud that overhangs poetry is not of his making: it is rather the demand of our normal existence that all messages be given in the restricted code of limited perspectives. The cryptogram of life which poetry construes does not admit of easy deciphering in our daily terms. Poetry is striving to say what in the main is the message of the present-day science. It is our impossible that is possible, it is our certainty that is unsure.

Reality beyond conjecture

Reality overleaps our most daring conjectures. Indeed there is no conjecture, sufficiently bold or overwhelming, that may express its wonders. This is not merely the faith of poetry; it is its direct perception of the actual. The vision of song is no more vague than the vision of every other department of knowledge. The indistinctness, where-ever that is present, is due to the magnitude of reality and not to the method of poetic advance.

The poetic confidence

Life without the hope and sight of the poetic understanding is a labyrinth from which there is no exit. But if you have the quiet confidence of the poetic state, if you believe as the great men of the past have always believed in the assurance of the inspirational mood, there is no need for fear or trembling. All that is destroyed, when dissolution is at hand, is the form of illusion which is confused with reality. The outward semblances of things to pass. But the Immaterial Essence that forms the aspirations, the affections, the person yea the whole dynamics and dimensions of man is locked safe from harm. It is the scaffolding that fails: the building is revealed. Such is the insight of poetry into the perils that enmesh the human doom. Alas! Man was born for the palace, but lives in the dead hut of habit; and he will not understand the fineness of this perception.

The stability of the soul

Is it not worth while kindling the desire for the stability of the soul, even if it be not there? If illusion does the work, the illusion must be grasped. How does the rainbow form in the arch of the sky? How does the lucent lamp of the glow-worm burn in the dark? How are Mercury and Venus and Mars born of the gaseous cloud? The process wonder-worth is illusion. Why reject imagination, if imagination make the dream-goal of our desire? The poet's faith, even if erring, works.

Now change the alternative. Suppose that inspiration, unaware, has brushed by with airy wings, the boundaries of truth. Suppose that the plummet of rhythm has drawn from the depths, dimly and darkly, the measure of Reality. Suppose song has soared not to the heaven of fancy but fact. See the vastness of the implications. The horizon of man alters. The landscape of his life, chequered by impending storms, brief as the wick of the candle, wayward as the breath of the wind, becomes from a solitary and tragic transit the progressive unfoldment of experience; heralding at the end the ecstatic moment of Eternity.

The truth of the Poetic vision

Shall I show you, as in a glass, the truth that the stammering tongue of Poetry is voicing through her visions? By the upward urge of inspiration, she passes over the narrow demesne of eye and ear. From her watch-post in the invisible she has strange sights, hints and intuitions. What do you think she sees? The roar of the water of life, swollen and in full flood, stayed by earth's obstruction. Never dismayed by the blockage, its vehemence and passion gather fresh pulsations of power. The barriers are adjusted by Nature to Yield, at the proper time and place, to the requisite pressure. The life-force is also endowed with the quality of exciting and accelerating its currents. The detention of the artificial boards and planks do not detain the march. Poetry overhead sees a remarkable sight. All the barriers are creaking and cracking and crashing. The sluices are open at the critical moment, when the volume of life has reached the height of its resounding reverberations. The lock-gates of the Niagara are lifted.

Poetry has not the speech to lisp to you, even in her delicatest cadences, what she beholds beyond in the dim distance. She anticipates that the mass and majesty of foam and flood, withheld by long suspense, overleap power, the consciousness and the beauty and the marvel of the soul in its awareness. Thus out of a furious fashioning is wrought the first compact unit of radiant energy the substance of the soul's self. Imagine the power operating upon the universal dimension stars and suns and systems all passing through life's probation. Such is the poet's glimpse and trembling intuition of things as they are.

The Quest finished

The quest is ended. The light shines, if you will see it. The gloom before the pathway is realistic:

realism is necessary to illusions that they may work. The darkness of doubt is there, to set in motion the wheels of faith. The maladjustment. The rhythmic beats are disjointed that the ear of the musician may join. The strings of the cello snap that the cellist may change the instrument. The bands of the body break that the soul may issue thence.

Life a Passage

Life is an abrupt and hastened passage just that Eternity may be prized. Our faith lies in the instability, the insecurity, the certain dissolution of the present order. Would you have it otherwise? Perpetuate to time without end the present pain and pang? The most helpless, abject, and pathetic pessimism is the desire to prolong for ever a preparatory state of life. But to break that dream, so vast, so various, so beautiful to bring that to dust and ashes herein is the regret of man mellowed to a sadness beyond the range of rhyme.

But that regret restores the transcendental value of things, of the air that the body breathes without purchase, of the summer springs that slake the thirst without the buying. That though sets our estimate of life, not by the roubles and the lire of international currency, but by the gold-clause of the soul that stands fast against the breach of international faith.

TEN THINGS to THINK ABOUT if YOU WANT to CHANGE the WORLD

By Michael Angier

Mahatma Gandhi believed that we must be the change we want to see in the world. This was well demonstrated when he helped India gain its independence. Gandhi was a revolutionary man, but he accomplished India's emergence as a nation without starting a revolution. In fact, he advocated no violence. One of the most powerful countries in the world yielded to the commitment of one man and the dream of millions.

What change can we effect? What's the difference we want to make in the world?

Gandhi said, "In a gentle way you can shake the world." Here are some things to think about how to do just that.

1. Know that all significant change throughout history has occurred not because of nations, armies, governments and certainly not committees. They happened as a result of the courage and commitment of individuals. People like Joan of Ark, Albert Einstein, Clara Barton, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison and Rosa Parks. They might not have done it alone, but they were, without question, the change makers.
2. Believe that you have a unique purpose and potential in the world. It's not so much something to create as to be discovered. And it's up to you to discover it. Believe that you can and will make a difference.
3. Recognize that everything you do, every step you take, every sentence you write, every word you speak—or DON'T speak--counts. Nothing is trivial. The world may be big, but there are no small things. Everything matters.
4. To be the change you want to see in the world, you don't have to be loud. You don't have to be eloquent. You don't have to be elected. You don't even have to be particularly smart or well educated. You do, however, have to be committed.
5. Take personal responsibility. Never think that "it's not my job". It's a cop-out to say, "What can I do, I'm only one person." You don't need everyone's cooperation or anyone's permission to make changes. Remember this little gem, "If it's to be, it's up to me."
6. Don't get caught up in the how of things. If you're clear on what you want to change and why you want to change it, the how will come. Many significant things have been left undone because someone let the problem solving interfere with the decision-making.
7. Don't wait for things to be right in order to begin. Change is messy. Things will never be just right. Follow Teddy Roosevelt's timeless advice, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."
8. The genesis for change is awareness. We cannot change what we don't acknowledge. Most of the time, we aren't aware of what's wrong or what's not working. We don't see what could be. By becoming more aware, we begin the process of change.
9. Take to heart these words from Albert Einstein--arguably one of the smartest change masters who ever lived: "All meaningful and lasting change starts first in your imagination and then works its way out. Imagination is more important than knowledge."
10. In order for things to change, YOU have to change. We can't change others; we can only change ourselves. However, when WE change, it changes everything. And in doing so, we truly can

be the change we want to see in the world.

Inscribed on the tomb of an Anglican Bishop in Westminster Abby (1100 A.D.)

When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country. But it, too, seemed immovable.

As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest to me, but alas, they would have none of it. And now, as I lie on my deathbed, I suddenly realize: If I had only changed myself first, then by example I would have changed my family. From their inspiration and encouragement, I would then have been able to better my country, and who knows, I may have even changed the world. Since this list was inspired by Gandhi's belief, it seems appropriate to end with another of his quotes: "Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and we will make not only our own happiness, but that of the world at large."

About the author

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WAYS to GET to KNOW YOURSELF

By Erica Wang

1. Create a space for yourself.

It's very important to have a place or time for just yourself. Have fun creating a room or personal corner that fills you with joy and feels like home. Date yourself and find your likes and dislikes. Enjoy who you are.

2. Spend some quiet time by yourself every day.

If noise and activity constantly bombard your life, you are drowning out your inner guidance. Enjoy the quiet time, sit or lie down, and just be.

3. Listen to the little voice inside of you.

Learn to distinguish the voices behind your inner dialogues. Don't ignore your higher self. You may make your life harder than it needs to be.

4. Ask yourself questions; never assume your answers.

Challenge yourself with questions daily. Work from a self-knowledge base rather than answering to please or rebel against others. Be honest about who you are or you may disappoint yourself and others.

5. Find an activity that fills you with joy.

When we do the things we love, we love the life we have and learn to love ourselves.

6. Wake up each morning and do an internal check.

Before you jump out of bed and run off to the next activity, take a few moments to be with yourself and check-in with how you are feeling, what you are thinking, and where you are going.

7. Let your spirit define who you are rather than the outside world.

Don't dress outside in, dress inside out. Wear your spirit proudly and attract more contentment to you. Don't rely on an external image (i.e. clothing, hairstyle, and status symbols) to tell you who you are.

8. Be honest with others about your needs and boundaries.

Once you know what you need, let others know. Don't mix your messages. If you remain silent, there's a chance of disappointing yourself and others more than the truth ever could.

9. Process what others have to say about you. Don't take their words for Gospel, but don't ignore it.

Let perspectives outside of yourself give dimension to your internal picture. Balance between taking people's words as ultimate truth and ignoring what is being said. Realize everyone sees the world through his or her own filters (past experiences, needs, wants). Listen for the truth with love.

10. Give thanks to the force that created you.

However you name the force that created you, give thanks for who you are. When you give thanks, you acknowledge your beauty and have the ability to cherish yourself more and more.

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Ways to Grow Consistently

By Shale Paul

Personal growth seems to occur in spurts. We gain a little, lose a little, surge ahead only to slide into a holding pattern where in growth seems to be stagnated. Here are ten ways to get back on track.

1. Recognize that growth continues, despite our best efforts to thwart it.

There's a saying: God's time and mortals' time differ. Nowhere is that more true than in the area of personal growth. Growth can be likened to fermentation; it often occurs well below the surface and appears dormant for long periods. Still, much is going on, if only we have the good sense to realize it. And, there ARE things we can do to break through the surface layers...

2. Engage in the process; give up attachment to the result.

We live in a results-oriented world. That's both good and bad. In the short term, it enables us to get more done faster. In the long term, however, it conceals a great life truth: ultimately, ALL is process, and as we engage in the process and relinquish our obsession with results, the results occur spontaneously, easily. To be involved fully in the process is to be fully in the present.

3. Work on one thing at a time.

High achievers and type A's pride themselves on their ability to keep several balls in the air at one time. For many, it works, but there is a price. Multi-tasking, as it's come called, splits your focus, reduces the energy devoted to any single task and--when the balls mysteriously begin to get out of control--leaves the serious multi-tasker at a loss for words or acts. But to work on one thing at a time is tantamount to enjoying the beauty of a single rose, savouring the clean clear taste of cold spring water, and feeling the exhilaration of a new day. Single tasking gets the body and the mind going again, inspires and invigorates.

4. Stop thinking, writing and speaking in the first person.

Here's a fun exercise. It's called, an I inventory and it goes like this. Review our correspondence file, the letters you've written, and note how often you begin a sentence with, I. Then, pay attention to your conversations with others. How often do you use that word, I? If you journal, take a yellow (better yet, red) marker and over line every single I. All of these are good measures of your preoccupation with yourself. Try taking a vacation from the word, I. You may find it both refreshing and stimulating.

5. Realize that it can take great effort to achieve a state of effortless achievement.

Sounds like double talk, doesn't it! But it's true. In order to achieve effortlessly, which is a measure of alignment, you must get beyond concepts that serve as comfort zones e.g., self-importance, personal attachment, and even enlightenment. With respect to enlightenment, it's not so much a state to be achieved as one to be recognized. If you're having trouble with this one, think of Jesus's words: Before Abraham was, I am (The Bible, John 8:58).

6. Look for the lesson in pain.

This is not a plea for a life of self-sacrifice, or an argument that pain is necessary and good. It's just that sometimes, pain IS. Stopping, taking time to examine what's really going on in the present state of pain, prevents this all too common emotion from developing into anger, resentment and

resignation. Looking at pain dispassionately, openly, allows you to learn the lesson and move ahead.

7. Let go of your need to have an opinion.

When things go wrong, friends offend, and our progress seems to be grinding to a halt, it's natural to have an opinion, to explain, justify and defend. Natural, yes; understandable, yes; but productive? No! To give up the need to have an opinion in such instances is to free the mind to receive answers.

8. Walk away from it.

Years ago, I was going through a rough time, but was determined to stick with it until I won out. A friend who sensed my frustration asked if I would tell her about it. With some hesitation, I told her of the problem, the struggles, and the seeming lack of progress. She listened patiently and, after I finished, hesitated a moment, and then said something I'll never forget: "You know, sometimes wisdom is knowing when to walk away from it." So, when IS it time to walk away? From a distance of some years now, I would say it's when the course you are "stubbornly" pursuing is not producing results and you have no real feeling that it will!

9. Follow your path rather than your plan.

The distinction relates to specificity. Paths are often winding, indistinct and surprising in where they lead. Plans are clear, definite, and designed to eliminate uncertainty. To follow a path is to be open to discovery, to the sudden turns that yield joy, insight and challenge. But, to really follow a path requires courage and a willingness to give up certainty. To follow a path is to go forward when you can see only a single step ahead, confident that the next step will appear.

10. HEAR what is being said.

Have you ever had a friend offer you some unwelcome advice and preface it with, "You're not going to want to hear this, but..." Well, often when new information comes to us that conflicts with what we know, believe, think, or want, we DON'T hear it. Even while we're "listening", we're preparing our replies, defences and rebuttals. In short, we're blocking our chance to learn. To "hear", as opposed to simply listening, is to withhold judgment, to go beyond the actual words, and to really be open to the possible lesson that may be lurking just beneath the surface. The difference between listening and hearing is that, somewhere in between, there's a filter, and it's usually our resistance to new and sometimes conflicting information.

Welcome to Fantasy Land

By Michael Levy

When was the last time you visited a theme park? Did you enjoy it?

Most people love to go to a theme park and escape the hum-drum chores of everyday living. How real are theme parks? All those fascinating furry creatures that come up to us and give us a big hug...How cute they look, but how real are they?

Within an eye to a young child they are very real, but through the view of adulthood they are just a person in a costume...Right? Well, not exactly, for many times we use our imagination for just that one day and we go along with the fantasy. After all, that is the fun of going into a theme park...To indulge in the fantasy..... is it not?

We allow our imagination to go back to our childhood and we enjoy all the fun of the fair. At the end of the day we are tired but very contented with all the release of worry and tensions the fantasy has relieved. But....we do not live in fantasy worlds do we?....We have to go back out into the "real world," to face all the negativity and dangers of modern day living, or do we?

So, what is real and what is fantasy in our everyday lives? Worry and anxiety seem real enough when there are events in our lives that take on harmful emotional stress. Being in debt, sickness, death of a loved one, all this stuff will play havoc with our enjoyment of life and turn happiness into sorrow. Debt, illness and lack of joy can be avoided if we know the true, authentic paths to follow, but death of our physical form is a certainty...You can bet your life on it!
But ... what is life? And.....how real is death...

Well, the physical presence on earth disappears. The ego/intellect that was so worried about its appearance, other peoples gossip, making lots of money, keeping up with the Jones's, world events, family arguments and a host over other "Important stuff" will all disappear like smoke...Just as if it was all a fantasy??????

A theme on life.... in a park of drama perhaps?

It sure is a shame most folks forgot their lines they were given at birth and tried to ad-lib a script fabricated by self-torment and mental-torture. The fantasy they enacted really seemed like reality, but since all finite substances are glued together atoms, fed by chemicals such as serotonin and dopamine, they are bound to come unstuck eventually and the "reality" fades into oblivion...The good news is the tangible authentic be-ing will never fade away. The true essence of a human-being is a constant flow of intelligent energy that cannot disappear. We label it a soul, but such identities cannot describe the indescribable.....That has to be experienced.

So, is it time to get real now?To rediscover the authentic life that is projected here on earth and throughout eternity. Is it time to take off our fluffy costumes, our masks, our facade and to live as our authentic self. Is there any difference between eternity and the now existence? If you say; Yes there is, then you are living in a fantasy theme park, but this one has a long dark shadow that turns happiness into grief.

It exists only in a will-o'-the-wisp called ego.

OK...enough already! ... I guess it is time to cut out the Non-Sense of the ego/intellect and to turn on..... tune in.....to our S-SENSE!!
The Spirit of a True Soul.
Now that's a valid existence that experiences how to live in infinite

Love & Joy!!!! A design, within a subject, within a point, within a theme, within a dream, within a fantasy land.....Enjoy it all from within! But Understand.....What is not born.... Cannot die. The eternal soul will nourish our life on earth..... for without the soul ... there is no life....Just a Fantasy of Delusions.

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What Calls You?

By Claudette Rowley

"It is not, in my estimation, an undue stretch to say that if we are living lives that are wrong for our spirits, and if we say no to the calls that could put that spirit to rights, then we, too...are lost souls." - Gregg Levoy from *Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life*

We all know people who have known from birth almost that they had a calling - to be a dancer or parent or salesperson. A calling that had a life of its own, a force that was so strong they couldn't resist it. Here's the truth: We all have a calling, several in fact. A calling is a vocation in any area of life: work, relationship, or lifestyle. Our callings or vocations are the forces that pull us toward being more authentic - toward lives centered around what we want, and even more important, what we love.

We can be called to DO something, like train as a surgeon, publish a book of short stories or start a non-profit venture. We are equally as likely to be called to BE something as well - more creative, more compassionate or more truthful. Any calling we hear is our natural birthright. No calling is better than another nor is one person more worthy than another to follow their calling.

Here are three very general steps to identifying and following a calling:

- Listen. The universe is constantly asking us to follow our callings. When we don't know what they are, it gives us signs and signals. For example, one client overheard a conversation in a coffee shop that was exactly what she needed to hear at the time, as if the words were spoken directly to her.
- Respond. Once we've identified a calling, we need to respond "yes or no" to it. Sometimes we answer consciously, and sometimes unconsciously by turning a deaf ear to the calling. When we hear the calling, but don't respond, the universe pushes and prods us.
- Take action. All calls must be translated into action at some point or another. There's an art to the timing of action. When it's time to take action, the universe will up the ante until we do.

I'll share an example from my own life. About four years ago, I knew that one of my callings was to be a coach. I knew it like I know my own name. I started exploring the field, registered for a training program and told friends and family. I was taking action, right? Well, the universe wasn't satisfied. I was still working at my social work job, a job that I had described more than once as "killing my spirit." I continued to work there for the salary. (Let me be clear: sometimes continuing to work for your salary is a necessary leg in your journey). The universe upped the ante, and gave me a wake up call. I was presented with a scenario at work that compromised my personal integrity so much that I couldn't write my letter of resignation fast enough. A colleague later commented, "The universe really gave you a swift kick in the pants, didn't it?" She was right.

Here's a sampling of possible signs that you are being prompted to follow a calling:

- Synchronicity. For example, three people recommend the same book to you in the space of the week. The message is clear - go get the book.
- Wake up call. An unexpected turn of events occurs, for instance, you become ill, you lose your job or a relationship ends abruptly.
- Intuition. You know in your gut that there's a new direction in which you need to head.

- Body signals. Your body is wise, and will communicate with you when you're not getting the message. For example, if you have a persistent pain in your neck, what's a "pain in the neck" in your life? See if the two are related.

Take a look at the spectrum of your life right now. What's calling to you? Which calls are you answering right now? Is it time to translate a calling into action? In the end, we are called to be ourselves more fully - to give expression to what resounds in our souls.

Claudette Rowley, coach and author, helps professionals identify and pursue their true purpose and calling in life. Contact her today for a complimentary consultation at 781-676-5633 or claudette@metavoice.org. Sign up for her free newsletter "Insights for the Savvy" at <http://www.metavoice.org>.

About the Author - Claudette Rowley

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What is a Life Purpose?

By Michelle L. Casto

The word purpose means to have intentional results. When we are on purpose, we are making a conscious effort to be or create something. Usually what we really want to be or do seems out of reach, “impossible.” But we must remember that the word “impossible” with an apostrophe is actually I’m (I am) possible. And you are! Dudley Lynch and Paul Lordis in their book *Strategy of the Dolphin* said this: “We can define “purpose” in several ways. For one, when know our purpose, we have an anchor--- a device of the mind to provide some stability, to keep the surprises of a creative universe from tossing us to and fro, from inflicting constant seasickness on us. Or we can think of our purpose as being a master nautical chart marking shoals and rocks. Perhaps the most profound thing about “being on purpose” is that when that is our status, our condition, and our comfort, we find our lives have meaning, and when are “off purpose” we are confused about meanings and motives.” A clearly defined life purpose provides meaning, direction, and significance.

Your life purpose answers two essential questions: Who do I want to be? & What do I want to do? When we are living from our true soul’s purpose, we feel more alive---filled with excitement, joy, and inner peace---in a word “contentment.” We are more connected to one another as human beings and more content with who we are and what we do. When we are “on purpose” we tap into a higher power, we have supernatural support! The best things in life seem to be naturally attracted to us. When we are not on purpose, we try to do it all alone! We grasp at straws, every thing looks good—whether it is a new job, going to school, moving, finding another lover—anything to fill the void of the extreme emptiness we feel inside. Not being on purpose leads to constant seeking--- external things to make you feel more fulfilled. Being on purpose leads to effortless contentment---an internal peace with what is unfolding in your life. You have a feeling of “all is right with the world” and I have an important part to play!

As Thomas Edison once said, “If we all did the things we were capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.” To reach this place of soulful purpose, an inner shift must first occur. Change starts on the inside, and as you awaken to the real part you are meant to play, you will develop confidence in knowing who are meant to be and what you are meant to do in the world. You will develop awareness of how big and bright you really are. You will then begin to accept your part, articulating it to yourself and others, and finally taking action to live out your purpose.

5 Steps to Discovering Your Soul Life Purpose

1. **Awakening** This is step where you awaken to the fact that you have a bigger game to play in life—a unique personal and professional purpose. If you are awakening, you are beginning to notice a restlessness in your soul, you may be having trouble sleeping, getting intuitive messages, having symbolic dreams.

2. **Awareness** This is the step where you become aware that you need to find out exactly what your life purposes are. If you are becoming aware, you are wanting to find out more about what else there is to life, desiring more fulfillment and meaning, and feeling more awake about who you really are.

3. **Acceptance** This is the step where you accept your life purposes and come to terms with what it means to you and the world. If you are in acceptance, you are beginning to embrace the idea that your life has purpose, realizing it is your job to be it and do it, and wanting to find out how.

4. **Articulating** This is the step where you articulate your life purposes by putting them into words. If

you are articulating, you are putting in words what it is that you are meant to be and do, starting to share it with others, and getting excited about it.

5. Acting This is the step where you take action by moving towards the fulfillment of your life purposes. If you are taking action, you have begun making major personal and professional life changes that are more in alignment with who you are and what you are meant to do.

About the Author

Brightlight Coaching

Intuitive, soul-centered and experiential coaching for awesome results in your whole life. Free articles, resources and coaching sessions to begin living the life you were meant to lead with author and coach. Her coaching practice is Brightlight Coaching, as she empowers people to freely shine their bright light to the world. Her own life purpose is to educate and empower people to live with passion, purpose, and possibility. Visit her virtually: www.getsmartseries.com or (770) 281-4606/coach@getsmartseries.com

What is Wisdom?

By Cyril Upton

It is probably the oldest question on Earth, upon the answer to which men have ferociously disagreed since the dawn of thought, and by which an evolving universal consciousness, if such a phenomenon exists, may well, itself, be tormented. Yet with the immense documentation of human thought and intuition, during successive civilisations, which we have now accumulated and translated, together with the manifold expression of the world's art, and the prodigious advance in scientific research, we are, perhaps, in a better position to-day to pose the question without prejudice, and in a more balanced approach, than when, even up to very recent times, ignorance and unabashed superstition were all too often at the helm. For what we have attained is not so much a greater knowledge of what is true, as a greater certainty of what is manifestly false. We have, so to speak, weeded the garden of the imagination to quite a considerable extent, leaving the soil richer for those blooms which were for so long stifled and which now can be studied more objectively. Whereas with the dawn of Aristotelian science it was impossible to render mysticism compatible with universal phenomena as we then conceived them, we can now perceive a harmonious cosmos whose laws reinforce, rather than contradict, our intuitive aspirations.

Of the thousands of pompous definitions of wisdom scattered by Philomath's throughout the ages, the simple aphorism of Hung Wu, the Chinese Haroun Al Rachid, who founded the Ming Dynasty, seems to ring the truest to our contemporary moderation, "All wisdom consists in this, not to think that we know what we do not know."

It is no longer pardonable, since the science of semantics has helped to light the way, to employ a word, especially when writing a book, without making sure that it conveys the identical meaning to the reader that it holds for the writer. The semantic discipline has revealed no less than that the greater part of human misunderstanding, suffering, and folly, is due to the confusion caused by the careless use of words, to the different meaning attached to words by the uneducated and semi-educated of all classes of society, to the frequent difficulty in the translation of words from one language to another, and to the ever-present temptation to mistake words for realities. Philosophers, with their systems, which are all more or less attempts to arrive at a knowledge of the unknowable by juggling with concepts, believe in the reality of the very words which lead them to doubt the reality of their own personal existence. Such people derive immense reassurance from a concept like Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*.

Since wisdom is a perennial example of a word that has ever conveyed different meanings to different men, to different races, and to different epochs, it is the first modest endeavour of this book to pin down, as it were, the meaning of this word, mutually to be agreed upon between writer and reader. Thus, and thus only, can we attempt to follow in the footsteps of the sages without perpetually floundering in the byways of random thought. This may be less difficult than would, at first, appear possible, if the reader will permit frequent quotation of extracts of poetry rather than from philosophical disquisitions which tend to become nebulous and oppressive. As Croce said, "poetry is 'lyrical intuition' apprehending the pure throb of life in its ideality".

Fear of the unknown, and horror of the known,
Had led him to the lute, for in its tone
He heard the music of an inner life
Rising above the dissonance and strife
His soul had long outgrown.

And from the never-ending wrong he turned
To newfound purposes, new values learned,

And, cloistered from the world of random thought,
Found in humility the light he sought
As the taper downward burned.

And thus and thus serenity drew nigh;
His heart an instrument, and life a sigh
That, like an errant breeze, caressed its string,
And daydreams, wakened into song, took wing
As the years went drifting by.

Should the reader doubt the utility of writing at all upon so fragile a theme as wisdom, let him remember that with the development of nuclear physics, mankind is within the immediate possibility of perpetrating its greatest folly, besides which all previous follies pale into insignificance.

Now when we approach even the threshold of the subject of wisdom, it must be accepted a priori that ideas which lose their validity with the march of time, which cannot be sustained, cannot be regarded as in the realm of absolute wisdom, one would be compelled to complete an encyclopaedia of the cloud-cuckoo-land of credulity and illusion. Of that which changes we can have nothing more than opinion; real knowledge is of the changeless. Although this was already acknowledged in Indian thought, it was Plato, in the West, who first ascribed reality in a full sense only that which is eternal. Thus all political, social, and what we may call everyday domestic wisdom is purely relative to changing circumstances.

"The One remains, the many changes and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines. Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass
Stains the white radiance of Eternity."

Shelly

Surely the path towards wisdom begins with a man's capacity to identify himself with, and perpetually adapt himself to, the greater realities. Beside the mystery of man and the universe, the preposterous pettiness of hostile religious sects and philosophical "schools" cannot exist for the wise. Before the enormous problems of racial distribution and economic adjustment, intense nationalism, racialism, and hemispherism become absurd. Even before the stresses and strains of internal of internal domestic politics, party rigidity, class prejudices and bumbledom are but the symbols of limited comprehension. Wisdom is the faculty of seeing things always as part of something bigger on and on progressively to the eternal. The discoveries of science and of comparative religion reduces a vast mass of that which has been hailed as wisdom in the past to utter nonsense. Learning, which is fluctuating, is not necessarily wisdom, though it may lead to thereto, for abiding wisdom is, as we shall submit later, more a question of intuition than of intellectual achievement. If the epitome of wisdom is attainable, it must be a spiritual comprehension of eternal truths. Hence a man may acquire an immense erudition and yet possess little or no wisdom. Another may be a paragon of virtue and yet extremely stupid. Erudition and virtue are, if you will, natural corollaries of wisdom but are not a part thereof, for the obvious reason that both vary with social progress and regress; but wisdom remains poised as an abstraction over and above the flux.

"Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one, Have oft-times no connection. Knowledge dwells In head replete with thoughts of other men; Wisdom in minds attentive to their own." *Cowper*

Within You

By Judi Singleton

Your outer life is but a reflection of your inner life. If it is full of strife you can change it. Just change the strife within. Many times we forget this and struggle in the outer world to create what we would have. Maybe we want to be rich, have a new house, a new car, bring about world peace. There is an old hymn Called "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." You only have control over you what you think, feel or are. You can't change the whole world or others. But if you are filled with peace then peace on earth does begin with you.

Focusing from the outside in does not work very well. We must change what is within to have our outer world change and to receive these things we desire.

How do we do that?

We already live in a state of peace. What you say how can you say that when the whole world is going to war and there is such lack in the world. We only really need air, food, and water to survive think on all you have beyond that. We live in a state of abundance at all times We already have all the peace we can express. Just center yourself and meditate for a few moments. When you truly get to the center of you there is all the peace you could desire. You do not have to get caught up in the mass consciousness, you do not have to give in to fear. These are choices you are making.

Focus on the peace you already have. Focus on the state of abundance you already live in. Be grateful. Write a grateful list. The universe responds to your state of mind. If your state of mind is usually in a state of want then you will continue to want. If your state of mind is one of gratefulness for what you already have then you will receive more to be grateful for. So in this time of uncertainty focus on peace for you and the world. More peace will come.

It is much easier to effect change internally because we are dealing with an aspect of the universe that we can have complete control over. We can't always control our outer universe but we can always, with effort, control our inner universe. Within is the building blocks of the world. So build a world that you would love to live in. You must want this for others as well as yourself. The more we look within the more our outer world will reflect what we would have.

About the author

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Why am I here?

By H.K. Challoner & Roland Northover

From Antidote To Fear

Viewing This Pattern Of ever-widening realms of consciousness and realisation it must gradually dawn upon us that there is no limit set to what we can, each one of us, achieve, except that limit impose upon ourselves.

We can all become, if we so choose, increasingly receptive to the powers and attributes, the love and the glory of that Divinity Which, we are assured, exists in Its Wholeness, Its unlimited potentiality, in every single being in Its creation.

This is, of course, one of those mysteries which are too profound for any ordinary man to understand until he has reached great heights of spiritual perception. But we have evidence that many of the Illuminati have done so, and we are always being assured that what they have done we can also do if we are ready to follow the paths they indicate. One thing, however, seems quite certain; the greater the extent to which we can "forthshine" as a Hebrew Scripture graphically expresses it that is, make ourselves transparent to this infinite Power within us which is Love so that it flows through us outward, the nearer to understanding the significance of Divinity we shall be and the more perfectly shall we carry out our responsibility towards God.

But however united we may all be in our Reality in this universal movement towards the same goal, we have a measure of free will and can refuse to follow the dim impulses which draw us upward the Voice of the Divine calling us home. Yet at some time or another the troubles and sorrows caused by our own self self-will and our resistance to the tide of evolution will open our eyes and we shall turn and listen. The moment this happens we shall not be left without help and guidance.

So when we feel bereft, cut off, lonely and afraid; when we can see no clear goal to strive for and are lost in the dark forest; when we succumb to a thousand fears, let us remember that it is only because we have become confused by the miasmas of earth and forgotten our high destiny. And we have probably forgotten something equally important the enduring love and watchfulness of Those above us but not so far above that they cannot reach down and help to pull us up to the rung of the ladder upon which they stand. But again and this cannot be stressed too often this depends entirely on whether we make the effort to reach up and grasp their hand. The great desire of these Elder Brothers is to aid and strengthen us in the long climb. But they cannot do so if we turn our back on them and can't be bothered to make the initial effort to respond, to create the conditions in which their help can be received. Our aim must be to balance ourselves upon each rung, reaching up towards the next in aspiration but with arms wide stretched, poring out all that we have hitherto received in love, wisdom and service to our fellow men. As we so stand, we perceive that we ourselves form one of the most ancient and profoundly significant symbols in the world, that of the equal armed cross.

This attitude typifies our two types of responsibility, upward to God, outward to man. Which attitude, paradoxically, is the only one which will bring us to the top, for we and the ladder are the same.

Of these two responsibilities the first and foremost is, of course, that towards God and until this fulfilled to the greatest extent possible, which means until some measure of dedication has been achieved, our other responsibilities are not likely to be perceived with any great degree of clarity. We shall continue to wobble between the pairs of opposites clinging desperately to one side or the other to keep our balance and never able to maintain ourselves upon the Middle Way of Wisdom in alignment with our Soul.

This is obvious. For only in the light which flows from above and gives a more inclusive vision can the basic Reality behind any phenomenon, activity or problem in daily living be rightly assessed and met.

For normally we see life in all its aspects through the distorting mirror of our own very partial and imperfect vision which is coloured by our separative nature and self-will.

Although every power we manifest, everything we ARE, is, as all the great Experts stress over and over again, divine in its inner nature and essence, distortion has taken place because we normally do not recognise this fact and act upon it. The sense fog in which we habitually live, the fog of our own-clouded vision, the illusions engendered by our immersion in dense matter and our concentration upon it, all play their part in veiling Reality.

So, clearly, these sages are right when they insist that our first responsibility to the Divine is to cleanse this mirror so that it may reflect a more accurate and clear view of the truth and show us things as they really are and not just as they appear to us to be.

Until we have done so, to some extent at least, we are as a man who seeks an object in a dark room. His hands touch this and that, trying to assess their value and guess whether they are what he is looking for. Nine times out of ten he will guess wrongly and when eventually he sees them in the light will discover that he holds some worthless imitation or something entirely different which, in his blindness, seemed to be the pearl of great price.

And the more penetrating and accurate our vision becomes the more we come to realise that this responsibility towards God does not lie so much in the conventional realms of prayer and praise but rather in a very practical work of learning how to "let through the light" so that we may rightfully fulfil our duty and obligations also towards His creatures in the material world where we have been placed, and serve them with love and wisdom.

Once, however, we are ready to accept, if only provisionally this all-over picture which reveals a Universe based upon strict law illuminated by love and united indissolubly in all its part in an archetypal pattern, our whole view of ourselves in our relation to God and to man must change.

We begin to see ourselves as minute segments of a kind of cosmic living jigsaw puzzle in which each segment is of vital importance to the picture as a whole. For the time being we can know only our tiny corner of this pattern, the part into which, to complete that specific bit, we must fit. If we do not do this, if we try to jam ourselves into a corner or refuse to fit in anywhere; if we shove other pieces out of the way because we think their bit more interesting, our corner will temporarily suffer and in consequence so will the whole Design.

Such a view as this reveals the vital importance of our individual contribution to the total picture at any given moment. We belong. We are co-workers with the omnipresent dynamic Forces throughout the Universe. And in order to fulfil our own destiny our obligation to the Architect of this Design, which is our vertical responsibility to God it is of primary importance to try and discover what our particular role in life is meant to be, and when we have found it, to work at perfecting our own corner by fitting ourselves into it as harmoniously and willingly as we can.

For only in our rightful place, doing our natural duty to God and man, serving and loving those with whom we are brought into contact, shall we grow out of our present stage into a higher one, or, to change the metaphor, shall we be enabled to establish ourselves upon the next rung of the ladder.

We may not like our little patch. Nine times out of ten we don't. But after all, granted these general premises, we made it, so what have we to grumble about? In any case, it represents our job in building up our part of the Grand Design. If we refuse to do so similar conditions will be met us again and again until we have accepted the opportunity to play the part assigned to us. Some time the tiny segment must take its rightful place in the Pattern however long delayed that may be. So, however difficult and often pointless and senseless the work may seem, we can take heart of grace. All those who have gone before have succeeded in however small a degree in merging their every-day consciousness with that of their Soul.

This means, of course, that we have to create where we stand the uttermost perfection at every level we can achieve. To carry this out it is essential to develop all our potentialities within the limits by which we are conditioned. And if these conditions seem cruelly constricting and narrow as they so often are it will help to realise that these constrictions are there just for the purpose of achieving perfection within them; they, too, are part of the jigsaw puzzle. In accepting such conditions, infusing them with beauty and light and love lies true happiness. For just because it is our job in the Divine Plan, the forces of the Universe are on our side. In this, too, we shall find security. A point so often overlooked by people caught up, as we all are, by the modern obsession for size and quantity, is that it is quality which really counts. The delicate, minute carving in a walnut by some Chinese master has an intrinsic value as great, perhaps even greater than any more spectacular work of art.

"Impossible to live that way in the world today," many will exclaim. Difficult yes, most worthwhile things are; but certainly far from impossible. And it will be made much easier once we can accept this idea that we are where we are because it is just here that we are needed most and can do most good. That this and no other is the bit of the Pattern we were born to make perfect. And another thing is to keep in mind we have not been drawn to it arbitrarily, but because we ourselves have created the need for the particular experiences and relationships with which it will present us. For we can all see easily enough that perhaps the larger number of the trials and difficulties we are called upon to face have been brought upon us by our own actions in this one. By resistance to the Pattern or by blindness to its requirements, by not fulfilling obligations and so on. Although, of course, the seeds of such mistakes, weakness, ignorance, greed, stupidity, emotional reactions of whatsoever kind must clearly have been sown long before, since they are an intrinsic part of our character.

But even if this theory of causes reaching back into the past make no appeal, it could equally well be postulated that the Divine Vision in our own Soul has seen that just here and nowhere else is our next step on the way to greater understanding and therefore to a greater chance of liberation from suffering and fear.

Part of our trouble is that we are all so confused about the real values in life. Everything presses in upon us so and one of the greatest pressures of which we are hardly aware is the importance placed all over our world upon material things and standards.

In revolt against this some people, calling themselves spiritual, have been led to an unrealistic denigration of matter as such. They feel the physical world is somehow a "mistake" different to or separate from the Divine, even evil in itself.

They do not see that by implication they are separating matter off from the Divine Life of which it cannot be other than an aspect, expression or reflection since, as is stressed again and again, matter is energy and energy IS the divine in manifestation.

For in this system of thought nothing can ever be conceived of as being separate from its Source

and essential Being; it is only separate to our vision in the modes through which we make contact with and apprehend the world outside ourselves.

The Spirit of Christ entered into the material world not surely to prove that it was unnecessary or a "mistake" but on the contrary to reveal how it could be used to glorify its Creator and to improve man's lot.

Jesus made this clear enough. He brought a transforming vision down into everything that came his way, demonstrating how matter could be so purified and transilluminated by spirit that even things considered most debased and commonplace, a jar of wine a fish a tree criminals and prostitutes could be infused with such a radiance of Light and Love that they became full of divine significance and potentiality, instruments through which God's presence could be revealed to man on earth.

Once we achieved this vision of matter as intrinsically divine in essence we shall be bound to approach everything in an entirely new way, recognising all things as instruments dedicated to Divine ends, and life itself a sacred trust.

This would of course be much simpler if, only for a flash of a second, we see, as no doubt the Great Ones could see when they chose, the elements of which matter is composed in its Reality. These would surely then appear as emanations of the Divine Life a dance of radiant, joyous atoms, the very life-energy of God, His own Vehicle of expression upon our particular level. It is just possible, of course, that we might be so overwhelmed that we would cease to become capable of getting on with living in any practical sense at all. Everything about us would be revealed itself as so holy that we would spend the rest of our lives in a daze of adoration. That seems to have happened to some who had such moments of vision; but it certainly would not be carrying out our responsibility towards God. We were put on this earth to stand upright to become ourselves gods, not to lie flat on our faces.

So it is probably a merciful dispensation that, until we reach the stage in which we are ready to see Reality clear-eyed without being thrown off our balance or destroyed as Semele was by the sight of Zeus, it is hidden under many, many veils, veils which we ourselves must gradually learn to draw aside, so that our eyes may become strong enough to look upon the Light without danger.

We are always being told that the crux of the matter is that any and everything can be used either for the glory of God or for the glory of man. It depends upon where we put our emphasis. Equally everything can be used to block the light or to reveal it. Nothing is high, nothing is low in the Divine Economy.

And according to the extent to which we are able to recognise this and to put it into practise, so will our lives be based upon an enduring or an ephemeral basis.

This realisation should give us a much better sense of proportion in our everyday life and prevent fanaticism and lack of balance. For this approached to living is no unattainable ideal so high that we, ordinary folk, will turn away in despair saying "Very fine, but not for me".

As an instance: There is nothing reprehensible in making money honestly and spending it with wisdom and discrimination to increase right human relations which words cover a wide field. Beautifying one's environment comes into it since atmosphere is of great importance and affects all who enter its sphere of influence. Money is energy energy is Divine. And beauty in all its aspects is the outer reflection of an inner archetypal Harmony and Order.

So objects of all kinds, cars, washing-machines, radio; TV. Sets, anything which helps to give man

leisure to develop himself mentally and spiritually and carry out wider responsibilities are all good, but the acquisition of such things for their own sake is not given priority and not made an end in itself. It is when material aims and objects are sought entirely for the purpose of self-interest or self-indulgence that we "sin". (And it is interesting to note that the word "sin" means "deprivation of being".)

By concentrating on material things overmuch, by disregarding the real purpose of living we do deprive ourselves of true "being" and so live with the continual nagging fear of losing what we cherish. Material objects can and all too often do - thus stand in our light and deprive us of the capacity for gaining that true vision which is freedom.

For the man or woman who makes a god of any of the forms through which the Divine is expressed or revealed is bowing down to idols. And this is true whether these "forms" are those of human beings or of things or even of thoughts, desires and ideas, the energies which are loaned us for a while to use in the service of God and our fellow men. Ideologies (the half perceived shadows of Divine Ideas) can become gods too. So can our own self-interest, vanity or greed; so can our loves and hates.

All these gods create in their devotees a deceptive sense of their absolute importance to the happiness of the individual. But as they are by nature ephemeral, possessing no permanence in Real Being, they engender sorrow and pain through an almost frantic fear of loss.

But the Reality, the Divine within, can never be lost. When This and This alone is perceived in every form and worshipped and served as Itself in its every phase, whether in appearing, abiding for a time, or passing away, fear of loss will increasingly weaken as realisation of True Gain and the impossibility of losing that Gain dawn in the heart and mind of men.

So another of our responsibilities towards God consists in setting up no altars to any thing or being less than the Divine; seeing It in all things, but worshipping It in nothing less than Its Wholeness.

"All very well", we exclaim again, with some impatience, "theoretically we know all this, of course, but how on earth can we be expected to retain this picture of an ever-present Deity in the pressure of living, while trying to keep going at all in the ever more complex demands of daily life, torn as we are by emotional conflicts and practical problems, confused by the threats of the contemporary World? How can we undertake this responsibility of being constantly aware of and giving service to 'The One in Whom we live and move and have our being'? How can we perfect these lines of communication between our personality and our Soul, if that is what responsibility to God implies? We just haven't got the time or opportunity".

The point is, of course, that we have. We can always do what we want to do enough and find time in which to do it. And here the stress must be upon the word "enough".

Supposing we really became convinced that our whole happiness, our sense of security, our freedom from fears and our general efficiency in living depended upon finding time? Supposing we grasped the fact that once this alignment with our Soul was achieved, even to a small degree, everything else in life would begin to make sense and fall into its proper place, beauty and order would be seen emerging from chaos, hope would blossom from despair? Perhaps then we would blossom from despair? Perhaps then we would begin to desire this union with our Source enough to find time to learn how to develop it. In fact it might soon become the prime factor in our lives, the most interesting and even the most exciting thing in existence. For it would give meaning and purpose to everything we thought or did or experienced.

It has been suggested that one of the purposes for which we have been created is to render back to

God the divine powers and energies of which all things on our planet are composed and which have been lent to us, as it were, so that we might do His work on earth.

But these powers have, for long ages, been perverted, debased and vitiated through misappropriation and misuse so that our task now, as self-conscious human beings, is to regenerate and purify them, recharge them with divine energy through our own efforts, for only then can the work to which they were originally dedicated be fulfilled.

One thing we must never do bury them, ignore them and above all, not fear them. They can become our most precious heritage. How can we set about this all important work and the methods which exist to enable us to do so will be discussed in a later chapter.

The New World Religion. Forces behind the Evolutionary Process

From The Externalization of the Hierarchy

By Alice A. Bailey

The new world religion must be based upon those truths which have stood the test of the ages. This I said elsewhere and enumerated four of those truths:

1. The Fact of God
2. Man's Relationship to God
3. The Fact of Immortality and Eternal Persistence
4. The Continuity of Revelation and the Divine Approaches.

These four facts are basic realities and truths which have conditioned the masses of men for aeons. Human unhappiness is founded primarily upon man's inability to live fully in the consciousness of these four fundamental realizations. But they are steadily taking shape in human thinking, and for them the United Nations fights.

Two more great and foundational facts are also part of the human state of awareness.

5. The fact of our relationship with each other. This is as much a foundational spiritual fact as is God Himself, because it is linked with our knowledge of Him as Father.

This relationship we call "brotherhood" and it expresses itself (or should I say, it will eventually express itself?) through human fellowship and right human relations. For this we work, and humanity is moving towards that relationship - and that in spite of the fact of war.

6. The fact of the Path to God. Awareness of this has been preserved for us down the ages by those who knew God and whom the world called mystics, occultists and saints. Opening out before aspiring men stretches the Way. The history of the human soul is the history of the search for that Way and its discovery by the persistent.

In every race and nation, in every climate and part of the world, and throughout the endless reaches of time itself, back into the limitless past, men have found the Path to God; they have trodden it and accepted its conditions, endured its disciplines, rested back in confidence upon its realities, received its rewards and found their goal. Arrived there, they have "entered into the joy of the Lord," participated in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, dwelt in the glory of the divine Presence, and then returned to the ways of men, to serve. The testimony to the existence of this Path is the priceless treasure of all the great religions and its witnesses are those who have transcended all forms and all theologies, and have penetrated into the world of meaning which all symbols veil.

These truths are part of all that the past gives to man. They are our eternal heritage, and connected with them there is no new revelation but only participation and understanding. These are the facts which the World Teachers have brought to us, suited to our need and capacity at any given time. They are the inner structure of the One Truth upon which all the world theologies have been built, including the Christian doctrines and dogmas built around the Person of Christ and His teaching.

Dimly sensed by the evolving human consciousness hovers another emerging truth of a larger nature - larger [406] because related to the Whole and not just to individual man and his personal salvation. It is an extension of the individual approach to truth. Let us call it the truth of the Great Cyclic Approaches of the divine to the human of which all world Teachers and Saviors were the symbol and the guarantee. At certain great moments, down the ages, God drew nearer to His people and humanity (blindly and unconscious of their objective) at the same time made great efforts to draw near to God. On the part of God, this was intentional, conscious and deliberate; on the part of man, it was largely unconscious, forced upon him by the tragedy of circumstance, by desperate need and by the driving urge of the collective soul. These Great Approaches can be traced down the

centuries, and each time one took place it meant a clearer understanding of divine purpose, a new and fresh revelation, the institution of some form of a new religion and the sounding of a note which produced a new civilization and culture, or a fresh recognition of relationship between God and man or man and his brother.

A new definition of God was given us when the Buddha taught that God was Light and showed us the way of illumination, and when Christ revealed to us that God was Love through His life and service on earth. Today the knowledge aspect of illumination is being comprehended, but the inner meaning of love is only now dimly sensed. Yet light and love have been revealed to the world by two great Sons of God in two Approaches. A new Approach is on the Way, bringing us the next needed truth. We ask ourselves: What will it be? For it, the knowers and lovers of God and of their fellowmen are prepared; for it, the masses of men wait.

Some of these Approaches have been of a major nature, affecting humanity as a whole, and some of them are of less importance affecting only a relatively small part of mankind - a nation or a group. Those Who come as the Revealers of the love of God come from that Spiritual center to which the Christ gave the name "the Kingdom of God." Here dwell the "spirits of just men made perfect"; here the spiritual Guides of the race are to be found and here the spiritual Executives of God's plans live and work and oversee human and planetary affairs. It is called by many names by many people. It is spoken of as the Spiritual Hierarchy, as the Abode of Light, as the center where the Masters of the Wisdom are to be found, as the Great White Lodge. From it come those who act as Messengers of the Wisdom of God, Custodians of the truth as it is in Christ, and Those Whose task it is to save the world, to impart the next revelation and to demonstrate divinity. All the world Scriptures bear witness to the existence of this center of spiritual energy. This spiritual Hierarchy has been steadily drawing nearer to humanity as men have become more conscious of divinity and more fitted for contact with the divine.