

October 2018

# heartfulness

Simply living



**Karma, Jnana**  
**AND BHAKTI YOGA**

**Youth Empowerment**  
**IN KENYA**

**MEDITATION**  
**& NEUROSCIENCE**

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# Heartfulness

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*ISSN 2455-7684*

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*Subscriptions* — [subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com](mailto:subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com)

[www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions](http://www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions)

*Editor* — Rishabh Kothari

*Printed by* — Sunil Kumar

Kala Jyothi Process Pvt. Limited, 1-1-60/5, RT C Cross Roads, Musheerabad,  
Hyderabad-500 020, Telangana

*Publisher* — Sunil Kumar representing Spiritual Hierarchy Publication Trust  
on behalf of Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation, Chennai.

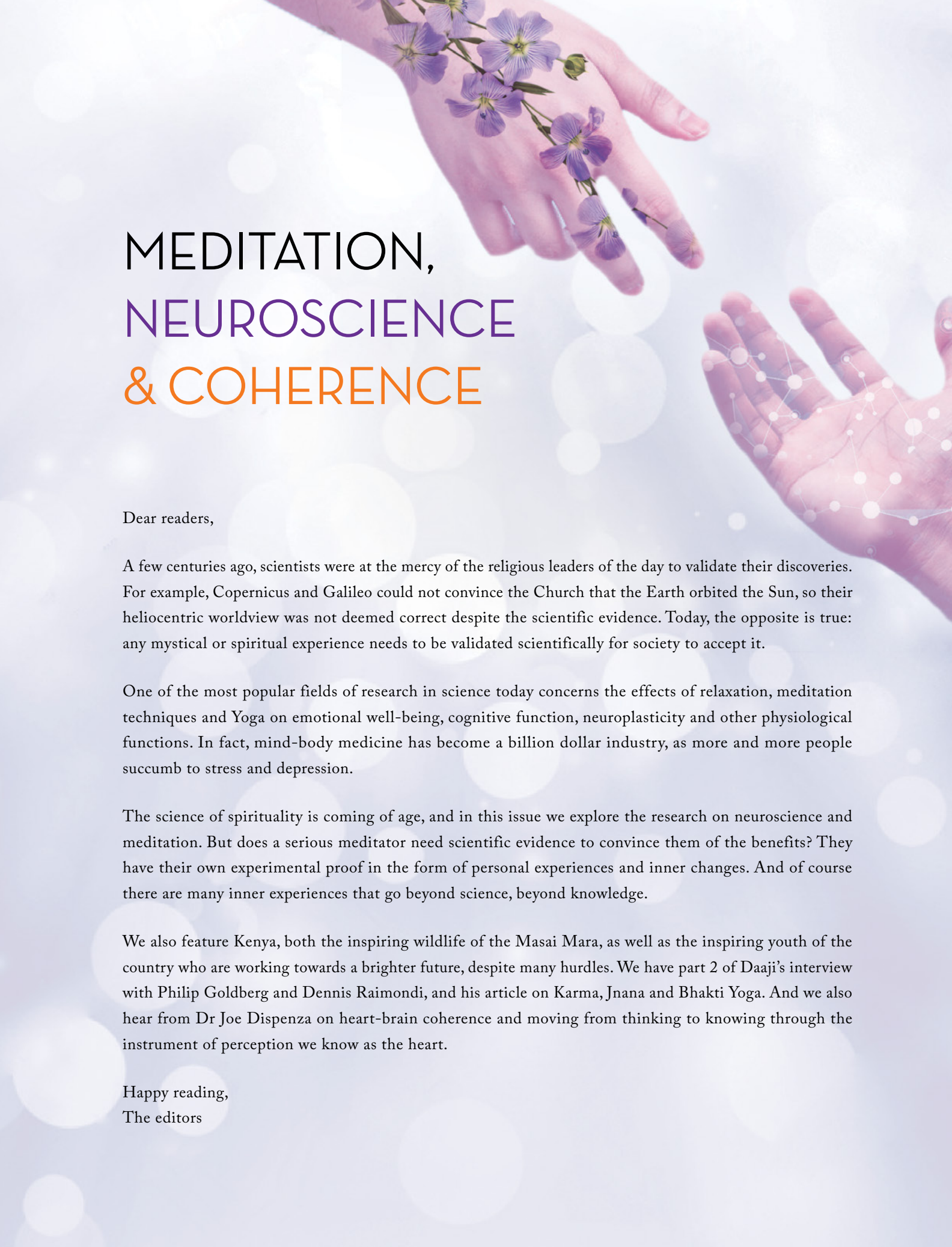
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revenue collection rights vests with the Publisher alone.

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The background of the page features two hands. The top hand is holding a sprig of small purple flowers. The bottom hand is shown with a glowing, interconnected network of white dots and lines, resembling a molecular or neural structure, overlaid on it. The overall background is a soft, light purple with subtle bokeh effects.

# MEDITATION, NEUROSCIENCE & COHERENCE

Dear readers,

A few centuries ago, scientists were at the mercy of the religious leaders of the day to validate their discoveries. For example, Copernicus and Galileo could not convince the Church that the Earth orbited the Sun, so their heliocentric worldview was not deemed correct despite the scientific evidence. Today, the opposite is true: any mystical or spiritual experience needs to be validated scientifically for society to accept it.

One of the most popular fields of research in science today concerns the effects of relaxation, meditation techniques and Yoga on emotional well-being, cognitive function, neuroplasticity and other physiological functions. In fact, mind-body medicine has become a billion dollar industry, as more and more people succumb to stress and depression.

The science of spirituality is coming of age, and in this issue we explore the research on neuroscience and meditation. But does a serious meditator need scientific evidence to convince them of the benefits? They have their own experimental proof in the form of personal experiences and inner changes. And of course there are many inner experiences that go beyond science, beyond knowledge.

We also feature Kenya, both the inspiring wildlife of the Masai Mara, as well as the inspiring youth of the country who are working towards a brighter future, despite many hurdles. We have part 2 of Daaji's interview with Philip Goldberg and Dennis Raimondi, and his article on Karma, Jnana and Bhakti Yoga. And we also hear from Dr Joe Dispenza on heart-brain coherence and moving from thinking to knowing through the instrument of perception we know as the heart.

Happy reading,  
The editors

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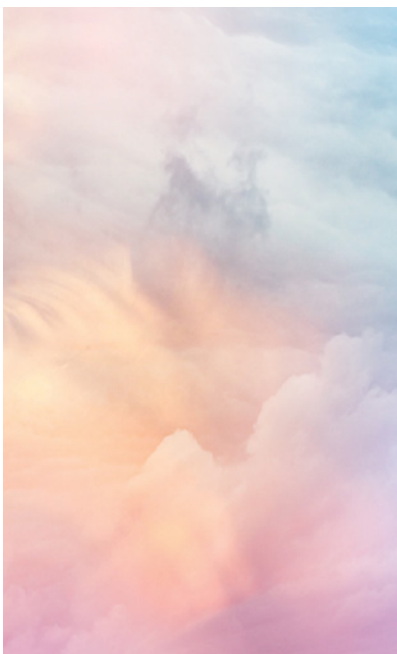
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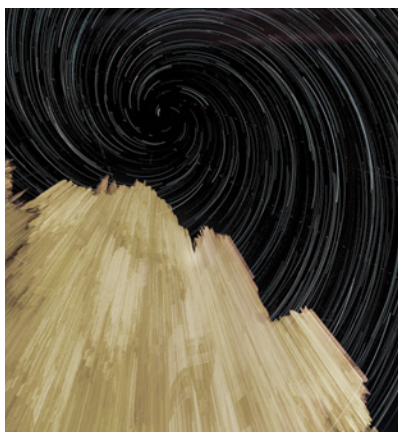
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# focus

Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character.

*Swami Vivekananda*





RUBY CARMEN

Psychologist and social worker  
London, UK

In ancient times, science, spirituality and Yoga were often treated as one, and science was viewed in a more holistic sense that included spiritual aspects as well as the mundane. More

recently, you could say that there is a reunion of science and spirituality, as both can compliment one another with different perspectives, illuminating our vision of the world across multiple spectrums.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the growth of neuroscience is its investigation of internal phenomena, such as meditation. As a meditator and meditation trainer with a background in psychology, I am intrigued to know about the different areas of the brain that are activated or de-activated during meditation. Indeed, longitudinal studies in neuroscience offer possibilities of examining changes within the structures of the brain over time. This is providing evidence that correlates to the personal experience of meditators.

- 1 | What do you feel is the relevance of science in the field of spirituality and Yoga?
- 2 | What fascinates you about neuroscience's understanding of meditation?
- 3 | How are the discoveries of neuroscience changing our perception of consciousness?

The journal, *The Neuroscience of Consciousness*, is devoted to the study of consciousness, which traditionally fell within the realm of philosophy before a distinction emerged between philosophy and psychology. The development of neuroscience enables another perspective on our understanding of consciousness. It provides an alternative means of exploring consciousness, including possibilities of 'locating' it within the human system. The renewed appreciation that exists for the study of consciousness goes beyond a 'reductionist' view of the mind to take into account the richness of our internal worlds.

<https://academic.oup.com/nc>

[https://www.sciencedaily.com/  
releases/2018/03/18O322125O28.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/03/18O322125O28.htm)



JIM OTIS

Certified Functional Neurologist  
Oakland, California, USA

I think science and spirituality are relevant to each other. Right now what is increasingly important in society is that we're going through a really big transformation on our planet. As our official intelligence is growing and growing and growing, spirituality and neuroscience need to embrace each other; they need to enhance each other. And there's no bigger example of this than the development of a direct Brain-Computer Interface (BCI). That will be happening sometime within the next 15 years – that's the prediction – where we just think a thought and that's our interface with the cloud or computer, rather than speaking through Siri or typing through a keypad. That's going to change human experience on this planet in a really big way and demand a lot of spiritual wisdom to ground this thing.

What fascinates me about neuroscience's understanding of meditation? Everything! Number one, as we develop a neuroscientific understanding of what happens in the brain in meditation, that will and does have practical implications. There will be ways to enhance the quality of our life as we can identify the brain states associated with different forms of experience, meditation included.

The discoveries of neuroscience are changing our perception of consciousness. Number one, consciousness shifts states all the time. We are waking, sleeping, meditating, in *Samadhi*, absorption; there are all different kinds of manifestations or presentations of consciousness. And neuroscience is pretty good at understanding the neurological signatures of different states of consciousness. So if there's an astronaut out in space and we're measuring the brain signals only, we know when they're awake, when they're dreaming, when they're sleeping, when they're meditating, and what kind of meditation they're doing. So that's just fascinating and it does have practical implications.

I think of spirituality as seeing the big context – helping to give meaning to life. In every experience there are two poles: the context and the content, the big picture and the small picture, the details. Spirituality helps gives the big picture, and that's a function of the right side of our brain. The right side of our brain is context-providing – the big context, the emotional, the body language. The left side of the

brain is more content-oriented – the verbal meaning of the language. Artificial Intelligence is developing in a way that gives us so much more capability: if I want to find out what the weather is like in Jakarta at this moment, I can find out what the temperature is, the wind velocity; I can speak into a computer and order a 3D printer to print a cup.

We're developing a huge capability that needs to be contextualized. So when we do that brain-computer interface, there will be a huge data stream that will be available to us. We have to slow it down and contextualize in order to make meaning and sense of it. That meaning and sense needs to in turn guide the big data stream, that AI, which we can now harness.

<https://braintime.com/story/>



DR KRISHNAMURTHY J, MD  
Global Community Health Specialist  
Bangalore, India

Today, we know quite a lot about the effects of meditation on the brain and behavior. Of course, there are methodological and conceptual limitations in meditation research and we may not be able to study all changes as objectively as we would like to, but the progress made in the last few decades in uncovering neural correlates of meditation is worthy of appreciation.

Functional MRI scans among long term meditators have revealed structural changes (neuroplasticity) in the prefrontal cortex and anterior insula, the brain regions associated with improved attention, interoception and sensory processing. Changes include thickening of the somatosensory cortex associated with heightened self-awareness, and the shrinking of the amygdala associated with fear and anxiety.

Electroencephalogram (EEG) studies, which analyze electric activity of brains, have revealed heightened theta and alpha pattern among meditators, reflecting calmer and more relaxed states.

Studying neural correlates of consciousness is gaining a lot of momentum today. By default, our minds are in a restless state, not accustomed to living in the present, and this is akin to a state of unhappiness. This state is reflected by the activation of a neural network that deals with self-referential processing, known as the default mode network (DMN). Studies

have revealed that in experienced meditators, the main modes of DMN are actually deactivated indicating reduced restlessness. In long term practitioners, this change has become permanent.

Several theoretical frameworks are postulated to study consciousness. I personally find the 'Global neuronal workspace framework' very fascinating, which tries to explain the conscious and unconscious processing of information. It also relates to long distance connectivity between workspaces. Yes, these are still theoretical at the moment, but I feel science has made a bold attempt to begin exploring these aspects that were once regarded as mystical and subjective. There is some initial learning from neurophysiological, anatomical, and brain-imaging data to support a major role of the prefrontal cortex, anterior cingulate, and the areas that connect to them, in creating the postulated brain-scale workspace. The future of consciousness-related research will only be even more exciting!



DR HESTER O'CONNOR  
Clinical Psychologist  
Wicklow, Ireland

We can change our brains!

I love hearing about the capacity of the brain to change. The idea of neuroplasticity, our inbuilt capacity to form new neural connections in our brains, gives me hope that it is possible with repeated practice to form new habits. Why do most of us find it incredibly difficult to keep up with our own good intentions? The concept in neuroscience of neuroplasticity helps to answer this question.

Neuroplasticity means the brain can and does change throughout our lives. The brain is a dynamic interconnected power grid with billions of connections that light up every time we think, feel or do something. If we think of these pathways like an oak tree with billions of interconnecting roots, then it is not

difficult to understand that when we want to form new habits it is going to take time to weaken the old ones.

An example is deciding after a big meal that you are going to start walking every day. The next morning it is raining and you reassure yourself that you will start the next day. It takes a lot more than good intentions to form a new habit. The encouraging thing about neuroplasticity is that it means that because we have plastic brains we can learn new habits, and with a lot of practice we can reach our goal.

Two things are critical here: One, in order to change an old habit we need to practice the new one hundreds of times for the neural connections to become 'automatic' and hard wired. Two, we need to have a lot of compassion for our failed efforts knowing that we are doing our best and we are willing to keep trying. Berating ourselves will serve to reinforce existing pathways because that is what most of us have always done when we try to learn a new habit. Learning to meditate is no different. It is better to sit for ten minutes every day than for an hour once a week. The ten minutes will really help the new neural pathways to get firmly established. Along the way we need to be kind to ourselves. In the words of Samuel Beckett, "Try again. Fail again. Fail better."



VASCO GASPAR  
Mindfulness Corporate Trainer  
Lisbon, Portugal

More and more I believe that science is finding out through the objective 3rd person perspective what yogis and practitioners of spirituality have known for millennia from the 1st and 2nd person perspectives. Unifying these three perspectives allows a more integrative view of the whole, leading to a better understanding of yoga and spirituality. And since science serves as the 21st century's religion for many people, to have scientific studies proving spiritual claims gives trust to some people to try these practices.

What fascinates me the most about neuroscience is what is yet to be discovered. Phenomena like neuroplasticity, showing that parts of the brain change according to the type of meditation we do, is very inspiring. It gives confidence that meditation is not just something to

believe but something that changes us at the core level of our being.

One of the main discoveries is that mind and consciousness are not limited to the brain. That is a very narrow view, I believe. The more scientists 'dig' into the brain and the activities of neurons to understand and explain consciousness, the more they realize that they don't find it there. It is much more complex than that, and I believe that fields like Yoga bring complementary views that give us a better understanding of the whole picture.



DR NATWAR SHARMA  
Pediatric Intensivist  
Chennai, India

Science takes an evidence-based approach and needs explanations for everything. It requires formulae, objective tools, machines and equipment to gauge anything, while spirituality is largely subjective. Can

you measure the calmness or peace felt during meditation in absolute terms? We can only explain the relative effect or difference in our states of mind.

Although today we have several psychological and mental scales, like the stress scale, and equipment like EEG and MRI to assess what difference we feel with the practice of Yoga and meditation, science has not developed enough to measure the effects of meditation completely. For example, if a person today were to go back 200 years in time, he would wonder why people are struggling with small things. If a person from 200 years ago travels to today's time, she would be wonderstruck at the advancements! She is likely to look at a plane flying in the sky and exclaim, "Is that a new species of bird?" Similarly may be science backing spirituality, which we have not discovered yet. Ultimately, at any point in time it's difficult to explain everything scientifically, because science is also evolving.

As a doctor I am trained to look for evidence, so the empirical approach of neuroscience is what interests me. There is enough research to show how meditation helps with health, not only in the mind but also it reduces cortisol levels and heart rate variability, thereby reducing the occurrence of cardiovascular disease, strokes, stress, hypertension and even diabetes. It is found to improve sleep, mental cognition functions, focus and memory. I have been meditating for

24 years now and absolutely enjoy the experience, so much so that as part of my PhD I am conducting a study to see the effect of meditation on the body, mind, heart and aura of a person.

In my own work I have found that when people see and understand things objectively, it boosts them to move forward. Their awareness or consciousness expands with the changes they perceive over time. Here we are talking about individual consciousness, but if things have to change at a global level there has to be some groundbreaking discovery that can produce a shift in the consciousness of human beings collectively. Neuroscience also shows the potential of meditation to affect people on a large scale and bring about a change in our global consciousness.



# Neuroscience & AUM

**DAAJI** shows us how ancient Yoga and modern neuroscience converge in their understanding of the different states of brain functioning. He explores these states of A, U, M and the soundlessness that follows AUM, in the light of brainwave frequencies and yogic states of consciousness.

**AUM** is the original sound that manifested at the time of creation, and that sound is still there in our innate memory within the soul, starting from A to U to M, and finally the emptiness that follows the M. These three sounds all have tremendous significance, but it is the soundless sound that follows the M that we must capture. It is actually the empty silence that follows the sound of AUM that reminds us of the fourth state of our consciousness, known as the *Turiya* state.



These states of consciousness are experienced every day by all of us, and can also be measured with an EEG machine:

1. The A of AUM: the alert waking states are characterized by brainwaves of higher frequencies: Gamma waves, 31-120 Hertz, occur with hyper brain activity such as learning and problem solving. Beta waves, 13-30 Hertz, occur when we are active in conversation and activity.
2. The U of AUM: the contemplative dreamlike state is characterized by medium frequency brainwaves: Alpha waves, 8-12 Hertz, occur when we are relaxed, contemplative, absorbed in a beautiful piece of music, daydreaming or starting to meditate.

The dream state is characterized by Theta waves, 4-7 Hertz, and occurs when we are drowsy and drifting into sleep and dreams.

3. The M of AUM: the deep sleep state is characterized by Delta waves, 0.5-3 Hertz.

When we are in an active waking state, consciousness is moving outwards, away from the Source in the search for knowledge, and from this is born the field of modern science. As the brainwaves frequencies become slower, it shows that we are turning inwards and moving into deeper states of consciousness. The consciousness of the dream state is somewhere between the waking and sleeping state, where we dream of *slokas*, poetry, *ghazals*, etc. It is all about the inner search, and is related to the inner world. In the deep sleep state, consciousness gravitates towards its Source, the soul.

If you are familiar with the scientific research that has been done on those meditating with Transcendental Meditation, various Buddhist systems, Mindfulness and Heartfulness, they have conducted experiments on monks and ordinary people, new meditators and experienced meditators who had done ten thousand, fifteen thousand, twenty thousand hours in meditation.

In research studies, meditators have experienced Delta frequencies, normally found during deep sleep, the dream-like Theta frequencies, the relaxed Alpha states, and spikes of high frequency Gamma brainwaves in patterns not



normally associated with waking states. In fact, in yogis who meditate regularly, Gamma oscillations are found to be much more common and significantly greater in amplitude than in other groups. So the spectrum of brainwave frequencies expanded in both directions as a result of meditation.

The brainwave spectrum of the *Turiya* state encompasses the full range of the spectrum, even that of deep sleep or *Sushupti*, indicated by Delta waves, although the person meditating is simultaneously completely aware. Yogis and monks crave for this state with all their might, and sometimes meditate for thousands of hours or perform penances and practices in order to reach it. With the help of Yogic Transmission, it becomes quite easy to experience this *Turiya* state. Even if you have never meditated in your life, when you are exposed to Heartfulness Meditation with Transmission somehow it awakens your consciousness at a different level so that you expand into the *Turiya* condition. While your body is fully relaxed, your mind is able to perceive things. You are not sleeping, but you are in a relaxed state as rejuvenative as deep sleep. That is the true *Turiya* condition.

And then we move to the next stage, where we take this condition out into daily life with eyes open. We transcend *Turiya* to the *Turiyatit* state. The *Turiya* state is available only when we are in meditation, whereas the *Turiyatit* state emerges when we carry that deep meditative state with us all the time. It encompasses all the states: A, U, M and the soundless sound.

We transcend  
from A – the external wakeful state,  
to U – the inner dream-like state,  
to M – the deep sleep state of *Sushupti*,  
to the soundless silence of the *Turiya* state,  
and finally to the *Turiyatit* condition.

So while it is good to meditate regularly, it is even better to be in a meditative state all the time. We are actively meditating daily and meditatively remaining active all the time.

# In Search of CONSCIOUSNESS

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NS NAGARAJA presents to us an index of some theories of consciousness that have been put forward in the fields of philosophy, science and spirituality. They are not the only theories, but they do awaken the curiosity to discover more!

‘In Search of Consciousness’ is a nicer title than the article itself, and you will find out soon enough! This topic is all about a self in search of itself. For what purpose? When the finder finds oneself, who will know the answer? The finder or the found? Sometimes philosophy sounds like this, doesn’t it! The purpose of this article is to capture key ideas about consciousness from the perspectives of philosophy, spirituality and science, and to motivate you to Google more – this is certainly not an exhaustive list. Not only that, this indexing type of article may encourage you to search, think and tinker with consciousness itself!

## What is consciousness?

Let us start with a simple definition by Dr Christoff Koch: “Consciousness is everything that we experience.”

We have a physical body that performs many functions. Likewise, we all have, “Something in us that makes awareness or perception possible.” We know the simple sensory inputs of smell, taste, sight, touch and sound, which generate rich inner experience. The inner experience can be joy, pain or complex imagination, and so on.

Is the experience a physical phenomenon, arising out of complex information processing in the brain? Or is it a non-physical phenomenon associated with constructs like the soul or the self, or some universal field of energy?

Some philosophers consider experience as the hard problem of consciousness. Some scientists argue that once we understand how it works, it will be yet another physical process. This article will list some of the key intuitive approaches (spiritual approaches) and more mechanistic approaches to consciousness.



### The Buddhist concept

Way back in 400 BC, Buddhist philosophy proposed that consciousness is the life force that continues across rebirths, and also posited that there are 9 levels of consciousness:

Levels 1 to 5 arise out of the five senses: eyes – sight, nose – smell, ears – hearing, tongue – taste and body – touch;

Level 6 is the mind consciousness related to ideas and thoughts;

Level 7 is the inner life that creates the sense of self and is associated with emotions and attitude;

Level 8 is the subconscious, the repository of all karmic effects, that lives beyond this life; and

Level 9 is pure consciousness – a life force that creates complete harmony of the internal and external, and a sense of connectedness or oneness.

Buddhism provides a set of practices to expand or deepen consciousness through meditation and contemplation.



### Plato

Around the same period, Plato theorized that the mind receives information through senses, and the soul uses this information to create form and perception.

The allegory of Plato's Cave is a simple thought experiment that gives interesting insights on how Plato viewed the problem of perception. Aristotle, who was Plato's disciple, argued that the soul is seated in the heart and is the principal power by which life itself happens. Aristotle seemed to imply that consciousness is the property of the soul itself.



## THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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### Integrated Information Theory and Consciousness Meter

Many scientists have tried to derive an understanding of consciousness by starting with the laws of physics, and the relationship between consciousness and the brain is still a subject of deep research. On the other hand, Integrated Information Theory (IIT) is a body of research that seeks to explain consciousness by first accepting its existence, and then reasoning about what sort of physical entity could manifest consciousness.

IIT was first proposed by Giulio Tononi in 2004 and has since undergone many improvements. Some characteristics it attributes to consciousness are:

- It exhibits composition where there are distinct elements in it that are part of the experience.

- Each experience is distinct and differentiated from other experiences in the past or future.
- It is unified and it cannot be reduced to smaller experiences of phenomena inside it.
- IIT lays down certain postulates on what a physical entity like the brain that manifests consciousness needs to have. It should have cause-effect power, meaning it can influence other entities and can be influenced by other entities.

IIT also gives an account of why conscious brains might have evolved: brains that reflect the causal structure of their environment in their internal causal structure can adapt better.

IIT lays down facts about relationship between the brain and consciousness as well as providing certain inferences and extrapolations about consciousness. For example, the cerebral cortex is more likely to manifest consciousness than the cerebellum, because the neurons in the cerebral cortex can form a complex large enough for consciousness whereas the neurons in the cerebellum do not.

IIT also predicts that experiences can be had even when the cerebral cortex is silent, like in states of meditation. This body of knowledge has become an important step in advancing our understanding of consciousness.

Tononi and team have developed a tool to measure the consciousness level of a person. The Zap and Zip Technique involves sending an intense magnetic pulse through the skull and recording the induced electrical flow in the neuronal networks. A simple algorithm is then used to compute the complexity of brain activity. When tested on normal people, people under the influence of anesthesia, and people in a comatose state, the values obtained have consistently shown that it is possible to quantify and determine whether someone is conscious or not. Further research might help us understand how widespread consciousness is in nature.

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## Global Workspace Theory

Imagine you are seated in a theater, looking at the stage. On stage there are many actors, objects, the backdrop, movement, colors and sound. Now imagine a spotlight focused only on one actor and his actions. Everything else is still there, but it is not the focus. The director, technicians, audience and all other activities have slipped into the background and the spotlight highlights the one actor and his movement as the main focus. All the complex co-ordination, support and direction processes are all hidden. The conscious part is seen by the audience, directed by the spotlight. Hold on to this idea.

Now think that the whole brain is a theater, with many parts of the brain performing various functions. Now assume that our focus (spotlight) is on some set of thoughts or experiences; our conscious awareness is mainly on one thing, and all others are in the background. Global Workspace Theory proposes that all sensory and other inputs are communicated to all cognitive functional components of the brain. The conscious experience is generated as a result of some focused neuronal activities, and many others are hidden in the background to support this. According to GWT, consciousness is an integrative function of the brain to generate the rich experience. Bernard Baars is the architect of this theory, which provides an interesting perspective to origins of consciousness.



### Orchestrated Objective Reduction – the Quantum View

Many scientists have constructed new theories to explain consciousness. Karl Pribram, David Bohm and many others have believed that classical mechanics is not sufficient to explain the phenomenon of consciousness. They propose that the quantum mechanical phenomenon, the entanglement and superposition, may play a role in brain functioning and, in some way, provide the basis for conscious experience.



Roger Penrose and Stuart Hameroff have been working since the early '90s on a theory of consciousness known as Orchestrated Objective Reduction (Orch-OR or OOR). OOR is a new effort to bring physics and neuroscience together to explain how the brain may be involved in the process of consciousness. The fundamental hypothesis is that the neurons have molecular structures (microtubules), which can potentially support quantum processes. This theory argues that consciousness is not because of some complex processing in the brain, but instead it is because of quantum processes inside neurons. Such a possibility in theory opens up large scale information processing, and even takes perception beyond the individual into the realm of a connected universal field. There seems to be some early evidence to prove the existence of quantum activity in brain cells.



### Subtle Body Approach – Energy Field

In the Heartfulness philosophy, consciousness is seen as the integrated field of the subtle body, which has a spectrum consisting of the subconscious, conscious and superconscious. The expansion of consciousness from the current level of a person to the depths of the subconscious and the heights of the superconscious is known as spiritual evolution. And this evolution continues beyond the consciousness spectrum. Daaji has written extensively on the spiritual anatomy of the chakras, the subtle bodies and consciousness. Daaji's integrative approach provides simplified and rich information, and many new insights for all who want to dive deeper in the mysteries of consciousness.

In search of consciousness, outwardly, will give you lots of theories. In search of consciousness inwardly, what will you get?

Deep within it is bliss; high above it is oneness.

Transcending consciousness; what lies beyond?



# THOUGHT *in action*

People's emotions are rarely put into words; far more often they are expressed through other cues. ... The key to intuiting another's feelings is in the ability to read non-verbal channels, tone of voice, gesture, facial expression and the like.

*Daniel Goleman*



# the flow

THEOPHILE  
THE ELDER and  
YOUNGER have a lively  
discussion about Intellectual  
Quotient, Emotional  
Quotient and Spiritual  
Quotient, and how all  
three can flourish through  
heart-based meditation, in  
the condition described as  
'the Flow', of heightened  
awareness and interest in life.

**Theo the Younger:** Today I'd  
like to talk about human nature, its  
qualities and potentialities.

**Theophile the Elder:** When I  
am connected to the divine essence,  
I get enthusiastic and I feel like  
transmitting all that has been so  
liberally offered to me for decades.  
I wish I can transmit the best, but  
I must also temper my restlessness.



**Y:** [*Feeling mischievous*] Youth will have its way!

**E:** Taoism is the ideal tool for it. It places man between Heaven and Earth. The Taoist Masters naturally integrate all levels of existence in their teachings.

I've always been interested in Taoism and its spiritual guides, their eclecticism, their freedom of thought and their benevolence. They will respect everything and everyone. They let the breath of life go through them. They are cheerful, neutral to the point of an apparent carelessness, though they fully partake in this world. They are a good illustration of the bird and its two wings that Heartfulness gives as an example. They are naturally poised between the material and the spiritual.

**Y:** That is the sort of wisdom I'd like to gain, but I'm only at the beginning of my life. I feel like living it intensively. I want to contribute

to the progress of humankind at all levels, and at the same time be happy, enjoy living, creating and sharing.

*Theophile the Elder exults in his young friend's firework display. Only a glitter in his eyes betrays his delight. Isn't his role to channel, guide and balance Theo's energies?*

*Theo can see the Elder is touched and is listening to him with tender amusement. He continues, mockingly.*

**Y:** Maybe I'm being too fast for you. Let's quietly come back to it and be kind to our elders.

*Both friends, in good fellowship, burst out laughing. Then the Elder continues, more seriously.*

**E:** When I told you about Taoism, I immediately thought of the 'Flow', which is the state of excellence psychologists describe in 'positive psychology'.

**Y:** Why is it called 'positive'?

**E:** Because it cares for the persons' well-being, for their happiness, and because it does not consider human beings according to their pathologies, as traditional psychologists and psychiatrists do. Neurosciences are gathering momentum. After further research on human beings, scientists have reached interesting conclusions.

**Y:** Emotional intelligence, for instance?

**E:** They have realized that the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) depends on the neocortex, where the information received is integrated in order to ease decision-making. However, occupying a managerial position and being efficient requires more than this sort of intelligence. Emotional intelligence plays its part. Feelings are just as important as the intellect and, among other things, they help empathy develop. Therefore scientists have developed an Emotional Quotient (EQ). A business leader needs Emotional Intelligence if he wants to take the right directions, understand and detect market trends, enter into contracts with as yet unknown business partners or colleagues who are rarely benevolent; and there I remain moderate.

**Y:** [Bemused] I can help you discover some of them.

**E:** So first there was IQ, followed by EQ for emotional intelligence. And now there is Heartfulness, and the awareness of a spiritual quotient or SQ, involving an obvious connection between the heart and the brain via neural pathways. SQ shows the heart's leverage and its

intelligence. It is the beginning of a new era.

**Y:** Didn't you tell me that the heart had been highly valued in traditional Chinese medicine for more than five thousand years, for example, in the *Ling Shu*, to start with, and then in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*?

**E:** It is true that modern science is hardly one hundred and fifty years old. Youth may be arrogant; they think they know everything. Just think, in the seventies science decreed that acupuncture was no longer an esoteric topic since it was now possible to operate without resorting to anesthesia, and using four or five needles was enough to stimulate some particular areas. A researcher had injected a tiny amount of radioactive substance in an acupuncture point, thus demonstrating that meridians existed. Meanwhile, the science of acupuncture had been practiced for more than 3,000 years!

**Y:** I saw a program featuring a surgical operation called craniotomy, using acupuncture analgesia. It was impressive: the patient was even fed during surgery.

*So first there was IQ, followed by EQ for emotional intelligence. And now there is Heartfulness, and the awareness of a spiritual quotient or SQ, involving an obvious connection between the heart and the brain via neural pathways. SQ shows the heart's leverage and its intelligence. It is the beginning of a new era.*

**E:** And to cap it all off, he recovered faster.

**Y:** Do you really believe that scientists care for spirituality and meditation?

**E:** They started doing so about sixty years ago. Nowadays, Mindfulness and Heartfulness meditations are being introduced in all quarters, businesses, schools, universities and education circles, and they also appeal to those who are in search of themselves and of a better balanced life.

**Y:** There was a time when meditation was restricted to 'visionaries' like yourself, who were considered to be rather weird.

**E:** Now many people admit that meditation helps us to be more

effective in life. The objective for them is to make us better persons and achieve excellence. Meditation is a precious tool for personal development.

**Y:** I'm not really keen on that notion of excellence. It makes me think of the entrance exams for accessing the most prestigious schools, or of formatting intellectual elites and of training 'killers' who would do anything to rise atop of industry or government and take power. Just look at the way graduates from the École Nationale d'Administration and politicians behave. If they still have a heart, where do they hide it?

**E:** Keep calm, Theo. We all have a heart, but sometimes we ignore how it works.

**Y:** [*Feeling fiery*] There are people whose intellects are coarse and primitive. They want money and power, and they get it because they are the best, the strongest. It's 'I' first and foremost – 'my' personal interests, 'my' club – except that they hold the banner of education, culture and civilization. But it doesn't fool anyone, does it?

*Theophile the Elder sends out a wave of calm and serenity.*

**E:** Here, achievement and excellence are closely related to the self. You can be happy only if you live in agreement, in harmony with yourself. Then you are naturally ethical and moral. It's bound to be so. By meditating on the heart, we become what we have always been: universal beings who are in agreement with our environment and ourselves. We become aware of our smallness as well as our grandeur whenever we behold the starry nights in our inner cosmos and firmament. Heart-based meditation allows us to make both our left and right brains work better, as they are ruled by our hearts. The heart is a wonderful integrator, and a potent and faithful friend.

**Y:** Is spiritual science recognized by mainstream science?

**E:** It's beginning. For example, channels for neurotransmitters have been identified between the heart and several parts of the brain.

**Y:** How will scientists take to meditation?

**E:** They will use meditation to manage constant stress and disturbing emotions, and also to improve their performance or their capacity to decide quickly and efficiently.

**Y:** Isn't that going to be our new management model?

**E:** It's already happening. For example, I was lucky enough to be trained by Professor Ichak Adizes. He is renowned worldwide in the area of management education for business and government; his motto for ensuring success is 'mutual trust and respect'.

**Y:** To improve business performance?

**E:** Yes indeed! And it gives excellent results, which can be recorded and quantified. It makes people happier in their daily lives as well as in their jobs.

**Y:** How can you make people change in the role of managers?

**E:** We don't want to force change. When people have the inner experience of who they really are, then everything else will naturally follow. They will want to do what is right. They will also be more effective and, above all, happier with themselves and with their social, professional and family environment.

Emotional intelligence will determine the level of performance the person will attain.

**Y:** What factors will help develop that emotional intelligence?

**E:** Interest and curiosity, which show the level of involvement and motivation and give us the patience to make all the adequate efforts.

And attentiveness, the benefits of which you already know through meditation, as well as all the joy that comes from it. It is the sign of optimum operation.

*We don't want to force change. When people have the inner experience of who they really are, then everything else will naturally follow. They will want to do what is right. They will also be more effective and, above all, happier with themselves and with their social, professional and family environment.*

**Y:** So, conditions are the same as for meditation.

**E:** As in meditation, the neurological system is non-verbal. They have the same operating mode.

**Y:** What does emotional intelligence result in?

**E:** Intrapersonal intelligence, which is able to listen to the Self, and interpersonal intelligence, which is able to listen to others and develop empathy.

**Y:** Those are the heart's qualities, aren't they?

**E:** The words differ according to culture and times. It's the same as with religions. But here it is a scientific issue: how to access the second level of the heart, which I have called cosmic or universal consciousness, whereas science speaks of meta-knowledge?

**Y:** It sounds revolutionary.

**E:** It is evolutionary! I don't mean to give a lecture on emotional intelligence, though the topic is exciting. I was mostly interested in the condition Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihaly describes, concerning learning and fluency, that is, 'the flow'.

**Y:** Could you sketch it out for me, please?

**E:** Fluency, or flow, is the ultimate in emotional intelligence. It is described as being 'the optimum experience', which means that the person will give their level best and go beyond their own limits. That will raise a burst of joy and a deep sense of well-being, and it is a very gratifying state to experience, no matter how others see us.

**Y:** How will consciousness fare during that optimum experience?

**E:** It is unlimited. A person will lose track of time and the self, and yet at the same time be fully aware of himself. In such a moment, action and consciousness blend into one another.

**Y:** It's another way to forget the ego.

**E:** Yes indeed, because the person is totally absorbed in the work to be done and the goal to reach. Efficiency is in the offing, since the mind is flexible, adaptable, creative and receptive.

**Y:** It makes me think of the Taoist Masters.

**E:** Quite right, as they are in a state of constant fluency. Spiritual knowledge has allowed me to make out the importance and validity of the discoveries made by researchers in the field of emotional psychology.

**Y:** Is there any reason why?

**E:** As with Heartfulness Yoga or Taoism, one can access one's interiority and consciousness of the heart without having to resort to a spiritual or religious context. Here, the experience is firsthand and objective.

**Y:** So it is a scientific approach: don't believe anything, instead experiment without any prejudice. The experience is repeatable.

**E:** There is another similarity with meditation. The optimum experience, due to its fluency and the fact that it results in concentration, feels very much like the Heartfulness Meditation we practice. Attention is both fluent and relaxed. Perception is circular. The fluency brings about a mild euphoria, though the brain remains impartial and calm. That is why we are able to achieve exceptional performance.

**Y:** Scientifically speaking, it means that the links between the thalamus-tonsils and cortex are under control.

**E:** And that the neuronal circuits are more efficient: abilities and skills are pushed to the extreme at minimum energy consumption.

**Y:** With no risk of burnout, in contrast to what is increasingly happening in companies nowadays.

**E:** Concerning burnout, Chinese Medicine speaks of a yin vacuum. Being devoid of energy resources – the root-energy – and due to an obvious yang, the person is restless to the extent of collapsing, having no access to his or her knowhow or skills and losing all self-control. The warnings sent by the body, brain and heart having been ignored, the brain has to provoke a salutary short-circuit.

**Y:** I have pondered over this. In such moments we experience sleep disorders and are unable to recover any energy. Psychological, cognitive and emotional functions don't work properly. It is the first step towards depression.

**E:** The effect is the opposite of the optimum experience, which is regenerating. One enthuses you, the other ... you see?

# From Waste to RESOURCE

GEETU BOHRA is passionate about the 3Rs of waste management – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Here she shares some thoughts on how we can all do much more to reduce our footprint and care for our beautiful Mother Earth.



Most of the waste that we create in our households, and which we dump outside, can be made into something else. When I heard that Sweden imports garbage and waste from other countries, it really shook me. What they do with it is amazing: they produce half of their electricity with that waste. They segregate the waste and convert most of it into other resources.

In our houses, roughly 60% of the waste is from the kitchen – vegetable peels, leftover food, and so on. Recyclable items, like polythene and plastic, make up approximately 30%, and a small amount may be hazardous, like e-waste. So just imagine how much waste we can make into resources! We start with segregation at the source.

There are 3 Rs to waste management:

## REDUCE

We need to change our lifestyle. Nowadays we prefer comfort. If there is a disposable plate and a washable plate, many of us will grab the disposable plate so that we can eat and throw. We just leave it there, but we don't realize how much that small act of ours is going to impact the whole ecosystem.

We waste food that somebody else could eat. To provide for that, farmers must grow more. Because the requirement is more, more deforestation is happening to create land for farming.

These are the repercussions. Just a small act of wasting food and dumping garbage creates all these imbalances. So first we need to reduce our consumption as much as possible. How can we reduce?

Here are some examples:

1. Don't use plastic bags: carry your own bags whenever you go to buy something.

2. When you buy a shirt or other item, leave behind the packaging. If everybody does that, then the sellers cannot keep storing the packages and after some time will have to tell the manufacturers to stop.

There are many things we can do to reduce our garbage. If you come up with some ideas, please share them with us.

## REUSE

I have seen in my native place, a small town in a hilly region in northern India, that people take their own bags or vessels to buy things. Even for oil they use a recyclable can. In the West today, there are many stores where people take their own vessels to buy goods. To achieve this we need to transform our lifestyle and lead a life where we reduce our waste by reusing things.

Some people think so creatively and do amazing things. For example, instead of throwing away an old T-shirt or giving it to someone else, you can make a bag out of it in just two minutes! You can also involve your kids. When they do something on their own, they learn.



Here is a five-liter water can that has been made into a beautiful birdhouse.



This flower vase is actually a toilet cleaner bottle.



A hand-wash bottle and a toilet cleaner bottle have been made into a pencil box and pen stand.

If we teach our children, they can learn by having fun.

With one act we can do something good for so many people. So make sure that your waste reaches the right places.

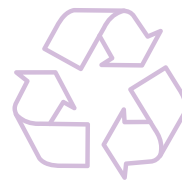
## RECYCLE

Recycling starts with segregation. After we segregate, it's very important to take the waste to the right place. Most of us think that by segregating waste our job is done – no. Here are two examples of recycling:

1. Depending on the quantity, our wet organic and food waste can be made into Biogas, or we can make our own manure.
2. Some people start their own business in recycling. If we segregate our waste, they may come and collect it and some may even pay us for certain items like wood, glass, plastic or paper.

By segregation we are doing something good for the environment, the person who has a business, and ourselves.

We do not need to be so dangerous to the environment. We need to think, act and implement to make the future better for us and for all our friends, the many species of plants and animals on Earth. And that is in our hands, my friends, in your hands and mine. We have to work towards waste management as a team, but let's start by implementing it as individuals!





# *INTERVIEW*

Know you are one,  
pure awareness.

*Ashtavakra Gita*



# A Personal Journey

## Part 2

Spirit Matters Podcast is a very popular site showcasing an eclectic mix of talks about contemporary spirituality. The hosts are DENNIS RAIMONDI and PHILIP GOLDBERG.

On 1 July 2018, together they interviewed DAAJI about his life, spirituality and his new book, *The Heartfulness Way*. Here we highlight excerpts from the interview. You can listen to the whole interview on the Spirit Matters Podcast website at <http://spiritmatterstalk.com/daaji>.



KAMLESH  
PATEL



DENNIS  
RAIMONDI



PHILIP  
GOLDBERG

*“Condition yourself like a lotus in water, which is not affected by the dirty pond”; it remains unaffected. Besides protecting our consciousness, the art of meditation, the spiritual purpose is to make it expand.*

**DR** I'm actually looking at your website now; you have a great website! And I'm looking at the HeartSpots. You really are worldwide.

I have one question about the meditation: When you instruct somebody, how much time do you tell them to spend a day in meditation? And if somebody wants to really go deep when they come to your ashram, can they spend many more hours in meditation? So what's the balance of meditation and activity that you recommend?

**DAAJI** Well, to begin with we recommend to meditate for about 20 minutes or half an hour in the morning, and then let this effect of meditation, which becomes a meditative state, continue throughout the day during all your daily activities.

**DR** And are there instructions for how to do that second part?

**DAAJI** It happens very naturally. When you like something and when the experience is so profound you remain glued to it, and even if you want to shake it off it's not easy for you to shake it off, because it is such a profound stillness you feel within that you would like to remain connected with it. So I think a method is unnecessary. Just sit for half an hour in the morning or 20 minutes, and savor that meditation experience, and allow that stillness or calmness that was a result of meditation to continue.

And if per chance you want to repeat it again and maybe make it more intense – I am working in a pharmacy for example and suddenly there's something that upsets me

for a moment, so I am away from the meditative state. What do I do then? I go to the bathroom, I just stand quietly in one corner and recollect the previous meditative state. And I'm back again. It's like when you're driving and you make a mistake by taking a wrong exit, you take a u-turn and come back to the main highway.

So consciousness is like that; consciousness is not like traveling a big distance. Instantly you can be in a superconscious state or you can be in your normal state, with which you can interact. And the whole idea is to play with this consciousness actually. How wonderfully we can play with this consciousness in such a way that we don't gather impressions.

Let me explain to you a little bit about these impressions or samskaras or the impact of our

thoughts, attitudes and actions. Let's say you are seated in a flight and you are in row number 13 or 14, and you are seeing passengers coming one by one, and the airhostess serving people. Though quiet, and seated doing nothing at that moment, you may continue to analyze people: "Oh, this person looks all right," and a second person enters, "Oh, this person looks angry and disturbed," or, "This airhostess, I think she serves well." And you have some reaction to all these things. "Oh, this lady is carrying so many bags! Doesn't she understand how to travel light?" These likes and dislikes we go on filtering in our heart, and we react to it.

In the business world also, the decisions that we make and the things that affect us, everything percolates to likes and dislikes: "I wish I had this; I wish I didn't have this." All these likes and dislikes affect our heart. And this effect on the heart changes our consciousness. When you're so happy, your consciousness simply expands. When you're angry and upset, your consciousness somehow gravitates into a small compact thing. You dislike it, and it can happen that you might get a migraine or a headache and you don't feel like talking to anyone at that moment. Our consciousness goes on playing and it gets affected. Phil and Dennis, if you are exposed to meditation, you know there's an expression, "Condition yourself like a lotus in water, which is not affected by the dirty pond"; it remains unaffected.



Besides protecting our consciousness, the art of meditation, the spiritual purpose is to make it expand. It is not just to maintain and remain unaffected by the things around us, but to allow it to expand.

We work with what little consciousness or awareness we have. It is like a thin layer of consciousness above which there is a superconscious ocean and below which there is a subconscious ocean. So the available consciousness we usually play with is a very thin layer. And in spiritual practice, the intention is to allow this thin layer of consciousness to soar higher into the superconscious sky and allow it percolate into our subconscious ocean. Once you get the knack of this, I think you have mastered your life.

**PG** Daaji, I'd like to come back to this notion of Yogic Transmission. Now we know that traditional *deeksha* forms of initiation often entail transmission. We know the concept of *darshan*, when with a highly evolved spiritual being something is transmitted. When a person learns your Heartfulness Meditation practice, what is the nature of that Transmission and when a person subsequently practices on his or her own, how does Transmission occur at that time, or does it?



**DAAJI** Oh, it does. It does all the time. Once a person is initiated into this Heartfulness Way, which happens through Transmission, there is a heart-to-heart connection made with the Source, and the seeker goes on absorbing from the Source all the time. When you feel like meditating and you close your eyes and you connect with the Source through a prayer, automatically the Transmission will start descending into your heart.

**PG** Okay. In that instance you are not referring to a transmission directly from teacher to student, but a larger sense of Transmission from the spiritual Source.

**DAAJI** It is always from the spiritual Source, even when we are with the Guide or Guru, who is the one who triggers it. The Source is within our heart itself.

**DR** Right. Daaji, I wanted to ask you, in addition to teaching meditation, do you or members of your organization have programs where you train people to become teachers? And if so, what does that entail?

**DAAJI** Well, it's very simple actually. You cannot help but start transmitting at some level of consciousness. When a person is evolved to a certain level, or is interested in learning this art of transmitting, he can come to one of our ashrams and submit that, "I would like to train others also, and make sure they all benefit, my family members benefit and my community benefits from what services I can provide later on in life."

So the minimum requirement is the willingness to serve. Second, it becomes my responsibility to train them in all the intricacies involved in Transmission, because you cannot transmit unless and until you are able to do the Cleaning. Cleaning here does not mean that the other person is dirty. It only means that we need to remove unwanted things from the heart of the other individual and then transmit.

The third thing is to make this person capable so that he is able to connect the seeker to his own Source. And the fourth thing is to make sure that this trainer has moved to a certain level of consciousness, meaning he should at least have moved beyond the *Ajna* Chakra, meaning he should be in the *Brahmanda Mandala*, the Cosmic Region. You understand this I hope.

**PG** Yes, very good.



*Once a person is initiated into this Heartfulness Way, which happens through Transmission, there is a heart-to-heart connection made with the Source, and the seeker goes on absorbing from the Source all the time.*

*It is like a thin layer of consciousness above which there is a superconscious ocean and below which there is a subconscious ocean. So the available consciousness we usually play with is a very thin layer. And in spiritual practice, the intention is to allow this thin layer of consciousness to soar higher into the superconscious sky and allow it percolate into our subconscious ocean. Once you get the knack of this, I think you have mastered your life.*

**DAAJI** So we go beyond the *Ajna* Chakra in order to train someone: “Okay, you’ve gone beyond *Mooladhara*, you’ve gone beyond *Swadhisthan*, you’ve gone beyond the Heart Chakra and the *Atma* Chakra, and the fire point and the water point and the air point.” And you go beyond this *Ajna* Chakra and tap into this source of energy, where your *sankalpa* or your suggestive ability becomes subtler and very refined.

**PG** Very good. So Daaji, you became the – I don’t know what the proper term is – the leader of a particular lineage. Are you still involved in business or is your whole attention only on the Heartfulness Way?

**DAAJI** Well, fortunately, even during my active days in the business world in New York, I had a very peculiar way of doing business actually. All the help that I had, I had trained them to run the pharmacy as if it

was their own, and sooner or later they became business partners, the actual business people – even the employees – and they were able to run the business as if it was their own business. And right now the same way it’s going on, where they don’t require my presence actually. They literally own it as business partners.

**DR** I want to thank you for taking the time; we’re going to wrap it up now. But if there is any other final questions you have, Phil, or any final points, Daaji, that you would like to make to our listeners?

**DAAJI** Well, I would like all spiritual seekers to please try this Transmission at least once and see for yourself. Experience it and see how it can make a difference in your state of consciousness. Nothing much is needed, just log in to contact one of our trainers at our HeartSpots and receive this Transmission and compare it

with your meditation experience. Continue with your own guru; there is no need to change your guru or system to see how this benefits us.

**PG** Thanks for being with us. I hope our paths cross in India or the US.

**DAAJI** Definitely! I look forward actively to meeting you one day.

**PG** I do hope we can do that.

**DR** Thank you so much.

**DAAJI** I am very grateful. Thank you.

You can listen to the full interview on the Spirit Matters website at <https://soundcloud.com/spirit-matters-talk/daaji-interview>.






it changes  
*everything*

The soul, fortunately, has  
an interpreter – often an  
unconscious but still a faithful  
interpreter – in the eye.

*Charlotte Brontë*



# LIVING HEART CENTERED



Since our human ancestors first began etching their histories upon cave walls and stone tablets, like a thread through the needle of time, the heart has appeared as a symbol to represent health, wisdom, intuition, guidance, and higher intelligence. The ancient Egyptians, who referred to the heart as *ieb*, believed the heart, rather than the brain, was the center of life and the source of human wisdom.

We know that the heart, beyond its obvious role in sustaining life, is not simply a muscular pump that moves blood throughout our body but an organ capable of influencing feelings and emotions. The heart is a sensory organ that guides our decision-making ability as well as our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world. It's a symbol that transcends time, place, and culture. It's a commonly accepted premise that when we are connected to the heart's inner knowing, we can tap into its wisdom as a source of love and higher guidance.

Every thought you think produces corresponding chemistry equal to that thought, which in turn creates an emotion. Therefore, you are suggestible only to the thoughts equal to your emotional state. We now know that when our students are heart centered and feel more wholeness and oneness, they're less separate from their dreams.

DR JOE DISPENZA shares some thoughts on heart-brain coherence and moving from thinking to knowing through the instrument of perception we know as the heart.

When they feel gratitude, abundance, freedom, or love, all of those emotions welcome corresponding thoughts. Those heart-centered emotions open the door to the subconscious mind so that you can program your autonomic nervous system equal to the thoughts of your new future. We also know

that if they live in the feeling of fear or lack but try to think they're abundant, they can't produce a measurable effect, because change can only happen when thoughts are in alignment with the emotional state of the body. They can think positively all they want, but without a corresponding feeling or emotion equal to that thought, the message cannot be felt or understood throughout the rest of the body.

So you could repeat the affirmation *I am fearless* until you're blue in the face, but if it's *fear* you're actually feeling, the thought *I am fearless* never makes it past the brain stem, which means you're not signaling the body and ANS into a new, specific destiny. The feeling is what produces the emotional charge (energy) to stimulate your ANS into a different destiny. Without the feeling, a disconnect remains between your brain and body – between the thought of health and the feeling of health – and you can't embody that new state of being.

It's only when you change your energy that you can produce more consistent effects. If you sustain these elevated emotions on a daily basis, eventually your body, in its innate intelligence, begins to make relative genetic changes in the way I described earlier. That's because the body believes that the emotion you are embracing is coming from an experience in your environment. So when you open your heart center, practice feeling an emotion before the experience occurs, and marry it with a clear intention, the body responds as if it's in the future experience. That heart-mind coherence then influences your body chemistry and energy in a series of ways.

If coherence between the heart and the brain can originate in the heart, and their synchronization results in optimal performance and health, then you should be taking time every day to focus on activating your heart center. By intentionally choosing to feel the elevated emotions of the heart rather than waiting for something outside of yourself to elicit those emotions, you become who you are truly meant to be—a heart-empowered individual. When you

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are living by the heart, you naturally choose love and innately demonstrate it through compassion and care for the well-being of yourself, others, and planet Earth. Through our partnership with HMI, our students have demonstrated that with practice, we can in fact produce, regulate, and sustain elevated feelings and emotions – independent of events in our external world.

In our workshops around the world, through the practice of regulating heart rhythms to sustain elevated emotions, we teach our students how to generate heart and brain coherence. We then measure their abilities using HRV (heart rate variability) monitors. During guided meditations, we ask our students to surrender to the feelings of gratitude, joy, and love, and we encourage daily practice outside of our formal instruction, because when one chooses to practice sitting in a state of coherence, it becomes a habit.

I hope that with enough practice, our students can replace old mental scripts of feeling unworthy, fearful, or insecure with more elevated states of being and fall deeply in love with their lives. We've seen enough of them demonstrate that it is indeed possible to produce positive, measurable, tangible effects in their lives simply by shifting the paradigm of their thoughts and



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*This is a pivotal moment in the story of humanity where ancient wisdom and modern science are intersecting to provide us with the technology and scientific understanding to learn not only how to more efficiently and effectively manage our emotions, but also what that means for our health, relationships, energy levels, and personal and collective evolution*

feelings. These dedicated individuals return to their homes, where the positive effects they've produced in their own lives ripple out to positively affect their families and communities, continuously expanding their vibrational influence of harmony and coherence throughout the world.

By repeatedly practicing the regulation of heightened emotional states, in time the constant feeling of elevated emotions creates a new emotional baseline. This baseline then begins to continuously influence a new set of thoughts equal to the heightened feelings. The summation of those novel thoughts creates a new level of mind, which then produces more corresponding emotions equal to those thoughts, further sustaining that baseline. When this feedback loop between the heart (body) and mind (brain) occurs, you are in an entirely new state of being – the consciousness of the unlimited mind and the energy of profound love and gratitude. The repetition of this process is what it means to recondition your body, rewire your brain, and reconfigure your biology equal to your new state of being. Now you are naturally, automatically, and regularly broadcasting a different electromagnetic signature of energy into the field. This is who you are, or who you have become.

Countless history books could be written through the lens of incoherent emotions. Whether the result is a Shakespearean tragedy, genocide, or a world war, survival emotions such as blame, hate,

rage, competition, and retribution have resulted in an endless, unnecessary trail of pain, suffering, oppression, and death. The results have caused humans to live in opposition and conflict rather than in peace and harmony. This is a time in history when we can break that cycle. This is a pivotal moment in the story of humanity where ancient wisdom and modern science are intersecting to provide us with the technology and scientific understanding to learn not only how to more efficiently and effectively manage our emotions, but also what that means for our health, relationships, energy levels, and personal and collective evolution. It doesn't require moving mountains – only changing our internal state of being. This allows us to alter the way we act with one another, replacing stressful situations with positive experiences that give us energy, fill our spirit, and leave us with a sense of wholeness, connection, and unity. The brain may *think*, but when you turn your heart into an instrument of perception, it *knows*.

Excerpt reprinted with permission from *Becoming Supernatural: How Common People Are Doing the Uncommon* by Dr Joe Dispenza. It can be found online at [hayhouse.com](http://hayhouse.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

# Eyes: the Windows to the Soul

NELLA AROSSA is now in her eighties. She has dedicated a large part of her life to research in the field of natural medicine, having studied iridology at the Heilpraktiker Fachschule Saarbrücken in Germany and subsequently at the University of Urbino in Italy, where she also explored the use of medicinal plants, phytotherapy, natural nutrition and oligotherapy. Nella lives in Torre Pellice in the north of Italy, surrounded by the natural beauty at the foot of the Alps. In the 1980s, as a Hatha Yoga teacher, she saw a picture of Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh on the cover of a book. It was the intensity and depth of his eyes that attracted her attention and inspired her to explore an inner world which she had always felt existed, and which those eyes promised.

Fascinating, mysterious, unsettling ... there are so many different ways of describing the eyes, the organs which are part of our visual system. Their task is to allow us to see – but to see what?

It is said that when a soul decides to come to live on Earth, it chooses the place and person most suited to its purpose. On the basis of this choice it defines, a priori, from the largest to the smallest detail, the man or woman it will represent on Earth. A physical structure comes into being with all the necessary



internal functionalities, organs and systems that will make that life one of growth. Then, once its task has been accomplished, the physical entity will dissolve.

The soul, which has now incarnated as a human being, needs to make itself known in all its fullness. Its most visible dimension, the physical body, is only one aspect; there are also the mind and the spirit, though these are less visible. But the organs which are best able to express all three dimensions – physical, mental and spiritual – are the eyes. They are in effect a means of communication, a way of transmitting information from the inside to the outside, and at the same time able to capture the outside world and bring it inside.



## EDUCATE YOUR EYES.

*They were created to see,  
even beyond what you think.*

*—Paul Coelho*

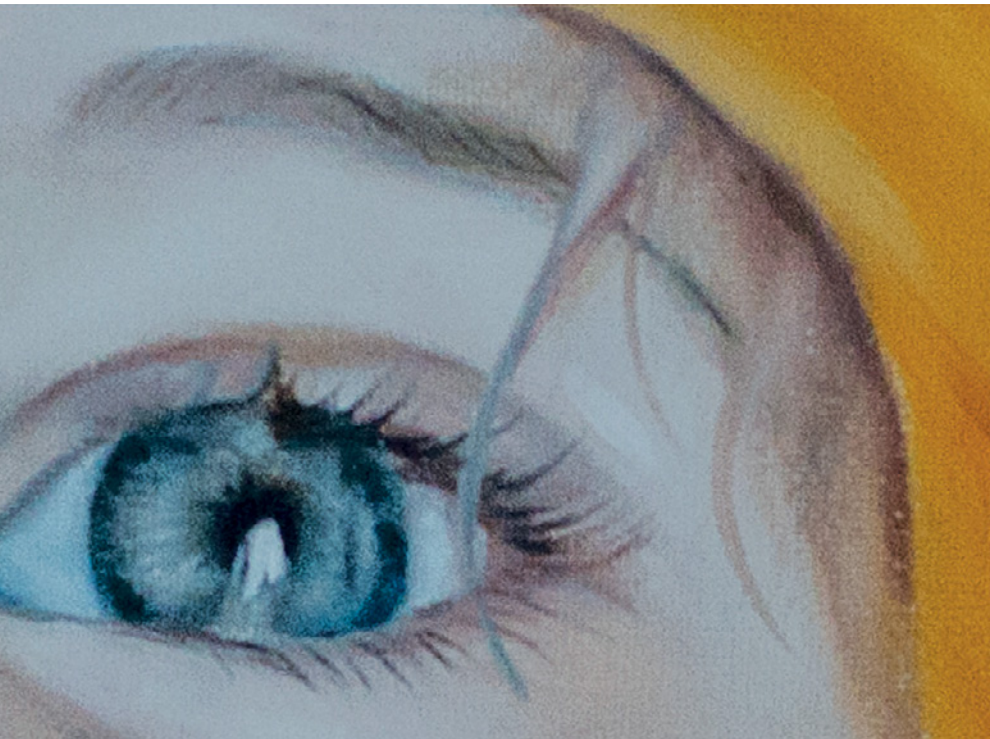
The eyes are the windows through which the soul makes itself visible.

When we meet someone, it is their eyes that first attract our attention: their color, their luminosity, their expression – all are taken in with a glance. According to iridology, the examination of the characteristics of the tissue of the iris, the genetic code that defines the individual constitution, its characteristics and internal functional organization, are impressed on the iris.

A detailed examination of the iris using a special magnifying apparatus allows us to ‘map’ our systemic health. In the same way that geographical maps indicate the location of places and routes, an iridology chart is a way of representing the state of our functional systems and internal organs, as well as their future path. An iridologist examines the tissue of the iris, its colors, patterns and flecks, and is able to make a reading of a person’s basic constitution. It

is important to point out that this is not a diagnosis, but a reading of the underlying ‘terrain’.

When used correctly, this information helps us to adopt a lifestyle corresponding to our real requirements. It not only allows us to respect our bodies and recognize our physical potential, but also helps us to know the weak points of our constitution and hence our limits. By doing so, these negative tendencies may



remain simply tendencies, and are not reinforced by bad habits that risk transforming them into health problems. For example, if an iridology examination reveals a genetic weakness in the pancreas, we know it is unwise to consume alcohol because that would put further strain on the enzymatic breakdown process, making food absorption difficult and leading to negative repercussions on all the other organs.

The world of thoughts, feelings and emotions takes up space in the mind. This mental aspect is subtler than the physical body and concerns one's awareness of inner feelings and the ability to relate to conditioning from the

outside world. At this level, the eyes communicate the reaction of the soul, whether rebelling and showing discontent or joyful.

Love and joy, as well as hate and sadness, are part of the spectrum of reactions expressed through the human eye. If we react with indifference when a child shows us something important, it is easy to see the disappointment in their eyes. Their enthusiasm is extinguished and the light in their eyes suddenly goes out, like the click of a light switch. It is through the eyes that we capture a glance of disapproval at our behavior. On the other hand, a reassuring look from a friend has the power to calm our anxieties. The sensation

of pain we feel at the suffering of others is also clearly reflected in our eyes.

We could go on indefinitely describing all that the mind communicates through the eyes, but this is not our purpose here. The aim is simply to make us more sensitive and attentive to this means of communication. To develop the ability to capture information through the eyes that can enrich our understanding of others.


The spiritual dimension is the most profound characteristic of the human being which, when we are sensitive, can also be captured through the eyes. When you are immersed in the depths of the eyes of the person before you, their physical boundaries disappear and you can perceive that infinite space which encompasses the whole universe. We become aware that there exists an unknown and limitless world of which we too are part. At this point, we can even close our eyes: it is no longer the individual who is speaking to us, because the real protagonist becomes the heart.

The eyes communicate, the heart transmits.

Illustration: Photo of an oil painting of two eyes by Martina Daniela Veronesi.



be inspired



Don't forget love;  
it will bring all the madness you need  
to unfurl yourself across the universe.

*Mirabai*

# KARMA, JNANA & BHAKTI YOGA

– part 1

Even before the texts of the Vedas were written down, the three fundamental elements of yogic practice were known as Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. Here **DAAJI** enlightens us on how these three elements arose, and how mastering karma, jnana and bhakti can help us to reach the stage of oneness known as Yoga.



It is fascinating to me that the most unified concept in the world, Yoga, has been subdivided into so many branches. Just as medical doctors specialize in certain organs of the body and certain illnesses, Yoga practitioners often specialize in just one or two aspects of Yoga. And like medicine, these yogic specializations may take us deeper into each area of specialty and provide very useful and important understanding, but the underlying purpose of Yoga has been lost in the process.

The word 'Yoga' itself means 'union' or 'to bind', and the practices of Yoga are all about unification of the lower self with the higher Self; union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness; and the integration of body, mind and soul into a purified whole. Despite this focus on union, Yoga has also traditionally been classified into three major disciplines – Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. What are these three disciplines and how do they fit together? Is there some purpose to this triadic classification? To understand this, we really need to go back to the time of creation.

## CREATION

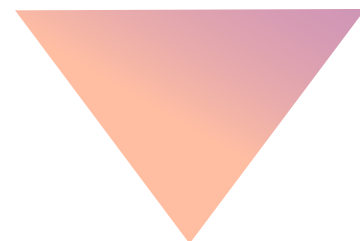
What was there before the creation of the universe? There was indescribable and infinite darkness. Then, into this absolute state of nothingness came a stir, and that very first vibration caused the big bang. It was also the first manifestation of consciousness, described in Yoga as AUM. The whole world rests upon it. It is the Absolute Base and foundation of all creation.

As a result, the veil of darkness collapsed and time was born. Individual identity arose, the 'I', and consciousness experienced fear because it was now separated from the Source. Fear arose because of the feeling of separateness or individuality. But as a result of thinking and understanding, fear disappeared, as it still does today whenever we face fear. The Being that existed at the dawn of time wished to expand, and that wish was the beginning of desire, and it began to grow. From then on it was called Brahman.

That first stir faced no friction; nothing prevented it or slowed it down in any way, and so it found an opportunity for infinite expansion. Thus there was movement or expansion (karma) and thinking (jnana), and before these two existed there was the original connection with the Source (bhakti). These three – karma, jnana and bhakti – have been there since the very beginning of the universe, as fundamental elements of life, and together they dance and weave our existence through the fabric of time. They are inseparable, and dependent on each other.

KARMA

JNANA



BHAKTI

The first and fundamental element is bhakti. We usually translate bhakti into English as ‘love and devotion’, but it is more fundamental than that. It is the feeling of connectedness with everything through the heart; the link of our individual consciousness with the universal divine consciousness. Without bhakti, karma and jnana are missing that vital element of enthusiasm and spark; so they become purposeless and futile. In these two articles we will explore all three of these elements, their interplay, and the role of spiritual practice and *Pranabuti* in refining them towards our purpose.

## KARMA

Karma is action. Why is action necessary? It is the practical manifestation of existence. Without action we cannot infer life, as action expresses life. Karma is the ‘movement’ part or the *ath* of the *atman* or soul. Karma was also the movement of that stir at the time of creation that became the ongoing ‘expansion’ part, the *bruha*, of Brahman or God. This aspect of

movement and expansion that is critical to all life is what we call karma.

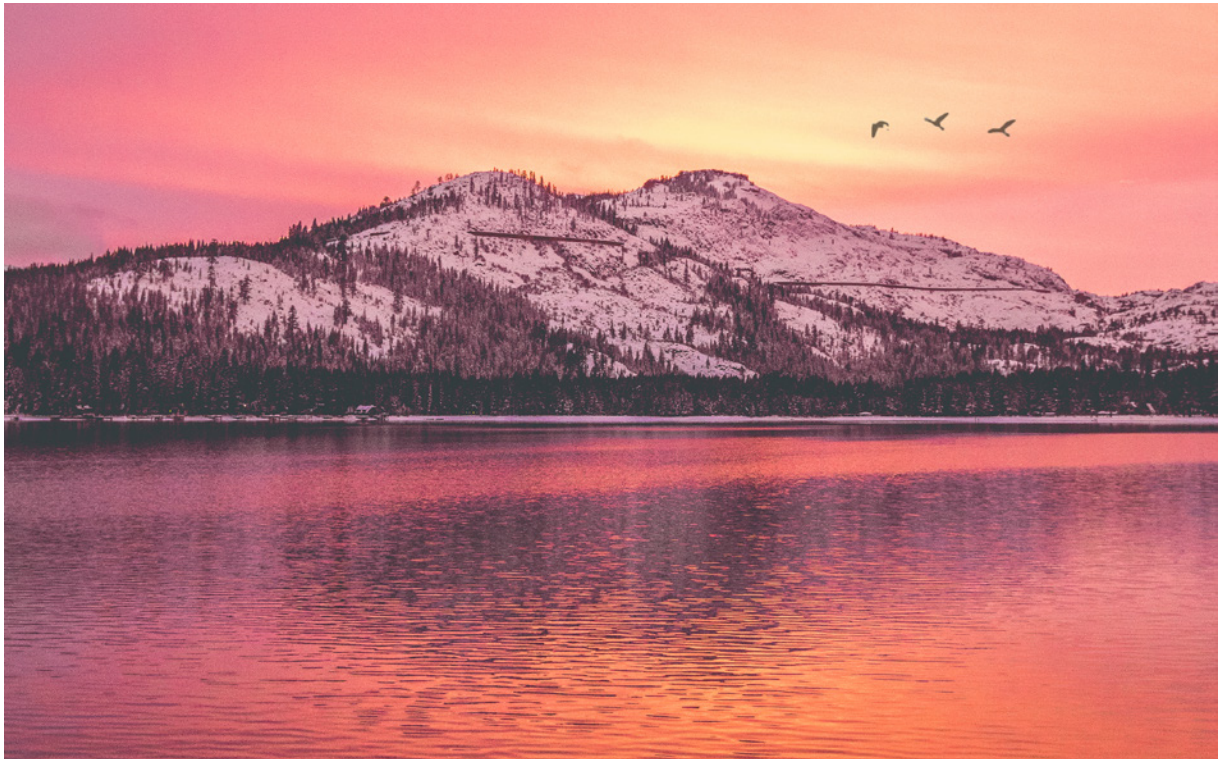
So in Karma Yoga we learn to express life through action according to the natural law. If life is expressed in this natural way, without harming anyone or anything, there is neither merit nor wrongdoing in it. When we spend time observing newborn babies, we soon see that there is no consciousness of right or wrong in their actions, or any thought of legitimate or illegitimate. Every action is so natural, in response to the most basic needs and stimuli. The ideal Karma Yogi is like a newborn – so pure that there is no need for ‘right or wrong’ consciousness.

But are we there yet? Instead we are entangled in thoughts of right and wrong, creating bondage and the need for ethics and values. When we act in accordance with mundane desires, we develop a chain of karma after karma, of desire after desire, and we become trapped in that net. Then the need to free ourselves arises, otherwise it would not even enter our thought.

To free ourselves from bondage, we have a number of Heartfulness practices:

*Karma is the ‘movement’ part or the ath of the atman or soul. Karma was also the movement of that stir at the time of creation that became the ongoing ‘expansion’ part, the bruha, of Brahman or God. This aspect of movement and expansion that is critical to all life is what we call karma.*

- The first is a process of **Cleaning** – a super effective method for removing the past impressions that created the bondage and limit or distort our consciousness.
- The second is a practice of **Constant Remembrance**, in which we maintain a base of resonating with the universal consciousness, of being united with the rest of Existence throughout the most part of the day. This way we are not laying down new impressions. That state is possible when our consciousness is purified, and we are able to connect with our Center in **Meditation** in the morning and then carry that state with us throughout the day.



- The third is a practice of **prayerful Continuous Improvement** at bedtime, in which we let go of any feelings and emotions we hold about wrongdoings, in a guilt-free way, focusing on positive behavioural change and growth. This brings us restful and carefree sleep.

Another remedy that helps to remove this bondage is to convert any intention into a good intention before acting. The best kind of action is to serve our fellow beings in the world without any selfish motive, personal desire or self-importance. When we do this, we are free from any bondage imposed by karma, and we refine ourselves through Karma Yoga.

Simplistically, we can say that there are two types of action, legitimate action and illegitimate action. Legitimate action brings happiness, and illegitimate action does not. An action is illegitimate if there is fear, hesitation and shame, and an action is legitimate if there is fearlessness, courage and valor. But there are also other influences: education, personal and cultural

*The best kind of action is to serve our fellow beings in the world without any selfish motive, personal desire or self-importance. When we do this, we are free from any bondage imposed by karma, and we refine ourselves through Karma Yoga.*



values, collective consciousness and experience. So to know if an action is legitimate, make sure that the following things are all in sync:

Your religious or ethical principles,  
The sacred and philosophical texts you follow,  
Your Guide's teachings, and  
Your own conscience.

When these are in agreement, an action is legitimate; if they differ, it is illegitimate.

In religious and spiritual texts, and the philosophy of ethics, a lot is made of the principles of right action. In fact, right character is considered to be the cornerstone of most value systems, such as the Buddha's eightfold path, Confucius' aphorisms, Plato's *Republic* and Ralph Waldo Emerson's *The Sovereignty of Ethics*. Probably the most famous *slokas* from the Bhagavad Gita, which can be recited by most school children in India, are *slokas* 47 and 48 from chapter 2, in which Lord Krishna tells Arjuna:

*Your authority is in action alone, not in its fruits.  
The motive for any action  
should not be in its fruits,  
nor should you cling to inaction.*

*While abiding in Yoga, engage in action!  
Let go of clinging, and let satisfaction and frustration be  
the same;  
for it is said that Yoga is poise.*

But with this ethical guidance comes an apparent paradox of karma to be resolved in our hearts: on one hand we have the above statements by Lord Krishna, and also his instruction to live life like a lotus in a muddy pond – unaffected by the dirt and sludge around. The great sage Ashtavakra also speaks about the importance of contentment as one of the five great qualities to be imbibed.

On the other hand, Patanjali advocates intensity and sincerity in our approach to Yoga. He says that if this intensity in practice, intensity of love, is not there, then we will not achieve the spiritual goal. We cannot

*The real enlightenment comes when we have full consciousness of the condition that has been enlivened in us at each chakra, and we become one with it.*

have a lukewarm relationship with anyone let alone God. Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur also advises us to have restlessness and intense craving for God; he invites us to say goodbye to peace. We will come back to this in part 2, when we explore the interplay between karma, jnana and bhakti.

## JNANA

Jnana is knowledge. Just as karma is the practical expression of life, knowledge is its essential aspect. Knowledge is the way we perceive and understand the reality of our life, and this is the distinguishing quality of human beings. Even the word 'man' comes from the Sanskrit word *manas*, meaning mind. Understandably, we place a lot of importance on the mind and knowledge.

The real knowledge of existence is not learnt through books and lectures, however, but through observation and direct experience. We also see this in newborn babies: even from the beginning, knowledge is constantly being absorbed, and they develop a set of cognates that help them survive in this world of experiences.

Knowledge is no doubt enlightening, but it is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end; it always has

some purpose. This is so evident in worldly life, for example, reciting  $C_6H_{12}O_6$ , the molecular formula for glucose, is not going to elevate my blood glucose level when I am hypoglycaemic, although repeating the formula shows that I have the knowledge of the formula for glucose. And reciting the formula for water – two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom,  $H_2O$  – is not going to quench my thirst! Similarly, to make a wooden chair I will have to practice carpentry and wood turning; and to learn swimming I will have to get into the water.

But what is it that human beings are supposed to achieve apart from the smaller mundane goals of life? What is our ultimate purpose, for which we need knowledge? In Yoga it is to become one with the higher Self, the absolute Reality, which is also that same state that was there before creation. So Jnana Yoga is the process of enlightening the way on that journey back to our Source. Our awareness of the destination is Jnana Yoga, and that is purposeful knowledge.

The word Jnana is usually applied so vaguely in the spiritual field that it is used to describe the range from bookish knowledge to the highest level of inner enlightenment. So a person who has learnt a few scriptures, another who has read many books, and yet another who recites philosophy or the scriptures in a very erudite way, may claim to be enlightened, irrespective of their inner state.

In fact, true Jnana is an ever-changing state, because the spiritual journey is an ever-expanding journey. We become enlightened up to a certain stage. In the real sense Jnana refers to the inner condition of the mind that develops as we pass through the different states at different points or chakras on the spiritual journey. Jnana is the practical realization of the condition prevailing at each chakra, and so our knowledge will vary according to the level we have reached on the journey.

*When the heart's attention also goes to the third stream, where it settles on the subtlest region, then our higher purpose comes into focus, and the teaching is known as upasana. For this we need bhakti, which is our lifeline for the upward journey.*

The real enlightenment comes when we have full consciousness of the condition that has been enlivened in us at each chakra, and we become one with it. We merge into its consciousness, and so we become enlightened up to that particular stage. This mergence carries with it a blissful state that encourages our heart to keep going ahead on the journey.

Jnana allows us to think, reflect, make wise choices and exhibit right behavior; it allows us to differentiate and draw a line between good and bad; it is the exclusive quality of the heart. As we progress on our journey, those abilities continue to become more and more refined until we reach a stage characterized by purity, discernment and wisdom. Eventually we transcend the need for knowledge to reach a higher state, which is at one with the condition before creation.

Karma and Jnana are joined by the middle link, which is the human heart. The heart sends its currents into our material existence, on one side, leading to action. The same heart sends its currents into the subtler regions of the mind for knowledge. While it lies in both knowledge and action, it enjoys the bliss of both, but if it leans completely towards one or the other, it is no longer balanced.

Now, when the heart's attention also goes to the third stream, where it settles on the subtlest region, then our higher purpose comes into focus, and the teaching is known as *upasana*. For this we need *bhakti*, which is our lifeline for the upward journey. In part 2, we will explore *bhakti*, as well as the interplay of all three elements, along with the practices that support them.

*To be continued.*



Known to many as Daaji, Kamlesh Patel is the fourth guide in the Heartfulness tradition of meditation. Embracing the many roles of a modern-day teacher, he has that rare capacity to dive deep into the center of his existence in the heart, and simultaneously have a scientific approach to original research in the field of meditation, spirituality and human evolution. He is a prolific speaker and writer, and you can read his latest book, *The Heartfulness Way*. To learn more about Daaji, go to [www.daaji.org](http://www.daaji.org).

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# THE PRINCIPLE OF PURITY

VICTOR KANNAN

inspires us to cultivate our original state of purity and simplicity.

I am intrigued to see new brands of clothing, nutrition and perfume called 'Purity' and 'Pure'. Despite this trend, I feel that the idea of purity is repugnant to many people. It has a religious or moral connotation, and people cringe and their minds close. They withdraw and avoid the conversation, for they feel uncomfortable with any ritual or worship that focuses on purity. They don't associate purity with the presence of love, forgiveness, empathy and compassion that could inspire them. Instead they feel judged because of their impurity, and dislike the self-righteousness of those who preach purity. Also, in many people's minds the idea of purity is limited to fidelity

in the conjugal relationship of marriage. Lack of purity in relationships creates separation, feelings of guilt, and other complications of insecurity, disappointment, anger and loss of discernment. No one is perfect, and yet the idea of cheerful acceptance of each other is farfetched.

Adulteration of any kind causes impurity, not just in relationships or in the mind. Can we mix oil and water? Do we rear goats and lions in the same cage? When everything is in its own space and time, in character and content, we can say there is purity. In other words, when there is no adulteration there is purity.

This leads us to explore the idea of simplicity. Simplicity is related to purity, while complexity is not. Everything in its own nature is pure and anything pretentious is not. Don't we say 'pure and simple' all the time?

Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur says, "Be simple to be identical with Nature." Is Nature simple? It has so much variety and grandeur. Its origin is fascinating and its sustenance mind-boggling. Still we say that to be simple and in tune with Nature begets happiness and joy in living.

Natural forces can be powerful and awe-inspiring. They may be simple,

yet when unleashed they can create huge disasters and also sustain the creation on an enormous scale. The sun shines daily and sustains the life of trillions of life forms. It is a blind force. It is majestic and serene at the same time. What is this character in Nature that makes it simple in spite of being so majestic?

In Nature there is predictability. The laws of nature operate inexorably. There are no double standards or pretention. In other words, there is no complexity. Nature is diverse and yet it has no complexity in its character. It is pure and simple.

Looking at human beings through the same lens, we can say we are physiologically complex, with so many organs, connections and signals passing through us, with extraordinary interdependence, yet the human body works like Nature. Where we find the most complexity is in the mind.

When we describe people as simple on one side and complex on the other, what is the characteristic that defines that spectrum? Let us look at it from the same standard of viewing Nature. Are we the same externally as we are internally? Do we exhibit trustable, predictable behavior?

Think about the distinction between man-made versus natural. Even in shoes, the label distinguishes man-made materials from natural leather. So simplicity and complexity, too, may have to be understood from

the point of view of what comes from nature and what is man-made.

When the mind creates things for the sake of itself or its identification, it ends up complex. Such complexity is adulteration or impurity. It is not simple addition but complex accumulation, which takes us away from our true nature of purity.

Our intuitive appreciation of purity drives us to value purity, while we also struggle with the tendencies that make us impure. It took time for us

we head in the right direction, we feel happy joyful and expansive, and that is also Nature cooperating. We can also augment our level of purity by acts of kindness and generosity.

When we become pure:

We see the interconnectedness of being.

We respect and cherish each other.

We contribute to the communal and collective well-being.

We begin to weave our destiny.

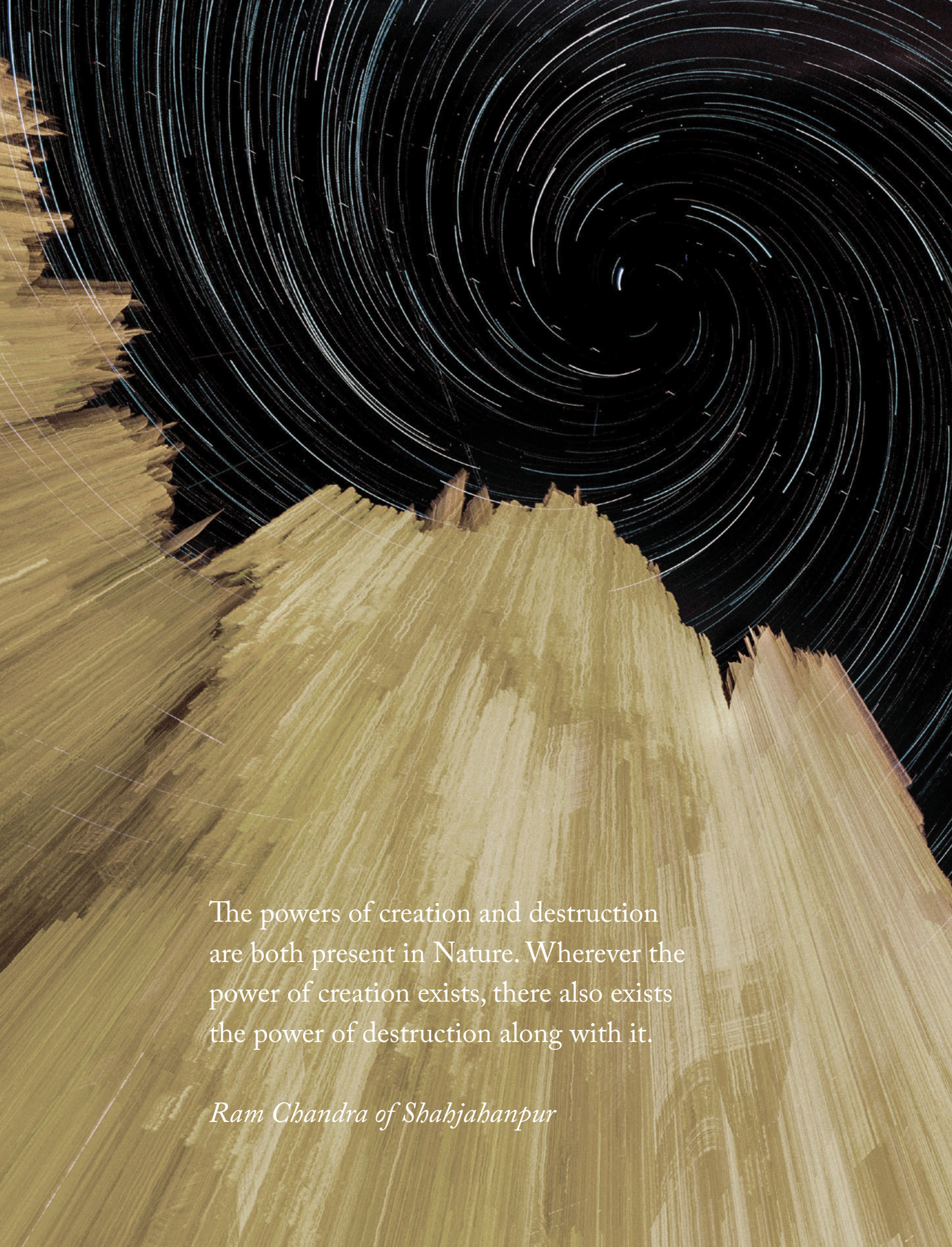
If we accept that purity weaves

*When we become pure: We see the interconnectedness of being. We respect and cherish each other. We contribute to the communal and collective well-being. We begin to weave our destiny.*

to become impure, so it's reasonable to think that it will take time to become pure once more, when we are awakened to the possibility. If we have impure thoughts and actions, we need to examine them and reverse them, like rewinding a tape in forward motion, for the past is the past. A conscious process will take less time than the unconscious one that resulted in our current state.

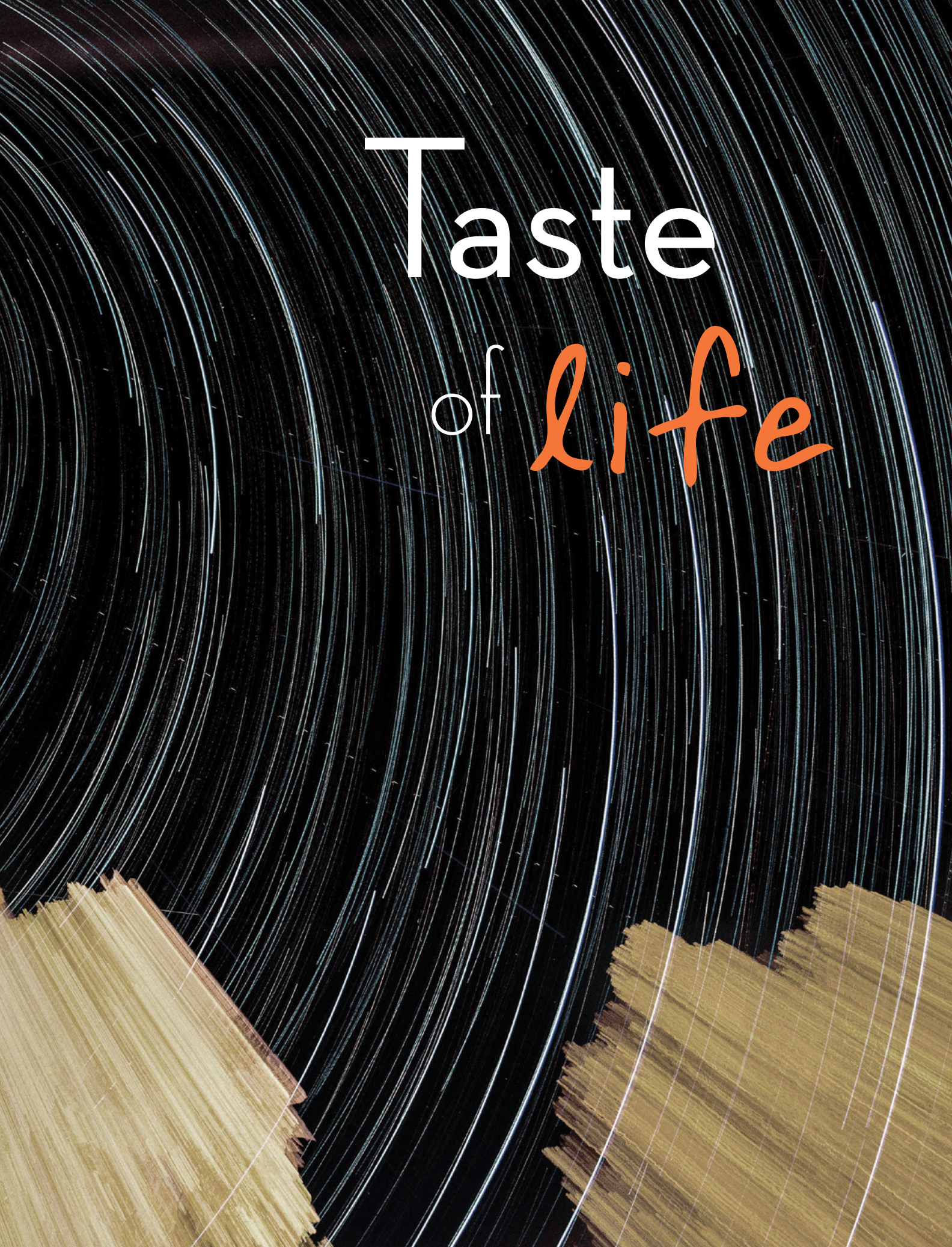
The true nature of our being is to be pure. As Nature is also pure, it becomes our ally once we undertake a conscious journey towards purity. Nature cooperates: when we head in the wrong direction, there are obstacles, pain and suffering. When

destiny, then our destiny is here awaiting us. We shape our existence so that our life is infused with purity – and this shaping is in the proper learning, doing and becoming. We weave it into our existence by becoming pure and simple as Nature intended us to be.

The image is a composite. The upper half shows a dark night sky with numerous concentric, circular star trails, suggesting a long-exposure photograph taken from a fixed point. The lower half features a golden, textured mountain range, possibly a representation of the Himalayas, with a jagged, layered appearance. The text is overlaid on the lower half, centered horizontally.

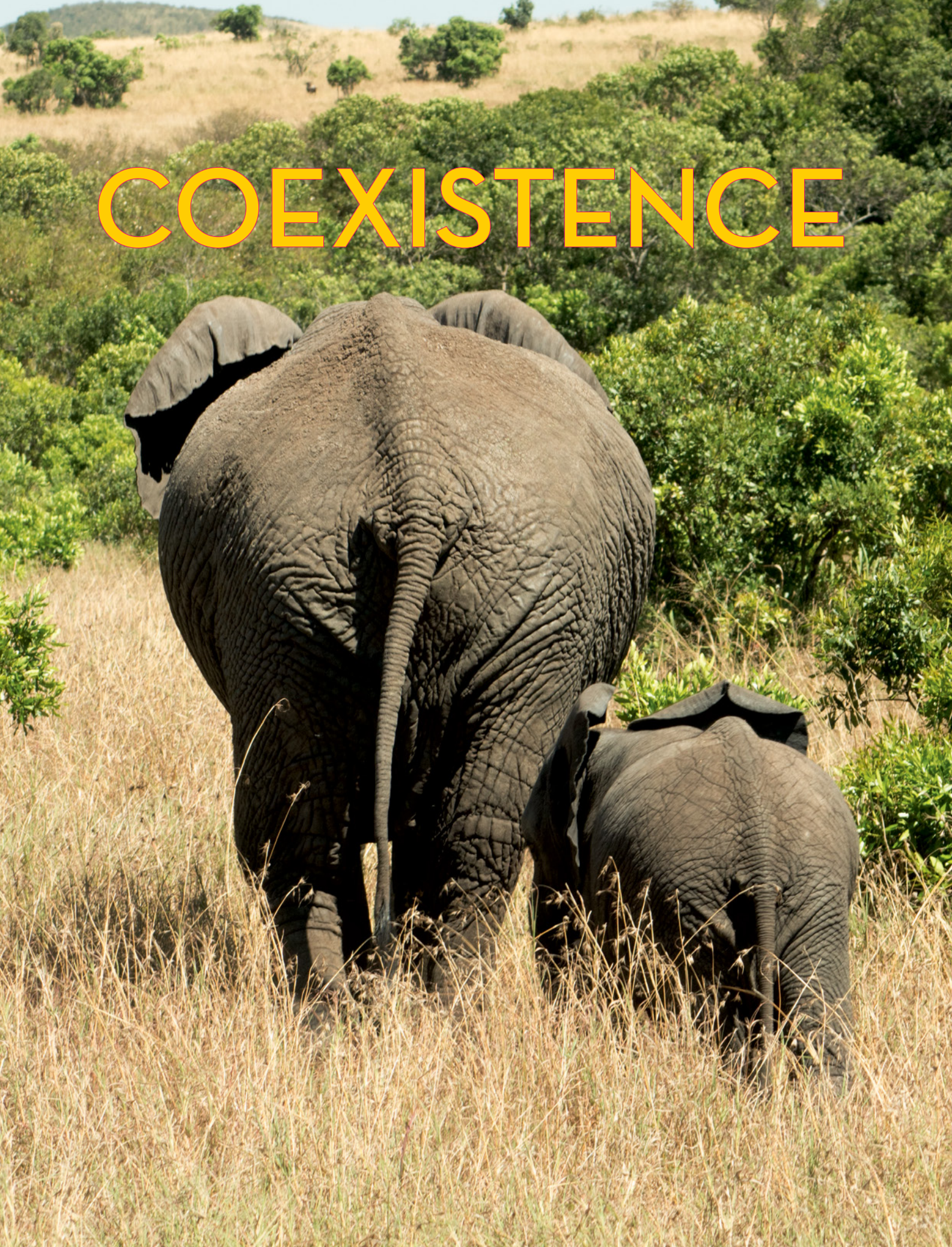
The powers of creation and destruction  
are both present in Nature. Wherever the  
power of creation exists, there also exists  
the power of destruction along with it.

*Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur*



# Taste of *life*

# COEXISTENCE



## A PHOTO ESSAY



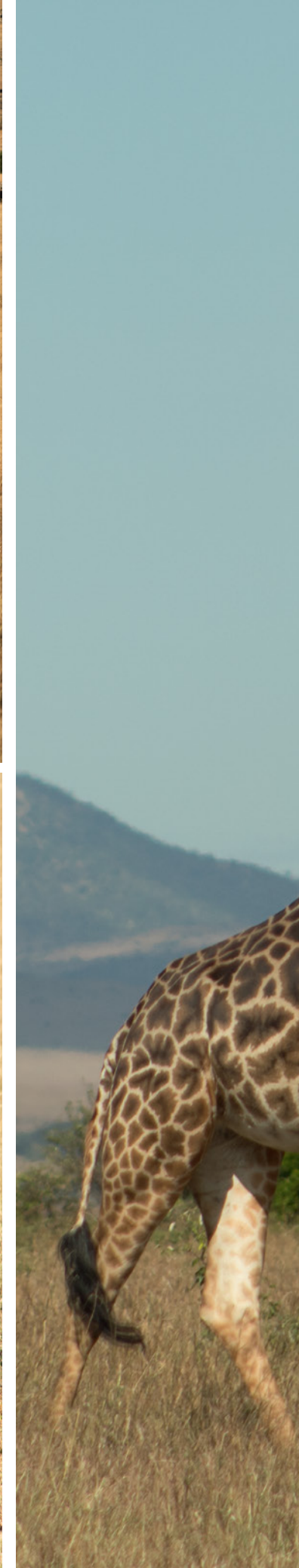
The Masai Mara National Reserve spreads over 1,200 square kilometers across the southwestern part of Kenya, Africa. In August 2018, **SATVIK SWAMINATHAN** had the opportunity to visit these sprawling grasslands and get a glimpse of the life that coexists here in all its magnificence.

**T**he first stop was a point from where I could see the rift valley, through which we would pass to reach Masai Mara. The view from the top was spectacular. It filled me with wonder, as I imagined what could be the future changes on the face of the Earth. This bigger picture in the divine scheme of things glaringly demonstrates the insignificance of human life, with its whole spectrum of joys and sorrows. It was a truly humbling feeling.

The entrance to the National Reserve is through the Ololaimutia gate, which is an archway without any boundary wall. The first view of Masai Mara is magnificent, as the real feel of the Savannah grasslands, with endless space and one lone tree here and there standing upright, is quite spectacular. It can only be experienced.

We saw the whole spectrum of wildlife in Africa: herds of elephants and giraffes; groups of wildebeest, deer, buffalos and zebras grazing in the grasslands; gigantic hippos lazing in ponds and waterholes; warthogs, ostriches and mongooses; the carnivorous lions, cheetahs and hyenas; and the scavenger birds also with their share in the Savannah. To see all these animals coexisting in the open, in a single frame, was quite an enthralling experience. I felt like an awestruck time traveler who had just landed in the prehistoric era!

The soil in Africa is very fertile, almost dark maroon in color, and this helps the growth of grass, which in turn attracts the wildebeest and zebras to cross the Mara River for greener pastures. Almost a million animals migrate every year to Masai Mara in August, braving the mighty river filled with hungry crocodiles.





They then return back to the Serengeti in Tanzania in October. With the abundance of prey, the lions and the other carnivores rule here.

The natural balance of the ecosystem is admirable: nature always provides the basic necessities in abundance. For every lion there are at least a thousand wildebeest, and for every wildebeest there is exponentially more grass to graze. Unlike human beings, nature doesn't hoard and save things. Just like a flowing river gathers no moss, the human mind also does not gather impressions when we use only what we need. The moment we build a dam, the water stagnates and moss is formed, very similar to the human mind where the very concept of saving creates impressions.

The first time I saw a lion eating an antelope was quite an experience, where I could feel the so-called negative qualities like fear, pain, and violence etc. in their pure form. I came to understand that it is the human mind, with its duality and judgment, which creates good and bad in any feeling or action. Never before had I thought of the concept of fear, pain and violence without a cringing feeling in my heart. But this time it was different.

Experiencing the raw feeling of a lion attacking and killing an antelope has no negativity associated with it, because the lion kills to eat. The most fascinating aspect in all this was that there was no impression formed in me despite the fact that the lion was tearing and ripping into the antelope and eating raw flesh. It was chaotic but natural. Here, everything is in the present and, once the lion has eaten, it does not trouble any other animal.

In comparison, when a butcher does the same thing, even though it is in a controlled manner, it stirs up a feeling that forms an impression. It is orderly yet unnatural. It's because the killing in the butcher shop



has more than the thought of just eating for today, but it also has the concept of saving for the future, selling, and all the other man-made layers associated with it. Only we human beings have the concept of saving for the future, which in itself is an unnatural act. So I came to realize that it is not what we do that matters, but the attitude and feeling with which things are done.

*Morality cannot be taught, it can only be felt.*

*It can never be a generalized rule spanning all people and time. It can be different for different situations, for different people, and at different points of time.*

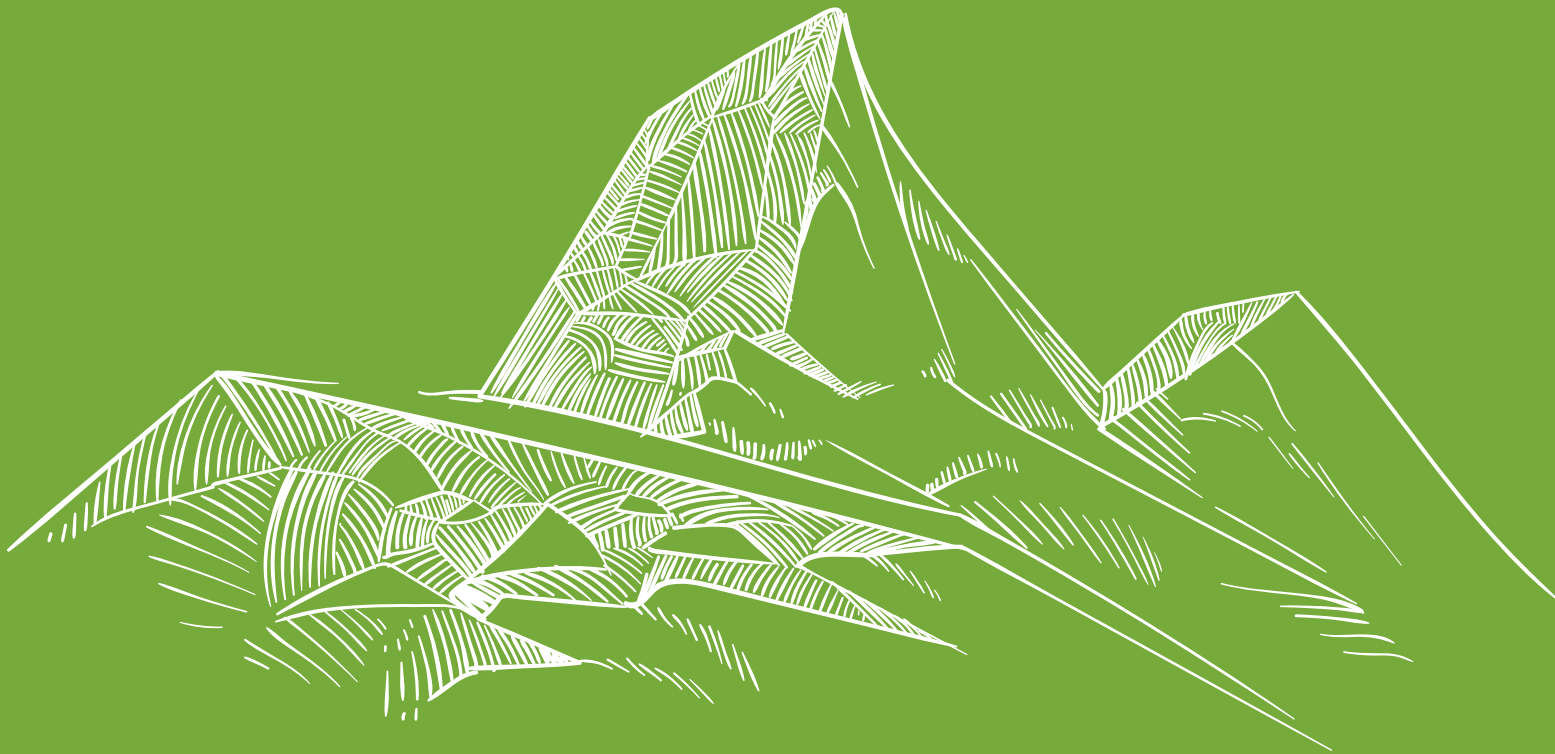
*Morality is the connection with the innermost feeling of the heart at that particular moment.*

To perceive the innermost feelings of the heart, we need to dive deep and remove any obstacles. Once we experience and realize that essence which is the same in everything, be it animate or inanimate, then even the question of being moral or not disappears and anything we do is in sync with the Ultimate.



# Sanctuaries in the Wilderness

A Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and author of three successful books, including *Sacred Mountains: Ancient Wisdom and Modern Meanings*, **DR ADRIAN COOPER** has been fascinated with wildlife and conservation since early childhood. Here he recounts some of the experiences of pilgrims traveling to wilderness environments, and how it helps them to grow naturally.



Wilderness environments have fed the human imagination since the dawn of history. Today, mountains, forests, mangroves and other challenging natural places are the focus for pilgrimage journeys for increasing numbers of people from all over the world. While traditional pilgrimage destinations such as Rome or Jerusalem may not always satisfy a pilgrim's search for solitude and sanctuary, mountains and forests often do so in glorious abundance, with many surprises along the way.

Traditionally, sanctuaries have been thought of as simply places of reflection, meditation and prayer. However, in remote natural environments, that is only part of the story. On a mountain slope or deep in a forest, for example, pilgrims learn that rational knowledge of their new sanctuary is never enough. There is a need to seek more.

As humankind finds its way through this bewildering new millennium, the greatest challenge facing each individual is to find ways of becoming spiritually reconciled to the sacred inspirations within this planet's last remaining wilderness environments.

For Harriot, a teacher from Seattle, Washington, her wilderness sanctuaries are most frequently discovered on Mount McKinley, often known by its Native American name of Denali. It is the highest peak in North America, and one of the most isolated mountains on Earth:

"I love to go hiking on Denali... I can tell you that it is my one and only true sanctuary. It's where I go to find my deepest meditations; I can pray there like

no other place. And it's where I feel I can grow in the most natural and organic way."

George, a software designer from London, UK, shares a very similar experience:

"Walking in the Scottish Highlands is my true sanctuary. It distances me physically and emotionally from all the hassle and hypocrisy of modern living. Out there I can breathe and feel restored. It's a sanctuary that I crave for, and which I need in my deepest soul."

There are also times when pilgrims reconcile their spiritual search with a personal scientific quest to understand local ecosystems, and to align them within their pilgrimage. This type of reconciliation between the spiritual and scientific aspects of wilderness sanctuaries is clearly described by Lucille, an artist from Rouen, France:

"For me, and a lot of my family and friends, there can never be a limit put on spiritual growth. We must always grow in any way we can. I love to learn about wildlife. I keep my own journal, which combines my mystical experiences with my notes about counting birds or sketching the grasses and other plants."

In all these ways, wilderness environments offer pilgrims life-changing lessons in the sanctuaries they discovered. Consequently, these extraordinary individuals have learned to become more than who they were before their journeys began.

# Heartfulness Yogasanas

## SHISHUPALA ASANA



Sit with the legs crossed.

Take the right foot with the right hand, and place it in the crook of the left elbow.

Bend the right knee in toward the trunk and place the right knee in the crook of the right elbow. Right elbow supporting right knee and left elbow supporting right foot. The right hand wrapped around the right leg.

Draw the right shin in towards the chest.

Shin parallel to the ground, shoulders relaxed and spine erect.

Look straight ahead and gently rock the right leg back and forth sideways in both hands as if cradling a baby.

Do the practice with normal breathing for 30 seconds.

Relax and repeat the practice for the left leg.

### BENEFITS

Stretches the hips, thighs and groin.

Eliminates pain in the thighs.

Relaxes the lower body from upper thighs to the ankles.

Increases flexibility in the hip joints.

Calms down the mind.

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IN THE FIELD

# Kenya

EMPOWERING THE NEW GENERATION

As Africa emerges as a continent of growth, positive change and potential in the 21st century, **ELIZABETH DENLEY** travels to Nairobi, Kenya, for an international Heartfulness Conference with a difference – the average age of participants is between 20 and 25! The atmosphere is dynamic, vibrant and full of the hopes and dreams of a new generation.

The first ever International Heartfulness Conference on African soil was held in August 2018 in Nairobi.

Since 2016 Heartfulness Institute has been affiliated with the CAP Youth Empowerment Initiative, a local NGO offering life-skills and employability training for youth from disadvantaged sections of society. CAP and Heartfulness work hand in hand to provide a humanitarian and self-sustainable approach to supporting the needs of youth. It is a mutually beneficial



and complementary collaboration including a basic 3-month introduction to Heartfulness practice, which has been offered in 15 CAP centers in different regions of Kenya. To date this program has reached over 10,000 students. The conference was designed primarily for these youth, to deepen their practice and have a positive impact on their lives.

This vision resonates with the African Union's agenda for 2063: "The aspirations reflect our desire for shared prosperity and well-being, for unity and integration, for a continent of free citizens and expanded horizons, where the full potential of women and youth, boys and girls are realized, and

with freedom from fear, disease and want." The Union has a magnificent vision for the continent – towards a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa by 2063.

The Heartfulness Conference was attended by 550 young CAP alumni, between the ages of 18 and 25, and 80 other Heartfulness practitioners from Africa – South Africa, Kenya, Madagascar, Congo Brazzaville, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tanzania, Cameroon, Uganda – and also from the UK, Australia, Dubai and India. The conference also attracted key guests from other NGOs, government representatives and the Deputy Governor of Kiambu County, as well as local TV channels and newspapers.



Three children from South Africa showcased the Brighter Minds program, and after the conference a dedicated training session was held to qualify Brighter Minds trainers for the African region.

A delegate from the UK, Stephanie Sismondi, writes: "Breakfast is simple, happy and joyful. I have a chat to two of the Kenyan trainers and they are cheerful, simple in their approach to life and so committed. One of them tells me that she loves her job, and that changing someone's life is quite something. The Kenyan trainers are full of life and commitment and such a lot of fun to be with.

"I also chat to a sister from Cameroon who tells me about her own spiritual journey. One thing that strikes me is that when she had been searching for meditation, it was love that she was looking for. Her previous experiences were that of an all-powerful and punitive



Youth

God, whereas her heart was telling her otherwise. In Heartfulness, she finds the love she needs.

“The Kenyan trainers are very skilled in activities and icebreakers, which are hilarious and totally light hearted, and their way of communicating with the youth is incredibly natural and very funny. When the CAP students are asked what they feel after experiencing meditation, quite a few stand up and share their feelings so beautifully:

*I feel refreshed and free.*

*I feel light hearted.*

*I can let go of my bitterness and anger.*

*It is time to be something different.*

*In this process I cleared off my mind, I was in my own world.*

“The end of the day is marked by an eventful and cheerful late afternoon party conducted by DJ Pierre Ravan from Dubai, who invites the CAP youth on a journey first through relaxation and meditation and then on to music and dance. Many questions come up, all incredibly honest, astute, fearless and ever so direct, just like the youth themselves. There is so much joy, relaxation and peace in the audience’s heart. It is very moving. At the end, everybody is dancing – CAP youth and other delegates, both young and not so young!



“The Kenyans and the African peoples’ openness to Heartfulness knows no boundaries.”

When asked what youth empowerment means to them, some of the youth shared:

*“To support us to become what we want to be.”*

*“Talking to that potential energy inside each one of us. Also, there is nobody that is less than anyone else.”*

*“You go from a zero to a hero.”*

At this last one, everybody cheered!

Emily Maina, the Minister for Education, Kiambu County, spoke about the government’s policies: “Our youth need space to express themselves both physically and virtually. The government wants to give authority to the youth and has implemented several policies and programs that focus on women, on deprived youth, and on the training of experts who can connect youth on their targeted capabilities.”

And the Deputy Governor for Kiambu County said that the best ideas come from youth; it is for them to be innovative.

In the words of one participant, “The conference ended leaving us with hope in the heart, joy and contentment for the youth of Africa, as well as all youth in the world. We are ever so grateful for the friendships, the spiritual partnerships and lessons for life that we have received over the course of this conference.”

There is still a lot to do. Not all of these youth receive an income, even after being trained. Many live in poverty, and do not know where their next meal is coming from. There are still obstacles to them finding jobs or starting businesses, despite the good intentions of the government to support them. The fact that such joy was evident during this conference is a tribute to the human spirit. Imagine how much more joy is possible if we come together in oneness, in Heartfulness. And so the work continues ...





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THE DESK

of Daaji

Vedas :

who wrote them ?

who received that knowledge ?

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K...



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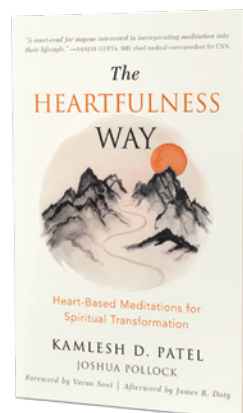
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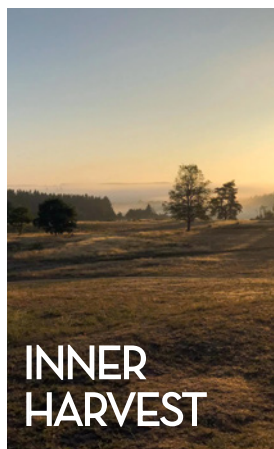
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During this webinar he will talk about his own spiritual path and how he came to write two books about how we plan our lives BEFORE we are born. He will touch on the five main reasons we plan great challenges for ourselves. He will also share some true stories of pre-birth planning.

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