heartfulness

Simply living





RECIPE FOR CHANGE

Daaji takes us further into Ashtanga Yoga with Niyama **KINDFULNESS**

An exclusive interview with Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

How can we become visionaries?

Heartfulness

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Contributors

Kamlesh Patel

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 that allows him 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 series on the evolution of consciousness. To learn more about Daaji, go to www.daaji.org.



Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche

Rinpoche is a world-renowned teacher and meditation master in the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. His teachings currently focus on a very valuable thing we human beings can learn and master: Kindfulness. His activities are vast and apart from his monasteries and nunneries in Nepal he directs Rangjung Yeshe Gomde centers and Dharma Houses around the world. Rinpoche is the founder of Rangjung Yeshe Institute, a center of higher learning that offers BA, MA, and Ph.D. programs in Buddhist Studies and Himalayan languages as well as Rangjung Yeshe Shenpen, a non-profit social work organization that helps disadvantaged people in Nepal.



Negin Motamed

Negin Motamed has been inspired by the mystery of existence since early childhood, shaping her interests in philosophy, physics, mythology, psychology, mystic literature and art. She works in the field of architecture and planning by profession, as well as pursuing painting, photography and poetry in her leisure time. She enjoys being in Nature, whether it is doing gardening at home, walking in Nature or simply listening to it in silence. She believes helping people to uncover the layers of complexity and experiencing love and joy that are our original states have helped her in her personal growth as well.





Elizabeth Denley, Rishabh Kothari Meghana Anand, Sylvie Berti Rossi Genia Catala, Emma Ivaturi

Dare to Think

Dear readers,

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." Most visionaries struggle to be heard, because their ideas and dreams seem out of the ordinary; they think outside the box. For example, Nelson Mandela wasn't always seen as a visionary. For many years he was just a prisoner. The same happened with the Indian freedom fighters, who eventually became the country's heroes. And what about the "I Have a Dream" speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963? He woke up the world. There are also so many unsung heroes in all cultures and walks of life, and these heroes create a bright future for humanity.

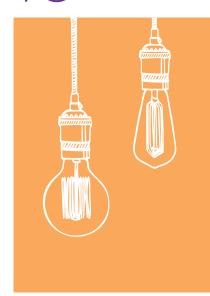
In this issue, Daaji gives us a new perspective on how the age-old yogic principles of *Niyama* can change our lives, and Chökyi Nyima Rinchope inspires us with the far-reaching effects of kindfulness. Megha Bajaj and Nidhi Gupta share their vision for holistic education in India, and Negin Motamed celebrates aging with grace. Victor Kannan explores where we are headed as a species, and Charles Einstein the nuances of interbeing.

In As a Man Thinketh, James Allen said, "The Vision that you glorify in your mind, the Ideal that you enthrone in your heart – this you will build your life by, this you will become."

Here's to all the people inspiring change and positive vision in the 21st century, both young and old. The momentum is building and we are happy to celebrate just a few in this issue – knowing that it is just the tip of the iceberg!

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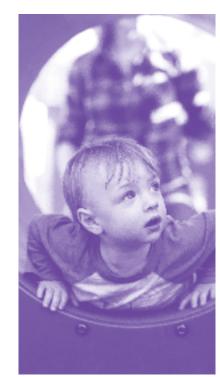
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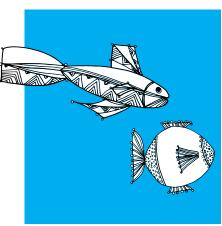
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heartfulness in the field

Over the New Year, a group of 8 young Kenyans traveled to Kanha Shantivanam, the Heartfulness Center near Hyderabad in India, to become Heartfulness Trainers. They all work for an NGO in Kenya called the CAP Youth Empowerment Institute, where they help vulnerable and disadvantaged youth to develop skills and find jobs. They have so far helped around 16,000 youth, and plan to help 60,000 by 2021. In 2016, CAP successfully introduced Heartfulness Meditation as part of life skills training. Here is what they had to say.

Elizabeth Wambui Njuguna Naivasha

The smile on my face signifies the happiness in my heart here in Kanha. The two dimples are much deeper. The joy in my heart cannot be measured.

Working with CAP for the last four years has been a major boost in my life, especially since the introduction of the Heartfulness classes. The youth have been able to relax and meditate before lessons. We always get positive feedback from the parents, who ask us, "How is it that these students are able to meditate and concentrate?" I would say that Heartfulness has really helped the youth in their learning.

Heartfulness Cleaning has played a major part in my life. I sleep very well and start the next day feeling fresh and rejuvenated.

Francis Mwago Mbugua Meru

After I started practicing Heartfulness suddenly I started changing. Sometimes you don't know whether you are changing until people tell you. So with good compliments from people I became very serious in meditation. I am now able to focus in my life, with my family and with everyone around me.

Quite an amazing takeaway is the understanding that our world is determined by the way we are from the inside. If we can change from the inside, we will change everyone around us and the environment also.

Harun Mwau Watuka Nairobi

I've come to realize that some things that I thought could never be achieved are achievable. Heartfulness has contributed to my becoming and being what I am right now. When you have love in your heart and peace of

mind as a result of Heartfulness, you are able to concentrate on your work, you are able to make the right decisions, you are able to save time, and all that has made me succeed in everything that I do.

Juliana Wambui Mwangi Kakamega

I have been working with CAP since 2014, with youth who appear lost when they start. So their transformation to becoming people who are considered important in the community has really touched me immensely.

After being in Kanha I am so happy, so transformed. I have met beautiful and wonderful people, and feel more at home than I have ever been. My inner self has changed – I have no words to express this feeling, how happy I am. I will take the whole of Kanha back to Kenya with me; the love, the joy, the hospitality, the beauty, everything.

Jacob Nyang'Owo Nairobi

Coming to Kanha has given me more knowledge and education about meditation, and more insights into many things. It has changed the way I do meditation. This place is so quiet and peaceful compared to anywhere I have

known. Then there is the love that you find here. Everyone has been so hospitable. Spiritually, we have been trained to offer Transmission to groups of people and to clean them.

Lilian Chepng'Etich Lelei Thika

Kanha is a place where you find peace and experience something you do not experience in the outside world. It's a very beautiful place to connect with yourself. I have learnt a lot about how to behave, how to meditate well, and how to relate with others well. I have a lot of things to take from here: the main one is meditation, which helps us tackle daily challenges and solve problems.

The students who come to us at CAP have a lot of problems. Through Heartfulness we are able to help them accept themselves, connect with themselves, and solve their problems by realizing that everything is within their control.

Nicholas Mmaitsi Mwole Nairobi

In CAP we give the youth life skills that will help them swim the ocean of life. Three mornings a week, we start with 35 minutes of Heartfulness Meditation, and we see the positive effect on students in attending to issues, making decisions and dealing with anger.

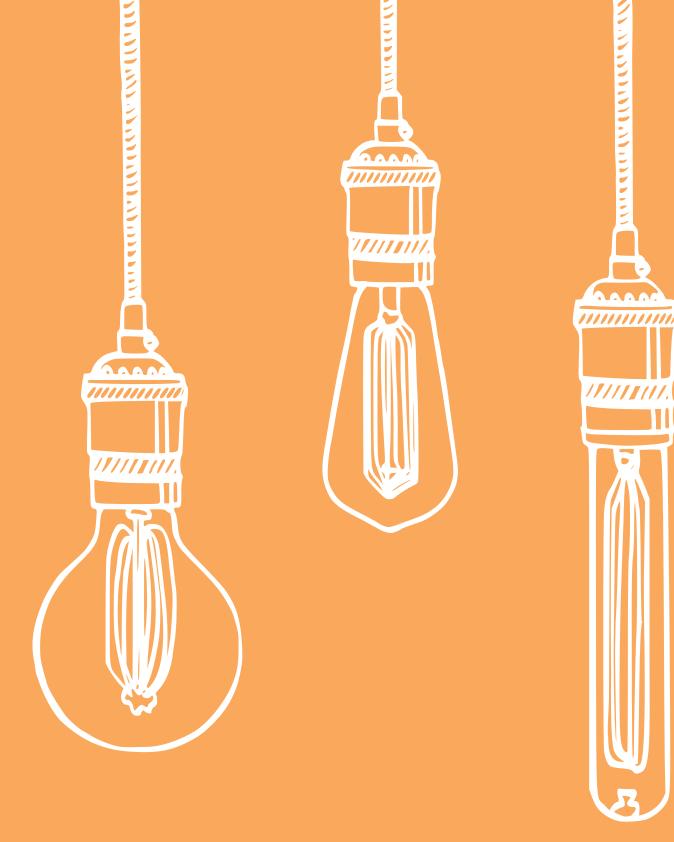
Kanha is awesome. I have never felt anything like this. We live all together as brothers and sisters. The love here is unbelievable. I have changed spiritually. Now I can make a prayer, meditate, and know the procedure for each practice. When I go back to Kenya, I will tell my family and friends the advantages of Heartfulness.

Sellah Opanga Achwanya Kisumu

Kanha is full of love. People come from many different countries and you can feel the love amongst them. They care and they are concerned. People are at peace with everything that is around them. So I am taking the peace and love inside me back home to share with others.

I have seen Heartfulness really help the students in Kenya, especially the cleaning process. Students with pain in their hearts, who could not forgive or let go, open up and share their background and their stories. When they are not able to let go of their burdens, they do not perform in their jobs, so this has really helped them.

Heartfulness



FOCUS:

becoming visionaries

Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your Vision is the promise of what you shall one day be. Your Ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil.

James Allen



a new human species

VICTOR KANNAN explores a vision for us collectively ushering in the next dimension of human existence, consciousness and bliss.

he idea of giving, in its magnificence, is really the essence of spirituality, bringing forth unity, love and compassion. For some of us, it is even the purpose of existence. But do we all have the same understanding of the purpose of existence? According to Professor Lawrence Krauss, there is no purpose for existence itself.¹

He says, "A universe without purpose should neither depress us nor suggest that our lives are purposeless. Through an awe-inspiring cosmic history we find ourselves on this remote planet in a remote corner of the universe, endowed with intelligence and self-awareness. We should not despair, but should humbly rejoice in making the most of these gifts, and celebrate our brief moment in the sun."

In an *LA Times* editorial,² he goes on to say, "Living in a strange and remarkable universe that is the way it is, independent of our desires and hopes, is far more satisfying for me than living in a fairy-tale universe invented to justify our existence."

How exciting! This point of view untethers us. It means there can be individual purpose. Instead

The traditional perspective of success and power are now outdated from the point of view of univervsal existence and the common good.

of conforming to some imposed worldview, we can create our own mini-universes full of people and their aspirations, and together we can create a purpose for our societies. And these purposes will evolve as our collective experience teaches us how to live better and to aspire.

Society is the sum of individual thinking, and currently we are seeing individual thinking changing very fast. The traditional perspective of success and power are now outdated from the point of view of universal existence and the common good: "An eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind." In this zero-sum game of economic progress, the polarization of haves and have-nots has been accelerating. Like the rubber band, it is a question of when, not if, it will break and hurt.

Such a polarization also exists in our overall mental, emotional and spiritual well-being, and so many of us have already moved away from the paradigm of success and power on the one hand to the 'more meaningful' on the other hand. This global shift is reflected in various fields of research. For example, the psychology of Emotional Intelligence and the science of neural exploration both reflect this movement towards the 'more meaningful' in humans all over the globe. Other examples include Theory U by Otto Scharmer³, and the Big Theory of Everything by physicist Thomas Campbell. Many others are also contributing to this growing discussion. Whether it is the Dalai Lama, Daniel Goleman, Bruce Lipton, Oprah Winfrey or Arianna Huffington, they are assisting in gently increasing the volume on the drumbeat of the call of spirituality.

¹ http://genesis1.asu.edu/essay_Krauss.html
2 http://articles.latimes.com/2012/apr/01/opinion/la-oe-krauss-cosmology-design-universe-20120401
3 https://www.presencing.com/theoryu

Anyone who practices true spirituality begets universal love, peace and harmony. Where there is love, it does not brook the suffering of others, let alone cause it. The kind of love we are talking about here is that 'life-giving energy', and is not limited to the stuff of romance and passion. Where there is true universal love there is peace. If not, the love is tinged with selfishness and the ignorance of separation.

Where there is love and peace, there is harmony, naturally. Even when the tiger eats a goat, that is part of nature sustaining itself. The tiger stops as soon as its stomach is full. No forest will be destroyed or atmosphere heated up if we feed ourselves only with what we need to survive and aspire – and no more.

Where there is love, peace and harmony, there is total focus, productivity and teamwork of a different kind. This, then, does not just produce more comfort on the material plane, but produces evolution in a para-human context.

It is said that every 100,000 years, life on Earth is ready for a jump in evolution. The last known evolutionary leap was to have come about 100,000 years ago, with the arrival of Homo sapiens on this planet.

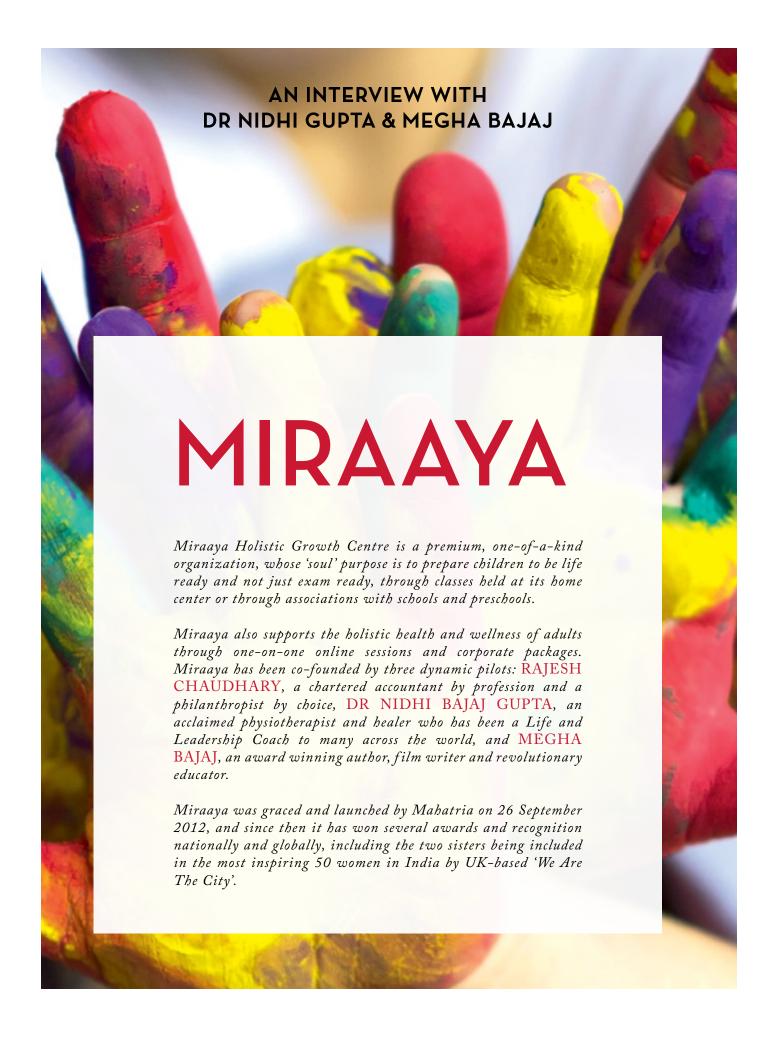
Maybe we are on the verge of the next evolutionary jump. If it is not generated by peaceful means, it will be caused by destructive means. When there is no other cure, more of the same is the antidote. The current state of humanity will be cured by itself.

So, perhaps the best is to step aside, wait to participate in the silent and quiet movement of human flourishing, and be a conduit for the next jump in evolution when it is ready to happen. If we participate in that, we will enjoy the next dimension of existence. If not, do we perish?

The choice is ours. In this we embrace the age-old spiritual wisdom of the third metric of existence, as Arianna Huffington puts it in her book *Thrive*. That third metric includes our well-being, our ability to draw on our intuition and inner wisdom, our sense of wonder, and our capacity for compassion and giving. It is in this understanding and the acquisition of this well-being and, most importantly, it is by passing on this understanding and inspiration to others that we will collectively usher in the next dimension of human existence, consciousness and bliss – a new human species.

Where there is love, peace and harmony, there is total focus, productivity and teamwork of a different kind. This, then, does not just produce more comfort on the material plane, but produces evolution in a para-human context.

Heartfulness



Education

What do you most love about teaching? What is a highlight of your teaching career?

NG: An aunt who comes home to visit once in a way will always notice how tall a child has become – something that people who see him daily miss. I feel like that when I meet students once a week at our center, or once a quarter at schools. I am able to observe them objectively, and lovingly help them to develop their strengths and work on areas that need improvement. I love the fact that I can actually help a child, and initiate a transformation that may help him throughout his life. To be that mentor, that guide fulfills me.

One of my students was going through a complex about her looks as she was dark-skinned and the other children at school teased her. When she shared it with me, I wanted her to get over it in a very beautiful way. Along with various worksheets and stories focused on growing in love with self, we also brought in two rabbits to class – a white and a black. Children had to interact with them and share their experience. I asked this girl if the color of the rabbits made a difference. She very thoughtfully said, "I now know,

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Seeing our students' blossom

- shy ones finding their feet,
over confident ones finding
their level, compassionate ones
feeling even more for others
and themselves, creative ones
finding their channel, has
been deeply satisfying.

teacher, it is not the skin but what is inside that matters!" I felt a rush of love, pride and happiness that a key lesson had been learnt that day.

MB: I was a very unique child, more of a thinker, very creative, and socially a little dyslexic. Even though I was studying in one of the best schools in Mumbai, and I am very grateful for all that I learnt there, a part of me felt very lonely and misunderstood growing up. Either I was considered very shy or very arrogant. My growing up years made me realize how important it is for each child to have a mentor, a life coach, someone who can love and accept them as they are and at the same time push them to be better than they are. Since I didn't have one until I found my spiritual mentor, I felt that I should be that anchor in many kid's lives and they shouldn't go through what I did and waste so many years finding themselves.

We had a student who looked really good, came from an affluent family and was very intelligent too. This had made him slightly arrogant and we could see he was talking down to other kids and they didn't like it. We did a story in class about eggs, and how one of the eggs had started believing that he could keep jumping from the sofa and nothing would happen to him but, alas, even he broke. In a very loving and experiential environment we were able to convey the point to him. Seeing that knowledge within him – that yes, I should be confident but not overconfident – made me happy.

Seeing our students' blossom – shy ones finding their feet, overconfident ones finding

their level, compassionate ones feeling even more for others and themselves, creative ones finding their channel, has been deeply satisfying.

What are your views of the mainstream education system? What changes are urgently needed?

NG: I think mainstream schools are doing the best they can. The only thing is there is so much to focus upon in terms of academics and meeting curriculum needs that I do feel a child's EQ (Emotional Quotient) development should not be hindered and affected. I feel an urgent change that is needed is to ensure that there is an hour devoted each day at school purely for life readiness. We cannot assume this is something a child will pick up along the way.

MB: Schools are doing good work – and some are doing great work. There is an overall increase in awareness of the importance of holistic education and development of a child. My main concern is that with a teacher to child ratio of 1:20, or in some schools 1:40, how will the teacher know each child intimately and deal with the myriad of issues that crop up within him? I see Miraaya as a great fit with schools, as our focus is holistic development, Emotional Quotient development, forming of roots, and developing a sense of culture and pride in where they have come from and hence where they are going.

What are the challenges you face at Miraaya?

NG: No organization is perfect and Miraaya has a long way to go. We are always in a state of learning and bettering ourselves. We are a team of very passionate people who love children, and love working with adults for healing, but our business acumen needs a lot of development. We have brought on board some industry experts to help us with this in 2018.



Heartfulness

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Education

Are there any alternative or progressive methods at Miraaya? Why this name and what does the name mean?

NG: Miraaya makes use of a lot of mindful techniques that aim to make a child become aware of their inner world. Nature, relationships, animals and plants all form an extremely important aspect of everything we do. Unlike schools that have a certain curriculum to follow and deadlines to meet, our focus in only on the development of the child's inner being. We often spontaneously tweak or modify our class to meet a certain key need in a child, something that a normal school cannot do, even if they wished to. Much more than skill sets we develop attitude, which helps a child across all areas.

We make use of VAK (Visual Audio and Kinesthetic aids) in our classroom and hence the sessions come alive for students. We also use mind maps, soul charts, 'getting to know the one within me' diagrams and worksheets to make learning fun and exciting. After every class, the entire team sits and discusses the growth and progress of each child and we actually have a book where detailed notes on each child are made. These are shared with parents if they wish to meet us and discuss. The name Miraaya comes from Mira who was the epitome of devotion. I had a successful clinic in South Mumbai and was pretty hunky dory as a physiotherapist. Starting Miraaya was a huge leap of faith and it was an expression of my need to work with children and make them life ready and not just exam ready. I don't regret a moment.

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MB: While I love a lot of our methodologies I would say our worksheets are extremely unique and special. Designed to bring out the best in each child, they have been created by writers who have a love for English, for life and are leadership coaches who have an experience of dealing with a myriad issues children face globally. They also keep in mind the needs of parents and children on day-to-day issues. Miraaya can become a part of any school across the globe – and we have already seen more than 25,000 students experience Miraaya at schools and benefit greatly from it.

Any interesting case studies and positive student experiences?



NG: I can quote examples from each day – as so many tangible and intangible changes are a part of our lives now. One that comes to mind is that of a little boy who had developed a lot of aggression and used to hit other children. Instead of telling him not to hit or making him feel like he is not good enough, I asked him to touch my face gently with his hands, telling him, "Hands are made to love." I would put his hands in the soil and encourage him to do gardening, telling him, "Hands are made to create life." I would encourage him to paint and tell him, "Hands are used to have fun." Slowly and steadily he fell in love with his hands and himself, so the hitting just dropped off on its own accord.

His mother who was at her wits end recently sent me a mail from the US saying it used to be embarrassing to take him to be with his cousins as he would beat them, but this summer he has only patted them, taught them how beautiful hands are and what all we can do with it.

MB: I had a student who believed she couldn't write well. Each class, we opened her mind a little, sat in nature, allowed words to become a medium for her to express her thoughts and she actually went on to publishing a short piece in a national newspaper. The happiness I saw in her made me happy.

Our lives have been filled with these little miracles and it is so fulfilling to know you can change a child's 'I can't' to 'I can', you can help them overcome certain self doubts and fears, you can create an environment for them where they believe they are champions, and can keep helping them fall in love with learning.

www.miraayathecentre.org

You can help them overcome certain self doubts and fears, you can create an environment for them where they believe they are champions, and can keep helping them fall in love with learning.

Heartfulness February 2018

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Everyday perspectives

I believe all of us have the

potential to be a visionary.

I have a vision where every

individual is educated

and is able to live his life



WE POSED 3 QUESTIONS ABOUT VISIONARIES TO OUR READERS.

What is your vision for Planet Earth in 2018?

Who is the visionary that has inspired you the most and why?

What visionary projects or endeavors would you like to turn into reality?

with respect and dignity. I visualize everyone to accept everyone as who they are and focus on As my vision for Planet improving oneself into Earth in 2018, I hope to their better self. I visualize see some revolutionary the world seeing people discoveries and changes of all differences coming taking place in regard together to save the innovation and Earth. I visualize people acceptance. I see people connecting and letting go coming up with more of boundaries and existing innovative ideas and a together in love and greater population of the peace. The idea may seem Earth realizing the need utopian but hope and to still their mind and faith and prayers to the focus their energy on universe works wonders.

the greater good. I see

imagination and providing

sustainable solutions to

be health conscious,

physically and mentally.

youth and children taking Kashish Kalwani over with their logic and Delhi, India

Earth's problems such as There will be a different pollution, possibility of time when to be human wars, natural disasters. The will mean a certain kind need for acceptance will of feeling and awareness. be more profound and the We could call it softness. uprooting of patriarchy, This will simply emanate racism, prejudices and among all and touch the stereotypes will take place fields of all life forms. through means of art, Our sense of selves will poetry, storytelling, and not have clear edges or social media. There will be resonate with fear. Instead greater tolerance among we will enjoy an intensity people. More would and aliveness of being which will be enriched by the different frequencies and responses of other life forms. We will feel more



alive and more connected and more enabled to move and create than ever before. The palette of existence will be of a kind that will extend the dimensions of space, time, manifestation. There will be a play of beauty like we see with the aurora borealis but more felt and known from within. Such a state of being will be more deeply aligned with the divine source and the energy of joy will be a natural and usual experience. We could say in a simple way, that this is a vision of love being freed from the constraints that limit our understanding at present...

Rosalind Pearmain Abingdon, UK



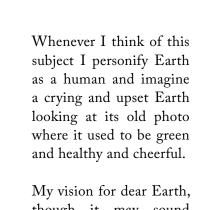
My vision for planet Earth in 2018 is more kindness, acceptance and love. After many years of human greed, over consumption and narcissism, I truly feel people are turning back to their heart.



I envision a change in the tide already starting. I believe empathy and compassion for each is the way to achieve it. other will foster more acceptance, love and inhabitants.

mankind, though racial acceptance of others, and perseverance inspire massive contribution. kindness, empathy, and truly coming from a heart toward my own goals and The contribution begins centered place. Visions visions for a better world are all encompassing and and acceptance of others. enlist many to kindle a spark, and keep that spark Ruth Haynes alive until the vision is Victoria, Canada complete. Setbacks and

me to take daily action



Everyday perspectives

though it may sound idealistic and crazy would be to have the old, detours happen so the healthier and happier and simple life. They do light of that vision must one back. When I say the same for their friends be kept visible and in our healthy, it's for restoring and family. hearts and minds daily. it's greenery, it's wildlife Making the daily choices and rare birds that are Neelam Shivhare that support the vision vulnerable for being and letting the other extincted soon, for the choices and temptations fresh water and fresh air that fill our daily lives go that it naturally bears for everyone.

And for restoring the ever kindness toward Mother As I only came to beautiful natural balance Earth and all of her embrace faith through of hers that is getting spirituality in the past few lost somewhere in today's years, my understanding society. This vision is Martin Luther King saw of visions, visionaries and definitely something I a vision to benefit all the people that work daily long to realize even if to bring them to fruition, takes time. I strive to do equality was the driver, still take my breath away. my bit and contribute achieving it would entail Their faith, dedication but it definitely needs a

> from home. Minimalist life is the key I believe. I do all my best to reduce waste, use separate dustbins for food waste

Whenever I think of this and other waste and then make sure that food waste goes to compost. Also planting small trees at home and surroundings.

On the bigger picture I feel the ripple effect is My vision for dear Earth, the key. I for instance ensure at least my family and close ones know the importance of greenery

Toulouse, France



PARTHASARATHI
RAJAGOPALACHARI
shared some thoughts
with his associates in a
conference in December
of 2011 on what it means
to be a visionary. Here are
some excerpts from that
inspiring talk.

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A vision is not a dream. A dream is something which comes to you uninvited, though it may have some purpose: to try to awaken you in the conscious state to something you have to do, or to be careful about, or maybe just something in passing. A vision is to do with waking reality. A vision does not possess you; you possess the vision. And it is internal to you, not external to you.

In a vision there is participation, not merely obedience. It is an intelligent, willing participation, sharing in a vision that envelops all. Vision must include in itself so many qualities: kindness, love, compassion and mercy. Do we have these things, or are we just sitting and preaching? Preaching does not take much effort or soul-power or anything. You can be taught to preach.

Visions are not hazy, like when you relax in your easy chair and enjoy the possibilities.

Those are daydreams, not visions. A vision is purposeful. The purpose never leaves your mind. It is there, insistent.

It is there when you are eating, when you are sleeping, when you are waking and, as circumstances get more and more difficult, the vision has to become more and more insistent, dominating, pushing you ahead.

How do you think that Christ permitted himself to be crucified? It is that crucifixion that is still keeping Christianity alive today, continuing the push. There are certain things where the initial push is so strong that it continues for thousands of years, maybe millions of years. Take the Big Bang of science, of cosmology. One bang, and it is still producing expansion in our universe. It is as if you kick a football in such a way that it is still going on somewhere in the universe.

So what is a vision? How do you define a vision? We all tend to think it is something somebody does. I know in some of the old primitive tribes, they had people like the shamans who possessed 'the dream'. It was never specified as to what their dream was,

what the dreamer dreamt. It was, and it was enough that it was there. And there was a vision, because it gave confidence to the tribe that someone is guiding us who has it in his power to unleash this vision for the growth of all.

In its essentiality, a vision is just an atomic, basic atom of a thought. So it is good to think more, rather than just listen more, note more, and decide to do more. People who do more without listening and thinking are like toy soldiers; you wind them up and they march: left, right, left, right.

So, be brave and think. You know it requires bravery to think – *aude sapere* – that is the Latin. The word 'audacious' comes from that. *Dare* to think. When people don't dare to think, they think the thoughts of others. Babuji read a few pages of Mills' philosophy and put it away, saying, "I don't want his thoughts in my head. I want my own thoughts in my head." Did he become an educated man? No. He became knowledge itself. Because instead of having to read a thousand books from a thousand libraries, he created his own knowledge base, as you call it in modern language. He created it inside himself.

Have we the courage to do that? You can have it if you practice *aude sapere* – dare to think. Like that, there is what Babuji calls this *kshobh*, *or* the Big Bang in physics. We each have a *kshobh*, something that suddenly explodes within us, that creates a vision. So from non-existence comes existence. To create the existence, you must be non-existent.

So there is a need to be simple, live simply, think simply. Don't have complicated thoughts. Be simple, undemanding, yet with a vision that is overpowering, which can be the soul of this world, and the soul of the future.



Every good deed, every positive act, helps the flame burn a little bit brighter. No matter how small or insignificant our contributions may seem, when we do good in the world, it adds up.

David Suzuki

A Mew Social Theory

NS NAGARAJA looks at the great social structures of governance throughout human history and proposes a new one for the 21st century.

here is a large group of rationalists who reject spirituality because for them there is no proof of God or the soul or even consciousness. This apparent lack of evidence is robbing many of the possibility to explore meditation.

Here it pays to examine another perspective. For a very long time, monarchs ruled and managed societies around the world. The monarchic system favored the rich and powerful ones, but the common people suffered. This led to new thinking and philosophies of how to organize and govern the state. Some people disliked the idea of the individual owning resources, and they proposed a new theory of social organization which allowed all the resources and properties to be owned by the community. The community members could contribute and receive according to the

need and, sometimes, ability. This theory of communism was a promise of better life.

In the beginning I don't think any of these social models were created taking into consideration the economic value and the overall impact on geo-political factors. Instead, those who were suffering, with hope, accepted and tried each new model, which was given a chance by all. Similar is the case with the theory of democracy, socialism and capitalism. We as a human society have strived to improve our lives by trying various social theories and models without having any empirical proof of their implications.

Let's look at science. It is full of theories, which generally come first, and the experiments come later. The models evolve. We test them. Some survive and some go away. All are given an opportunity to be proven.

Now take spirituality as a theory, which proposes to improve the social organization by improving the organization of individual mind. It proposes that through meditation it is possible to expand awareness and consciousness



to make the individual mind purer and wiser. A meditative mind and contemplative life can help us to evolve our personality and bring peace and joy in life, hence creating a better society. As we fix the inner, the external will change for the good.

It is such a simple idea to try out – spirituality as a way of inner governance. We have tried communism, democracy, socialism and capitalism. We have given a chance to consumerism. We are explorers. It is time we change our thinking fundamentally and explore the spiritual movement, which is the inner movement.

The practice of meditation assisted by Transmission helps in evolution of the self, infinitely by:

- Organizing and purifying the practitioner's mind
- Increasing awareness beyond the senses
- Expanding consciousness

The outcome is:

• A calmer mind

- Enhanced discrimination and decisionmaking ability
- Positive attitude and joyous approach to life
- Development of wisdom
- Development of perception towards the real nature of self and universe

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How to implement this approach:

Step 1 Learn meditation along with willing family members with a scientific bent of mind

Step 2 Observe and record changes in yourself for a period of 6 months or a year Step 3 While you learn and change, share with others

Step 4 Record for yourself the changes

This spiritual movement not only has a simple theory but also an utterly simple approach of implementation and practice. The world as a whole is one large being made up of smaller beings. When the part changes, the whole also changes. We can change the world by changing our self – is that not a reasonable argument? Let us give it a shot wholeheartedly.



CHARLES EISENSTEIN explores whether or not an individual small-scale approach to change can bring about the world we hope to see and solve the problems humanity faces right now.

et me present a logic that has immersed me ever since I became aware of the state of the planet as a teenager:

The world has some big problems right now. The crisis is urgent. There is no time to indulge in small, insignificant solutions that will be swept away by the tsunami of climate change, economic meltdown, nuclear holocaust, resource-scarcity fueled wars, and so forth. We need big solutions to big problems. Therefore, whatever you do on a local level, you'd better make sure it is scalable. You'd better make sure it can go viral, because otherwise its impact will be trivial.

Contained within this logic is an implicit hierarchy that values the contributions of some people – and some kinds of people – more than others. It values the activities of people who have a big reach, a big platform, a loud voice, or the money or institutional power to affect thousands or millions of people. That valuation is, you may notice, nearly identical to the dominant culture's allocation of status and power – a fact that should give us pause.

The logic of bigness devalues the grandmother spending all day with her granddaughter, the gardener restoring just one small corner of earth to health, the activist working to free one orca from captivity. It devalues anything that seemingly could not have much of a macrocosmic effect on the world. It devalues the feminine, the intimate, the personal and the quiet. It devalues the very same things that global capitalism, patriarchy, and technology have devalued.

Yet the logic seems unquestionable. Certainly my message will have a bigger effect if a million people hear it than a thousand, or one, or none at all? If the gardener puts a video of her soil regeneration project on social media, it will have a much greater potential impact than if she practices it invisibly on her small piece of land. Because if no one finds out about it, it will affect only a few square meters of soil, and nothing more. Right?

Here we come to what some call the 'theory of change' that underlies the ambition to do a big thing, to scale it up, to reach millions. At its root it is a Newtonian cosmology that says that change happens only when a force is exerted upon a mass. As a single individual, the amount of force you have at your disposal is quite limited, but if you can coordinate the actions of millions of people, perhaps by becoming a president or a pundit, or by having lots of money, then your power as a change agent is magnified as well. Thus we sometimes see an ambitiousness among NGOs and activists that eerily mirrors that of CEOs and celebrities: a race to compete for funding, for members, for Facebook likes, for mailing lists, for consumer attention.

A force-based causality in which bigger is necessarily better is a recipe for despair, paralysis, and burnout among those seeking social and ecological justice in the world. For one thing, the ruling elites who are wedded to the status quo have far more power – more money, more guns, and through concentration of media a much bigger voice – than any



The most potent actions are often done without forethought of publicity. They are sincere and uncalculating, touching us with a kind of naiveté. Ask yourself, which is more inspiring: to accidentally witness a touching act of generosity, or to watch the same act staged to become a spectacle?

to become a spectacle? Consider the man who stood in front of the tank at Tiananmen. Would it have been as potent a symbol if he had made sure first that someone was there to photograph it?

important I'm supposed to be doing."The logic of bigness devalues the very heart of life.

We all have another source of knowledge that holds the small, personal actions sacred. If a loved one has an emergency, we drop everything to help them because it feels like the most important thing we could possibly be doing at that moment. It feels like the most important thing in the world to be at the bedside of a dying loved one, or to be present for a child at a special moment.

Reality, moreover, often turns out to be the opposite of what the arithmetic of measurable impact would suggest. The most potent actions are often done without forethought of publicity. They are sincere and uncalculating, touching us with a kind of naiveté. Ask yourself, which is more inspiring: to accidentally witness a touching act of generosity, or to watch the same act staged

In my work I have discovered that the most powerful gatherings were the ones that were not recorded, as if the shielding from the outside world allowed us to enter a separate reality more completely. These gatherings also seem to ripple their power out into the future beyond the room, despite the lack of any attempt to make that happen. Maybe causality doesn't work the way we've been told.

We are transitioning away from a narrative that holds us separate from each other and the world, toward a new and ancient story that Thich Nhat Hanh calls interbeing. In this worldview, self and universe mirror each other; whatever happens to any being is also happening in some corner of ourselves. Every act we take ripples out to affect the whole world, and eventually comes back to affect ourselves. Rupert Sheldrake calls it the principle of morphic resonance: a change that happens in one place generates a field of

activist organization ever could. In a contest of force, we lose. Furthermore, when we buy into bigger-is-better, most of us must live with the disheartening knowledge that we are smaller-and-worse. How many of us can have a big voice that reaches millions? By necessity very few.

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Moral philosophers have grappled for several centuries with a dispiriting corollary: that what you do doesn't matter. For example, no matter how much you conscientiously recycle and conserve, your individual actions won't make a difference. It takes millions of others doing the same, and if millions of others do it then it doesn't matter if you do or not. Philosophers have advanced various moral and ethical principles to countermand this logic, which is on its own terms unassailable. Foremost among them is Kant's Categorical Imperative: act in the way you would want everyone to act in that situation. This idea is common in

popular morality today: don't dump poison down the drain, because even though it won't matter if you do it, if everyone thought that way it would matter. Yet, underneath that morality lies a secret, nihilistic fear: "Yeah, but not everyone thinks that way. Actually, it doesn't matter what I do."

We need another reason to do those small things. We need a reason beyond, "If everyone did them it would add up to a more beautiful world." Because you and I are not 'everyone'.

My indoctrination into the logic of bigness exerted an insidious effect on my own life, causing me always to question whether I am doing enough. When I focus on the small, intimate realms of life, taking the hours to tend to a relationship, to beautify a space, perhaps, or to enter the timeless child's world with my youngest son, I am subject to unease along the lines of, "There is something more

change that causes similar changes to happen everywhere.

Perhaps part of that transition out of the old story of separation is a strange and growing incapacity among those powers that have the most force at their command. Despite its mighty military, the United States seems increasingly incapable of achieving its foreign policy objectives. Despite its arsenal of antibiotics and pharmacology, modern medicine seems helpless to stem a stagnation or decline in health in the developed world. And the world's central bankers are powerless to fix the global economy, despite possessing the ability to create infinite amounts of money. As a society, we are losing faith in the tools and methods that we thought gave us power.

The principle of interbeing or morphic resonance coincides with our felt experience of significance when we engage the people and land around us with love, courage, and compassion. Even if we have no idea how those choices will affect the larger world, we sense that they do, and yet, paradoxically, we don't make choices for that reason. Sometimes we encounter special choice points in life that seem to be deliberately constructed to offer no possibility of selfish benefit – not even the benefit of being able to tell yourself you are doing something important. These moments are opportunities for self-creation, when we choose to listen to the voice of the heart over the voice of the calculating mind, which says we are being impractical, unreasonable or irresponsible.

Reasoning from interbeing, applying the principle of morphic resonance, this opposition between heart and mind crumbles away. Every act of compassion strengthens the global field of compassion; every choice of conscience strengthens the global field of conscience. Each

act becomes equal; each act 'scales up', even if by a process so mysterious and untraceable as to evade any perceptible sequence of cause and effect. How can anyone know what fruits will come from that monumental effort at patience you made, unwitnessed, when you stayed gentle with your child on that frustrating afternoon?

People possess a kind of primal ethics that understands that we are all equally important, that no human life is to be valued above another. Accordingly, there must be some Gods-eye perspective from which every choice of a country's president is no more or less significant than the choice of the lonely addict in the alleyway. The former's choices may have an immediate and visible effect on the world, while the latter's may bear fruit 500 years in the future. We cannot know.

This is not to say that we should engage in the small and humble in hopes that it will have a macroscopic impact anyway. Nor is it to replace one valorization of bigness based on Newtonian causality with another based on morphic resonance. My intention is to get scale-based thinking out of the way of love-inaction. I find that the story of interbeing allays my unease that says, "What if it doesn't make a difference?" "What if it is all for nothing?" This unease is built into the modern worldview and, more acutely, into the social structures of modernity in which personal relationships to community, to place, to extended family, and to the beings of the plant, animal and mineral world have been attenuated or severed, replaced with the diffuse, generic relationships of the market economy.

Bereft of a full complement of personal relationships, the self that is lodged in such a world feels out of place, lost and never quite at home. When I am in relationship to the faces I see throughout my day, when I know them and



they know me, I know myself as well. I belong. All the more when I am in living relationship to the animals, plants, and earth around me, feeding me, clothing me, housing me. When nature becomes instead a spectacle or an inconvenience, when my daily interactions are with strangers or acquaintances whose important stories are unknown to me; when my human, bodily needs are met through decontextualized, standardized commodities, then the small-scale seems less relevant.

When I understand the fig tree in my yard as a unique individual with whom I have a mutually sustaining relationship, then I don't need a macroscopic reason to care for it well, just as I don't need a reason to take care of my children. But if I am speaking of the global problem of deforestation, then I no longer apprehend the trees as individuals; they are rather generic members of a category, units that become important in contributing to a quantity. I think in terms of hectares or tons of carbon - so of course, bigger is better. Better to protect a million hectares than a thousand. Better to protect a thousand than just one tree. Yet here I am, about to go out and water my fig tree again. Wouldn't the

We don't create movements: if anything, they create us. They arise like swellings in the ocean, the sum of millions of ripples that feed back onto and excite each other. Most people don't plant a garden or start a co-op or resist house eviction or plant a fig tree with the calculated intention of starting a movement. More likely, it is the reverse the movement inspires us to do those things.

planet be better off if I didn't spend so much time to so little effect? Wouldn't it be better if I could scale it up?

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In other words, 'Bigger is better' is encoded into the modern social system as well as the modern ontology of generic building blocks governed by impersonal forces. It is implicit in the scientific worldview that "only the measurable is real". It is implicit as well in an economic system that assigns a linear value to all things. Scaling down, then, feels to the modern mind deeply irrational, even subversive. It runs contrary not only to conventional economic programming, but to quasi-economic concepts used in philanthropy (measurable impact) and environmentalism (carbon accounting).

Heartfulness

To celebrate the small-scale is not to deny the validity of endeavors that might require foresight and planning and involve the combined labor of millions of people. The problem, as I see it, is that the modernized mind tends to seek scale by default, a tendency based on ideology and habit. In so doing, it further empowers those institutions that exercise large-scale power already. In politics, for example, whatever the political orientation of the big plan, the winner is the same every time: the deep state. A further problem is that the rush to scale up can short-circuit the emergence of something entirely different by channeling creative energy into the usual forms.

When people ask me why I don't build an organization around the work I do, I say, "I'm not sure if what the world needs right now is another organization." Organizations as we know them behave in the way organizations behave, for better or for worse. Something else is needed. I'm not sure what, but maybe it will have a chance to emerge if we resist the rote impulse to scale up.

Surveying the magnitude of the crises enveloping the planet, the urge to scale up and make it big is quite understandable. Many people say, "We need to create a movement." I think that is mistaken. We don't create movements; if anything, they create us. They arise like swellings in the ocean, the sum of millions of ripples that feed back onto and excite each other. Most people don't plant a garden or start a co-op or resist house eviction or plant a fig tree with the calculated intention of starting a movement. More likely, it is the reverse – the movement inspires us to do those things. It offers an invitation to which we may respond, each in our small way. In scaling down, we relinquish the ambition to save the world, but we open to the possibility of being part of something that might do just that.

For me, scaling down implies a kind of trust that it is okay to do just this, right here, right now. Letting go of controlling the macroscopic outcome, action becomes a kind of prayer, a kind of aligning oneself with the world one wants to see.

An environmentalist acquaintance of mine, Mark Dubois, told me a heartbreaking story of a river that he and a group of activists tried to save from damming. They fought the dam all to no avail - in the end a gorgeous stretch of river with pristine ecosystems was destroyed. Their grief was so great, that for a long time the devastated members of the group could hardly bear to see each other. It seemed that their years of commitment were wasted. But coincidentally, Mark told me that was the last dam built in North America. It was as if their actions were a kind of prayer. The universe wanted to know, "Are you sure you want the dams to stop? How purely do you want it?" The fact that they gave their all answered that question. In the view of interbeing, no action is wasted.

The irony is not lost on me of attempting to assign a place for scaling down within a bigpicture narrative. Universalist narratives by their nature risk devaluing the local and the particular, effacing their differences in a way that, more often than not, contributes to the ideological hegemony (and often the economic and political interests) of those doing the universalizing.

Do we need scaled-up concepts like interbeing or morphic resonance to come to the defense of the small and humble? I don't think such questions admit to easy answers. Indeed, any simple, categorical answer would itself represent a scaling-up, even if it were a critique of scaling-up. I will therefore shirk this question except to offer, apologetically, one more universalized prescription: let us free our assessment of value from the metrics that define bigness and smallness to begin with.



heartful NEGOTIATOR

PART 1

RAVI VENKATESAN on business relationships



Beyond the head

The very word 'negotiation' evokes an allergic reaction for most of us. It brings up ideas of confrontation, arguments and debates. We often fear loss while going into a negotiation, and feel anger at being taken advantage of while coming out of a negotiation.

Some of us are on the other side of the spectrum: we love to debate and argue. We believe we win every negotiation, and get the best outcomes. On both sides of this spectrum, we feel that negotiations are like a tug of war. There is always a winner and a loser.

We mostly think about negotiations as high stakes exercises, like countries at war negotiating terms of peace or companies negotiating terms of a merger. In reality, we are all negotiating all the time. We may be negotiating with a co-worker on where to eat lunch, or negotiating with our spouse on what movie to watch, or negotiating with the kids on how much television they are allowed to watch.

As a young executive out of business school, I used to enjoy hard negotiations. I would use every tactic in the book to eke out an advantage. My favorite techniques came from books like *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu, *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli, *The 48 Laws of Power* by Robert Greene etc. These books taught me to play games, hide information, hide my real intentions, and be devious in gaining an advantage.

A few years in the business world taught me that winning one-off negotiations at the cost of relationships was not smart. I needed to negotiate win-win outcomes for both parties. I needed a way to turn an adversary into a partner. I started reading a new set of books, and my favorites now came from the Harvard Negotiation Project: Getting to Yes by Roger Fisher and Willam Ury, Beyond Reason by Roger Fisher and Daniel Shapiro, and Getting Together by Roger Fisher and Scott Brown. These books taught me how to negotiate win-win outcomes while building relationships.

As I continued my search for the ideal way to negotiate, I realized that we focus mostly on the **head**, which is the seat of logic and reason, and not enough on the **heart**, which is the seat of feelings and emotions. We also don't pay attention to what our egos are

doing in spite of ourselves. My learnings from Heartfulness led me to a different approach. This was to go beyond the head and use the heart. The head still plays a role with logic and reason, but the heart leads with what is right, ethical and sustainable. It is a natural and simple approach, and yet generates the best outcomes for all parties involved. It also eliminated the need to play games, indulge in deception, hide my real agenda, and instead let me be courageously authentic through the entire process.

I would like to share this approach with you through this series of articles. Practicing these will make you a Heartful Negotiator. If you are looking for techniques that let you gain advantage at the cost of others, then this series is not for you. However, if you would like to negotiate a win for you and others, then read on.



Intellect- Logic and Reason Mind - Ad hoc ideas and wandering

Feelings & Emotions Clarity vs Doubt

Fear vs Courage

Love vs Anger

Peace vs Restlessness Greed vs Contentment

Prior Disposition

Worries and Concerns
Desires

Likes and Dislike

Guilt

Business relationships

Business relationships

The first step towards being a Heartful Negotiator is to develop 360-degree awareness of the subtle aspects of our heads and hearts, which are at play when two individuals negotiate. These are aspects beneath the 'surface' that influence the way negotiations flow. In later articles, we'll expand on each of these aspects and how to manage them. As with learning any new skill, such as riding a bike or driving a car, you will initially feel that there are a lot of different things to keep track of, however, as you practice, these things will become second nature to you, and will come into play naturally and effortlessly.

Let us take the heart and mind as a vibrational field (Figure 1) where feelings and emotions on one end, and thoughts and ideas on the other end are constantly surfacing. Let's look at these in three buckets:

- Prior disposition,
- Feelings & emotions in the heart,
- Thoughts & ideas in the head.

Prior disposition:

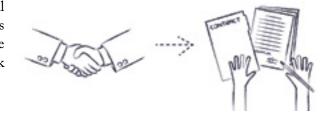
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Likes and dislikes – Each person has their set of likes and dislikes that influence the negotiation. For example, I may like pizza, and having pizza for lunch puts me in a more amicable frame of mind. You may dislike formal settings, so a business conference room full of people in suits may make you close up and not be flexible.

Worries and concerns – Each person has their own set of things they are concerned or worried about. Not being able to get a raise may mean that I lose face with my peers. Not getting the new

house within our budget may leave us with no money to furnish it for a couple of years.

Desires – Each person's desires are constantly informing and influencing their posture. I may desire the social status that a promotion brings more than a raise. This makes me willing to negotiate a lower raise to get a promotion.



Feelings and emotions in the heart:

There are opposing feelings and emotions at play in the heart. Throughout the negotiation process, the balance between these keeps shifting. Managing this can unlock a tremendous ability to navigate to the best outcomes.

- Greed versus Contentment
- Peace and Relaxation versus Restlessness
- Empathy, Love and Compassion versus Anger, Hate and Disgust
- Fear, Anxiety and Nervousness versus Courage and Confidence
- Feeling of clarity versus Feeling of doubt and uncertainty



Ideas and thoughts in the head:

Just as our heart cannot stop feeling, our mind cannot stop thinking. The thoughts and ideas that fill it up are equally important to understand and manage.

Ego perception – my perception of me versus you.

Intellect – logic and reason driven thoughts based on applying my intellect.

Mind wanderings – ad hoc ideas that are generated by my mind, and other mental distractions.

To understand the interplay of all these, try the following role play with a friend:

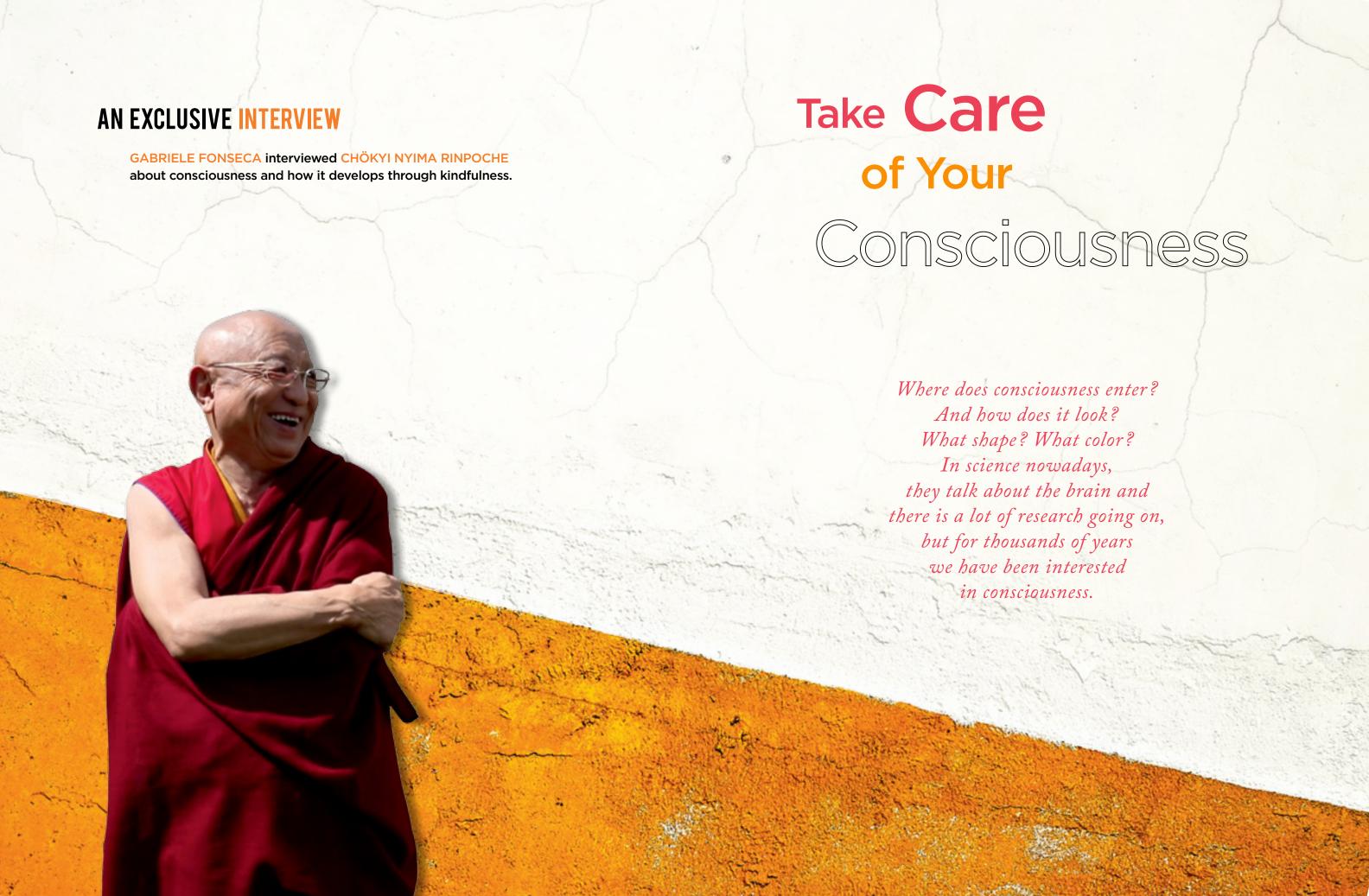
Scenario

You and your friend meet for lunch to discuss a joint family vacation. You generally like going to the mountains, and your friend always goes to the beach, so you know that the destination is going to be a point of debate. She also has a tendency to say, "My spouse would prefer to do ______," and deflect the conversation. You intend to counter this by calling her out, and getting to a decision.



Before the role play, both of you should spend some time in writing down a few bullets about your prior disposition based on the list above. As you start discussing ideas about where you could go for a join family vacation, pay attention to the feelings and emotions in your heart based on the list above. Also note the ego perception you have about yourself versus your friend. Note any logical reasoning you adopt to make points and counter points. Note cases where your mind is distracted or wanders, or generates other relevant or irrelevant ideas as you go through this conversation.

After the role play, share your notes and observations with each other. This will provide you insight into how much is happening beneath the surface, for even a simple negotiation like this. In subsequent articles, we will take a look at how to manage each of these aspects, and become a Heartful Negotiator. Our goal is to let our heart lead our head, and have both work together to generate the best outcomes.



Yes. If we speak about how consciousness develops – when, how, why – it is difficult, but let's consider it from a different angle. We humans are also animals who give birth to young and are subject to all the ups and downs of biology and existence. So why is it that a healthy man and a healthy woman don't always conceive and produce a baby, whereas another couple who is not so healthy is able to easily produce babies? Why? What is it that enters to create new life sometimes and not at other times? There is some other energy entering. Buddhists call this energy consciousness.

We can also try to understand consciousness in another way, by examining what we think we are. What do we identify with? Are we our body, or our wealth, or our family? You can say that the whole world is our living area and we develop a strong attachment to the physical body, to wealth, to family, and even to name, fame and power. We really think these things are 'mine'. We sign documents stating that we own certain things, and then we definitely think: "I am the owner. I own this much." But if we really examine it, we are not the owner. We fool ourselves - we only think we own things and actually we don't even own our body. These are all rented, like a guesthouse or hotel. It is like staying in a hotel and thinking, "This hotel is mine." We cling so strongly to the physical.

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Whereas we really need to think how consciousness entered into this physical body, and what happens to consciousness afterwards, because we will not live more than one hundred years. Then what happens to consciousness? Does it die, evaporating like water? If not, where does it go? Do we have the power for our consciousness to go wherever we want it to

go, or is that out of our control? If it is not in our control, in whose hands is it? Is it in God's hands, or Buddha's hands, or Allah's hands, or Ishwar's hands? If it is in their hands, what is the proof? And if we obey them and surrender to them, will they take us to some nice place after death or not? Who knows? Who guarantees? What proof is there?

So here today, among the billions of humans living, we have believers and non-believers. Most religions are based on faith. Faith is also belief in the Divine or God. For example, if you are a Buddhist but you do not study deeply, you may think that Buddha Bodhisatva will help you and guide you. But Buddha says, "I cannot protect you. I cannot save you. I cannot heal you. I can only teach you how to save yourself, how to heal yourself and how to protect yourself."

Now the question comes, who protects whom? Who saves whom? Will wealth save me? Will name, fame and power save me? Will family save me? Will the Divine God save me? I am a Buddhist and Buddha says that he cannot save me. It is disappointing on one hand, but on the other hand it is very logical. When we are sick we think the doctor can cure us, but it is not the doctor who cures us – medicines cure us.

So in Buddhist teaching, the most important thing is impartial loving kindness and compassion. We all have love and care – not only humans, animals also have love and care – but we are partial. We trust those who trust us, help and care for those who help us, love those who love us. It is like a business. It is not that pure. So the Buddhist way of loving kindness and compassion must be impartial, equally for those who love you and who hate you, who help you and who harm you. They equally need love and help, directly and indirectly.



So how is that possible?

It is for this that we take care of our consciousness. Where does consciousness enter? And how does it look? What shape? What color? In science nowadays, they talk about the brain and there is a lot of research going on, but for thousands of years we have been interested in consciousness.

You will eventually have to drop all the rest — wealth, fame, family, and even this body. The body is built of five elements but after death it is just a handful of ashes and that also disappears. But does consciousness die? If it does not die, then we need, urgently, as a matter of priority, to take care of our consciousness. Now. We shouldn't wait one day.

We never know when we will need to leave this guesthouse. It is unpredictable. What to do with consciousness? When to develop consciousness? Right now. Each second is our precious time.

How do we develop consciousness?

Impartial loving kindness and compassion is the number one important thing. Why? That brings consciousness itself to a floating state. It makes it clean. But that is not enough. We need realization, and what is that realization? That we are deluded, confused. Nothing is real that we think is real. Nothing is permanent that we think is permanent. We cannot pinpoint 'me' or 'I', because 'me' and 'I' are deluded. It is a wrong belief. So we need to learn more about consciousness.

How do we learn about consciousness? Where do we find this education? Who teaches us this? I would not say that Buddhism is higher than any other system, but there is so much literature available on consciousness in the Buddhist teachings. The answers about consciousness can be found in Buddha dharma. Also, some modern science is very helpful. We respect the scientists and I think they respect us. One scientist told me, "Now I know that I shall never know."

I travel here and there and I see that the main problem in this world is not lack of education, nor lack of technology, nor even an economic lack. If we really try to balance, everyone can live well. The problem is that instead we go to extremes, where some people have much more than they need and others find it difficult to survive. And so much money is going into weapons. Those weapons, those awful technologies, are for whom? Human to human. Humans are smart, but humans make

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Heartfulness

Kindfulness

awful things. Humans make weapons, pistols, handcuffs and big machines. For whom? For other humans. It is extremely sad and painful to see how it is going on, getting worse and worse. Technology has become so powerful.

Now we hear about Artificial Intelligence, and how robots can have feelings. This is not a joke or a toy. We give so much power and energy to technology. In the process we become less and less, and we let technology control us.

So it is time to develop loving kindness and compassion for our individual happiness, each in our own areas and countries. The problem right now is lack of loving kindness and compassion. Consciousness has so much power that if it goes wrong the whole world will be destroyed through technology. If we go to the positive side, consciousness can help and it will not only help humans. Our natural environment will be benefited also, and this is more important than technology. Without water, how can we survive? How can unhealthy water help us? Without healthy soil, what can we produce? Technology may look good, but we need to eat, and not just vitamin A, B, C and D tablets. Real vitamins come from water, earth and air; it is undeniable. It is time to take care of our global environment.

These days I am thinking more and more, what is the lack in this world? I am one of the human beings in this world. We need to help each other. So it is important to reach out not only to Buddhist people but also to anyone who wants to know more about consciousness.

We need to live with kindfulness, moment by moment. This way we are contributing to the global whole. This contribution is so proper, so clean. It heals – and through it we heal each other. All will become peace, harmony and a happy world.



How to develop kindness? Can we develop this through meditation?

These days, people so easily use the words 'meditation' and 'mindfulness', but meditation is so profound and there are so many steps. And who is teaching you meditation? The teacher is very important. He or she needs to study the mind and consciousness in detail, and have some experience. Only then can he or she teach or share. We shouldn't play with each other in the mental realm. It is much more sensitive than the physical realm.

We don't expect doctors to play around with our physical well-being, giving wrong medication, as it can be dangerous. It is even more important to be careful with our mental well-being. We shouldn't play around with different sorts of meditation with each other, as it can also be dangerous.

But these days, many people don't want to learn from a proper teacher, as they think that is religion. So they get stuck into methods that claim all sorts of things, and are then not able to develop their consciousness.

I can think and understand,
but I need to realize and have
experience. I get experience
through the heart.
Only then can I understand
through the mind.

People are very interested in mindfulness and meditation. It is nice, but they really need to know why, how and what effect results from what quality of meditation.

So you asked: how to develop kindness. Kindness is based on calmness. No calm, no kind. No kind, no realization. It's connected. No foundation, no wall and no ceiling.

And what about the heart?

These days we talk about the mind, the brain, the heart and feeling, but if you put it a very simple way, I think [pointing to his head] and I feel [pointing to the heart]. I can think and understand [pointing to the head], but I need to realize and have experience [pointing to the heart]. I get experience through the heart. Only then can I understand through the mind.

We need to live moment by moment, healthily, happily. And this is based on kindness. With negative emotion, we are unhappy, and with positive emotion we are happy. Check whenever you are unhappy. The number one reason is that you do not appreciate what you have. The number two reason is that you are not getting along with someone. The number three

reason is that you are jealous of someone. These are the three negative emotions. The result is unhappiness.

Now, you surely don't want to be unhappy. You want to be a happy person. So how to do it? But people say, "I don't want to meditate. I am not interested. I am a free thinker, and I am very smart. I am a scientist, and a doctor. I don't want to do religious things. I don't want to pray. Where is the Divine? Where is God? I don't believe in all this. I trust pills because they work. I trust alcohol, and even other substances. They make me calm and bring me some kind of good feeling."

But they will not bring you total happiness, only mental dullness and dumbness, damaging your brain and heart. This leads to addiction. Now what do you do? Definitely you still want to enjoy life. So you go away on vacation, thinking that maybe your unhappiness will disappear. You look at panoramic views. You listen to unusual music. You eat the best food in the world. Does that bring you ultimate happiness?

Now, what is the positive emotion, the positive approach? Appreciate whatever you have. In that moment you are happy. Then, how can you not get along with others? Practice forgiveness, apologize, don't let problems continue, or they will destroy your health. Fix problems as soon as possible. If you are jealous because others are more successful, you will indulge in useless mental torturing. You will not get anything beneficial from it. You will only experience anger, suffering, and maybe even worse than that! So what to do? Rejoice. Positive emotion results in happiness.

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Heartfulness



It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves.

William Shakespeare



NEGIN MOTAMED embraces the process of aging and provides tips for participating joyfully by going with the flow of natural cycles and enjoying the later part of life.

hen we talk about aging in today's culture, it seems that it is something negative that happens to us, which we have to 'go through' as we say in English, in the same way we go through traumas, miseries and disease. It shows that deep down we have not accepted it as a natural stage of our lives. Perhaps this is because we look at our life from a material standpoint only to see the deformation of the body, gradually moving from strong to weak, from beautiful and young to drooping and old, from completely healthy to ill, and so on and so forth.

From a material standpoint it obviously is the fall of life, a process of diminishing, setting and annihilation of matter. It can be seen as the road that takes us to death, and in the same way that death is taboo in our material culture, aging is also taboo. Hence we now have an industry of anti-aging beauty products, such as creams, hair colours, Botox injections and even surgeries. Also we have hormone supplements and aids to prolong the younger body functions that are not as active as before, go through their changes or simply stop as they are not needed any more.

This fear of aging has turned into a deep fear in our collective consciousness to the extent that some people don't even live their lives fully; they compromise to enjoy the sun's warm, healing, pleasant touch on their skin for a few minutes and cover themselves under layers of clothing and sunscreen. Some people even hide their age as if they have committed a crime! To me, hiding or reducing the number of years that we have lived is an indication of not agreeing that we have really lived those years. And if we have lived those years so fully, can we not be proud to announce them as a meaningful part of our lives?

It is true that aging is a part of the natural cycle of our lives and has its own course just like the cycle of the seasons; the transition that happens from spring to summer to autumn and then to winter happens whether we like it or not! However when we accept the natural cycle of things and go with the flow gracefully, it suddenly takes on another quality. All of a sudden we become an active part in the process. We change our position from the victim standpoint to the co-creator standpoint. We don't have to fight it anymore; instead we work with it. We claim and take back the power that we inherit from Nature. All of a sudden we are not passive. Rather, we actively and joyfully participate in the process.

But what does it really mean to participate joyfully in the aging process? The first step is obviously to accept it as a fact and as a natural stage in our lives. That will lead us to look into it and learn about it, from the physiological changes in our hormones, muscles and bones, to the emotional changes, and so on. It is like preparing for autumn before we come to the end of summer. We know exactly what we have to do to prepare our garden for the autumn. We start collecting the flower seeds before they scatter, we harvest the crops of our vegetable garden, and we prepare the soil for spring and put the bulbs in the soil. Later we collect the leaves from the grass, and cover the flower garden with them, and we cut the unwanted branches of trees and shrubs. We collect the outside furniture and winterize the water taps, and so on.

Likewise by familiarizing ourselves with the changes we are going to experience while aging, we prepare ourselves mentally for them and then we can choose the strategy of our choices towards these changes. Some of us may choose to make our houses smaller so we can easily

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maintain a living space as our physical strength diminishes. Instead we will spend more time traveling and relaxing, and maybe cultivating new habits such as meditation, Yoga, healthier diet, etc. Generally at this stage of our lives, we have less responsibility for children and more financial freedom to pursue a new vocation. So some of us may decide to dedicate our time serving the society, whether voluntarily or as a new career, doing something we aspire for.

It is all possible when we allow aging to appear fully in our being and consequently in our lives, as we go with the flow and observe keenly our inner and outer changes. We notice that some things do not matter to us anymore and other things matter to us much more. We notice the changes in our different body functions, as everything seem to slow down, as well as observing our skin wrinkling and our hair turning white. So instead of denying these facts and resisting the changes inwardly and in our appearance, we can choose to look at them with wonder and explore the quiddity of it whatever it may be according to our experience, pausing and reflecting on our new conditions and acting accordingly.

It is something to explore with an open mind and open heart, with a sense of wonder and curiosity. As if we are preparing for a journey to an unknown and untraveled land! The reality is that our appearance as we grow older is a reflection of our long-time thought patterns, habits and lifestyle. So whatever does not please us as we look into this changing mirror, we have to change on the inside!

If we look at the human system as a whole, it consists of the material aspect and all the other non-material and subtler layers; our intellect and thinking faculties, our emotional layer, our ego, and our overall consciousness. These non-visible, non-physical, yet more profound layers make us who we really are. What is the significance of having a human life? It cannot only be because we have a bigger brain and we walk on two feet, or in other words because of our physical differences with other species. Our physical aspect with all its uniqueness makes us just another animal species. So it brings us to think more and more of our spiritual aspects, and unlike our material aspects these can grow as we grow older. This is a potential, a possibility that we can work on so that we thrive. The reality is that not every old person becomes wiser and expands in his consciousness, but the possibility is there for us if we start to discover this aspect of our being and work towards our growth.

Perhaps through conscious observation we can naturally be guided to discover more about these other layers of our being when our outer beauty fades away, opening a doorway into our inner world. All this is part of actively participating in the process of aging. And this is the reason behind the traditional respect for elders in all ancient traditions and indigenous cultures. They symbolize the wisdom and consciousness that is supposed to be there as we add years to our lives. Where and when exactly did we lose the respect we used to have for elders and for old age in today's culture? What happened that we lost touch with nature and its cycles?

We have all seen elders who radiate a magical unworldly subtle beauty that emanates from within and reflects in their appearance. It is as if each wrinkle on their face allows the particles of their inner beauty to shine vibrantly through their fragile body, their pale skin and their white hair. It is as if their physicality becomes more and more transparent to allow what they have developed inside to come out. There is an aura of poise along with lightness around them and in their presence, as if they have even more presence. These beings are definitely not afraid

soar above gracefully. of aging. Per contra, they gracefully embrace it as they are confident of the wealth and beauty they have acquired within, which with no hesitation they give forth. That to me is the art of aging. And it doesn't happen through sticking to a superficial understanding of beauty that is skin deep. It doesn't happen until we welcome the newness of change; until we accept change as the only unchangeable fact in our world and work with it so we can bring about expansion in our inner existence and our consciousness as our bodies age. It is a process of metamorphosis like the caterpillar experience. By the time our bodies become weak, immobile and ill, and we have to ultimately drop them and leave them

behind, we already have our giant colorful wings

to allow us to soar above gracefully.

By the time our bodies

become weak, immobile

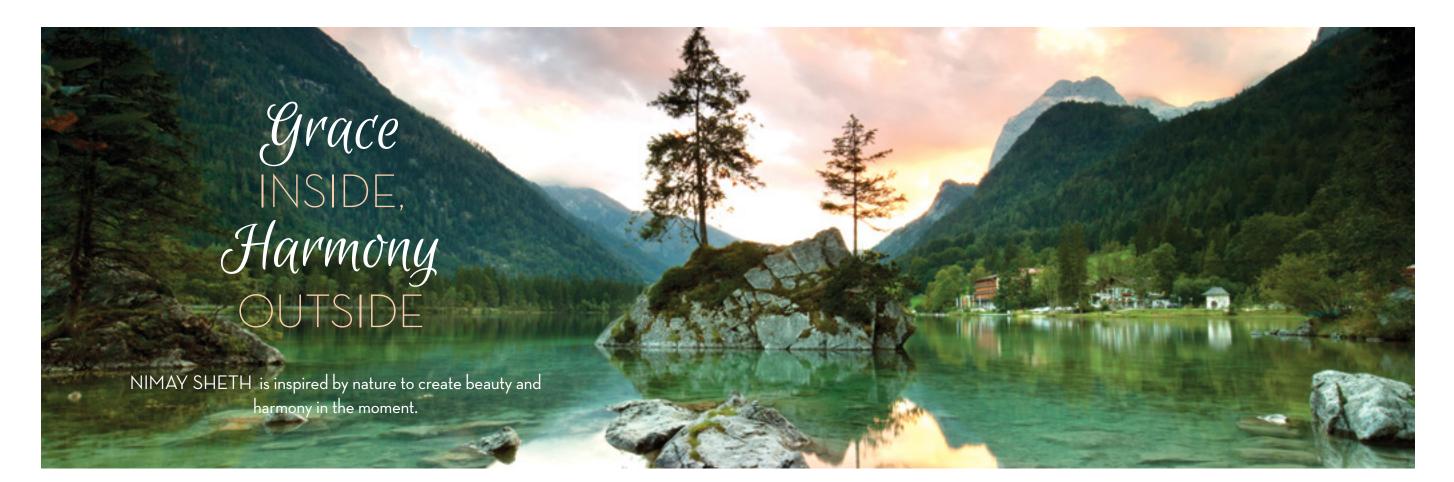
and ill, and we have to

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he other day I was busy splashing about in the swimming pool, trying to get through my daily routine of exercise. As I surfaced after the first couple of lengths, I noticed a peacock sitting on a faraway tree, peacefully observing the sun going down. He was oblivious to the heat and humidity in the atmosphere and was just content to enjoy this simple routine of nature. I was captivated by the bird's stillness and wondered how the rest of the animal kingdom could be consistently in tune with nature, while we humans struggle so much with this aspect. I could feel the gulf of difference between my restless mind and the peacock's relaxed state of being.

So I tried an exercise that my teacher had encouraged me to do in my free time:

"Go into the heart and suggest that

everything around – the air particles, people,

the birds, the trees, the flowers – is deeply

absorbed in Godly remembrance."

The first time I heard this, it sounded corny and possibly I felt that it was too good to be true. But, as I put my critical mind aside and made a quiet suggestion in the pool, I felt a subtle force engulf my entire being. I opened my eyes and felt as if I was an intimate part of that moment of consciousness. My restless mind was now as placid as a pond,

and I quietly turned toward the sky to feel the sun set.

I noticed the tree branches swaying here and there, as if playing a game of cat and mouse with the wind. Plants and trees are filled with such love – ready to sacrifice or play, as the weather wills them. Will it ever be possible for humans, who have an individual conscience, to be filled with such grace and simplicity? I recalled feeling a deep urge to be like the villagers, who emanate grace whenever I happen to meet them.

Today I'm much more in tune with nature and inevitably with myself. It is precious to be able to dive deep into my self in meditation and surface with a feeling of oneness with

everything around. Imagine applying this suggestion during taxing times; stuck in traffic, in the middle of an argument with co-workers. What effect do we bring to our surrounding environment when we radiate such grace and poise? Further, what is the effect on our collective consciousness when we retain this feeling and carry out all our actions with such an intention?

Others may also then start to mirror or 'catch' this feeling. Slowly, but surely, a feeling of harmony will develop in life. It may not be apparent to the naked eye, but it will be most evident in the confines of the heart. As we are collectively inspired, we will contribute to a beautiful feeling of harmony in our life and for our planet.

EGYPT tarab

/ TAH- ruhb/

The ecstacy people experience when listening to the enchanting vocals and instrumentation of Arab music.

Why it works:



The emotion that this traditional music evokes causes the brain to release dopamine, a chemical that gives you pleasure.

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Self-help books may tell you to look inside to find happiness, but you can also find it by looking outside — as in outside the country. People from Central America to Scandinavia regularly rank among the happiest in the world.

THE SECRET TOE

HAPPINESS

AROUND THE WORLD

[J]

We'll let you in on their secrets so you can try them yourself.

Researchers have studied happiness the world over. Organizations have even ranked countries on a happiness scale. So, what have the world's most inquisitive minds discovered? Is there a secret to happiness?

Is happiness spending time with loved ones, or spending time alone in nature? Is it losing yourself as you dance to music, or finding yourself while quietly meditating? The secret to happiness is actually all of these things, and more. It varies from country to country and culture to culture.

In some cultures happiness comes from a tangible practice, like Tai Chi, which the Chinese have been practicing for centuries. For others, the secret lies in a philosophy that's put into practice. Costa Ricans, for example, are guided by the idea of a simple, carefree 'pure life' known as pura vida.

According to the annual World Happiness Report, Norway is the happiest country, scoring highly in its approach to caring, freedom, generosity, honesty, health, income and good governance. Meanwhile, the Happy Planet Index ranks Costa Rica as the happiest country on Earth. While opposites when it comes to climate, the two countries apparently have one thing in common: happy citizens.

Despite the many differences in what constitutes happiness in countries around the world, there are some common threads. The most notable has to do with material wealth, or rather, the lack of it. Few people, if any, around the globe find happiness through personal possessions and financial success. Rather, they tend to attain it by appreciating the little things in life and, more importantly, the people in their lives.



The act of waking up early in the morning and going outside to hear the birds singing.

Why it works:



2008 study published in the journal Psychological Science found that immersing yourself in nature boosts cognitive ability and helps you recharge better.



Cultural wisdom

Cultural wisdom



SPAIN Sobremesa

/so-bre-MĚ-sa/

The time spent sitting around the table talking with family and friends after you dine together.



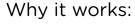
Why it works:

It provides important bonding time with loved ones and reduces stress by ensuring you slow down and relax.



Strong sense of Community

Icelanders never feel isolated and alone when facing hardship. They always look out for each other and the common good.





Studies published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology show that a feeling of belonging and knowing you're not alone are key to happiness and well being.





COSTA RICA Pura Vida

/POO-rah VEE-dah/

Literally 'pure life', it's the Costa Rican perspective that evokes a carefree, laid back and optimistic spirit.



Why it works:

According to researcher Dr Sonja Lyubomirsky, savoring little moments in life leads to a brighter, happier outlook.

CHINA Tai Chi

/tie chee/

A centuries-old meditative exercise consisting of graceful, fluid movements that circulate the body's internal energy, or chi.



Why it works:

A review in *Harvard Health Letter* notes that the slow, controlled nature of this ancient exercise lowers blood pressure and reduces stress.



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To be continued

Heartfulness

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Have you not noticed that love is silence? It may be while holding the hand of another, or looking lovingly at a child, or taking in the beauty of an evening. Love has no past or future; and so it is with this extraordinary state of silence. And without this silence, which is complete emptiness, there is no creation.

J. Krishnamurti



a high level that we are able to radiate the fragrance of the inner state. It is about selfrefinement towards subtler and subtler states, both inner and outer. It is about inner gentility,

elegance and etiquette. It will eventually result in living a life in such a way that we are in tune

with our Divine Nature. In essence, it is about

resolving within to follow a regular system of life so that one day the body consciousness

resonates well with the mind in an automatic

fashion, and where following a certain rhythm

brings about automatism. In Nature, as we

see, there is tremendous order. The higher the

goal, the greater the order required.

Swami Vivekananda said, "The sages have said that there are two sorts of purification – external and internal. The purification of the body by water, earth or other materials



What if someone told you there was a simple set of practices that could help you manage every aspect of your daily life, and at the same time take you to a level of human potential beyond your wildest imagination? Would you be interested? Most people would at least be curious.

That is in fact an accurate explanation of the practices of Yoga, but most people don't realize it. Yoga includes a holistic set of practices for overall self-development and the well-being of the body, mind and soul. A few thousand years back, the great sage Patanjali compiled the current yogic practices of that time into a simple framework consisting of eight parts or limbs, and that framework is still used today. It is known as Ashtanga Yoga.

But the practices of Yoga have evolved since Patanjali was alive, in response to the needs of the time and especially during the last 150 years. So in this series DAAJI explores each limb of Yoga in the light of the modern day yogic practices of Heartfulness. He shows us how to integrate inner spiritual practices with living in the world and refining our personality, so as to create that true state of Yoga – skill in action and integration of the spiritual and worldly aspects of life.

NIYAMA

Niyama is the second of Patanjali's eight limbs of yogic practice. DAAJI shows us how Yama is not sufficient for right living – the other side of the coin is the cultivation of nobility of character through the positive duties and inner observances of Niyama.

et us say that you are already perfecting the 'five vows of a seeker' of the first limb, Yama. In the process you are giving up many negative traits and tendencies, thus clearing so many complexities from your system, the thorns and bushes from the spiritual path. The practice of cleaning removes the load of samskaras that accumulate in the heart, and the tendencies and the emotional patterns that accompany them can also be removed with sincere efforts. So Yama is effectively the removal of all the 'don'ts', and this is one part of yogic psychology.

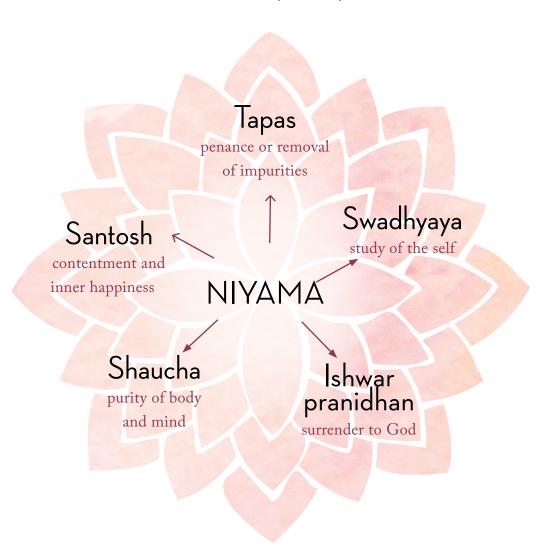
But is *Yama* enough? We have to go further in our refinement of character, and for this we take up *Niyama*, which involves cultivating and molding nobility of character. It includes all the 'dos', the virtues, the positive duties and inner observances.

Niyama is about finding some sort of order to establish and intensify life itself. It provides us with the focus to mold our living to such

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is the external purification, as bathing etc. Purification of the mind by truth, and by all the other virtues, is what is called internal purification. Both are necessary. It is not sufficient that a man should be internally pure and externally dirty. When both are not attainable the internal purity is the better, but no one will be a Yogi until he has both."

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As we evolve, the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and all the habits with which we are born must slowly be adjusted to our level of evolution. We evolve not just from within but in our manners and in our lifestyle. A complete transformation is necessary. So purity permeates to every level of our being from inside out.

SANTOSH

The second *Niyama* is *santosh*. What is it that most of us want in life? The commonest answer given by people of all walks of life and cultures is that we want happiness and contentment. Such a state of contentment allows us to accept whatever situation we may be in. We remain grateful to God.

And what brings happiness? Perhaps it is a wonderful relationship, a great career, children whose lives are fulfilled, a comfortable lifestyle and some peace and calm. But even if we tick all the other boxes, without inner peace we will not be happy. Why? Because happiness is found within.

Happiness does not actually depend on outside things or people, although external circumstances can fortify the inner states. As long as we have the basics, no amount of money, pleasure, friends, success or possessions will bring happiness. The philosopher Schopenhauer defined true happiness as the complete satisfaction of all desires. You could say that the happiness of a person can be described mathematically as:

Happiness = Number of desires fulfilled

Total number of desires

So if we have ten desires and five are fulfilled, we have fifty percent happiness; if ten are fulfilled, we have one hundred percent happiness. The more desires we have, the harder it will be to fulfill them all, and so the less happy we are. Happiness is inversely related to the number of desires.

What happens when we have no desires at all? The denominator becomes zero. Any number divided by zero is infinity. When we have zero desires, our happiness will be limitless. By minimizing our desires from more to less and finally to zero, we make peace with ourselves.

But is it possible to finally arrive at zero desires? Is it practical? Instead, we can try to fulfill our duties in the most appropriate manner, which then do not fall under the category of 'desires' that become a burden.

And how can we remove desires? In Heartfulness this happens as a result of a complementary set of practices:

First, we learn to ignore the pull of thoughts during meditation, so they no longer control us. Instead we develop mastery over the thinking process, and that process deepens to where we also transcend the pull of feelings and emotions in the heart. Transmission provides the necessary support for this to happen.

Second, we remove the underlying impressions or *samskaras* that provide the *hooks* in our subconscious minds for our desires, and this is done through the daily cleaning practice. This is critical, because many of our desires have a subconscious root that we cannot work with in our conscious mind. Cleaning removes the subconscious root.

Third, at bedtime we connect to our own Source through a prayer in which we acknowledge the barrier caused by our wishes. Then we offer our hearts to that Source, our inner Divinity, to help remove our wishes. Instead of trying to remove desires with our lower egoconsciousness, we take the direct route of engaging our highest consciousness.

Fourth, we have a set of simple guidelines for living, known as the Ten Maxims. They hold those spiritual secrets that have previously been passed down from heart to heart. They have come from direct perception, from the study of Nature, and are revealed by means of vibrations or *shruti*. Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur expressed them in words so that we can learn how to bring them into daily life.²

Fifth, is that we allow the meditative state acquired during meditation to simmer in

¹ Swami Vivekananda, *Raja Yoga*, Chapter 8, 'Raja Yoga in Brief'.

Science of spirituality

the background during the day, and this is known as constant remembrance. In this state, part of our attention remains inward and the remainder flows outward in order to complete our daily duties. In such a state, it is impossible to form impressions, and so the state of purity can be maintained.

TAPAS

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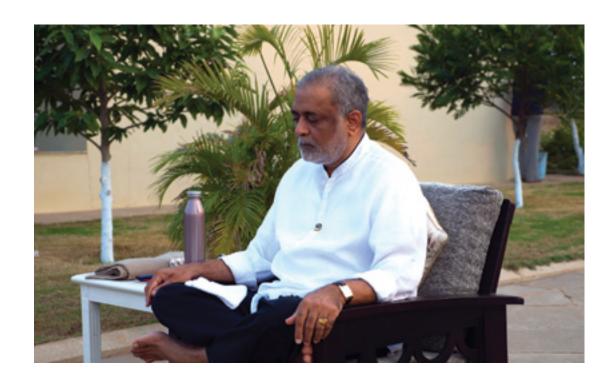
The next *Niyama* is *tapas* – penance, or the inner burning, the inner fire that brings higher and higher purification and refinement. It brings mastery over the senses. It is a manifestation of the fire of Divinity within us, and this we associate with the awakening of chakra 3 in the heart region, the fire point. *Tapasya* brings discipline, love, enthusiasm and a burning desire to reach the spiritual goal. It also burns away any habits and tendencies

that may block our progress, and it develops willpower. At the physical level, *tapasya* relates to those practices like fasting, which help us to remove debris from the physical body through autophagy.

It does not mean mortification of the body or running away to the jungle, as has commonly been misunderstood. In fact, it is all about embracing life and facing up to everything in life. It also means sacrificing our available resources for the welfare of the Godly creation.

SWADHYAYA

Swadhyaya means 'study of the self'; swa means 'self' and adhyaya is 'to study'. The need for self-observation and self-analysis in the journey of Yoga is paramount, otherwise we cannot be conscious of our intentions and actions. As thoughts are the expression of our



² Ram Chandra, 2015. Commentary on the Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.

inner state, observing thoughts helps us to study our inner state. In order to streamline our inner state to resonate with the Higher, we need to work on our character and bring those habits and tendencies to light that limit our personalities, in order for them to go. This can be tricky, because often we become very judgemental with ourselves and develop feelings of guilt and shame. This is not the approach of Yoga, where self-analysis is used for continuous improvement and refinement with self-acceptance.

Without purity, austerity and inner contentment, self-study can take a back seat. Why would an impure mind resort to self-study? A person who has not gone through some level of austerity will not generally be inclined towards self-study. Why would a discontented mind resort to systematic self-study? Swadhyaya is completed with meditation on the divine principle. Can an impure mind meditate? Can a discontented heart meditate? Can a person meditate who has not simplified his life through tapasya? We need to ask ourselves these fundamental and vital questions.

Heartfulness facilitates self-study in a number of ways, even when we lack those traits of purity, simplicity and contentment. In any case, if we already have all these qualities, why would we need meditation? Why shave eggs?

First, through meditation we learn to be the observer so as to observe our inner universe keenly. That way, when any inner turbulence arises, we are quickly aware and can do what is necessary to remove it through the process of cleaning. We don't need to be entangled in the emotions of what we see in ourselves.

In order to streamline our inner state to resonate with the Higher, we need to work on our character and bring those habits and tendencies to light that limit our personalities, in order for them to go.

Second, we are encouraged to write a journal, so as to better sensitize ourselves to the inner condition. We cultivate self-observation, self-acceptance and self-empathy. As a result we are able to change more easily.

Third, through our connection with the Source in prayer, we are better able to listen to our heart and become sensitive to its higher wisdom.

Fourth, through the practice of constant remembrance, we remain constantly connected with the inner wisdom that can help us study and refine our self.

Swadhyaya also includes the reading and study of sacred literature. These texts provide a reference point for our own inner journey, so we know where we are going and how we are progressing. Through reading, we receive the wisdom of those who have already traversed the path and this inspires us to keep moving forward. In these sacred texts there is always layer upon layer of meaning and

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understanding, and as we progress in our own journey these layers of knowledge unfold.

ISHWAR PRANIDHAN

The final *Niyama* is *Ishwar pranidhan*, meaning surrender to the all-pervading God. This also leads to self-surrender and self-acceptance, and is reflected in our attitudes and behavior by the utmost humility and sense of innocent wonder. This state is the natural outcome and culmination of faith.

Acceptance brings about surrender in the most natural way. Love makes us do things in the most beautiful way for our beloved. In love, where there is total acceptance, the idea of subservience or forced surrender does not even enter the equation. In contrast, a heart imbued with hatred, disgruntlement, confusion, violence, impurities and complexities cannot do anything to promote joy for himself or others. So is an impure mind capable of acceptance or surrender?

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In surrender, the burden of ego dissipates, leaving us free to soar higher, allowing consciousness to expand limitlessly. The energy that was suppressed now finds immediate expression, so we feel completely at peace with ourselves, and we find bliss within. Accepting everything allows us to surrender to the entire Existence. It is no longer a selective process of acceptance and surrender. Surrender is not an individual or group effort, but the result of our endeavors in the spiritual arena under the guidance of a capable Guide.

We can also learn about this Niyama from Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Niyama results in surrendering the fruits of all our actions to the Divine with dedication and devotion. It includes selfless action and

As a result of these five Niyamas, the mind will not wander in any direction, as beautifully explained by Swami Vivekananda.3 There will only be one focus, and that is the inner goal. Concentration will be the natural outcome, so these practices naturally lead to the fifth limb of Ashtanga Yoga, Pratyahara.

CULTIVATING THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS NIYAMA

What is the best way to cultivate these Niyamas? Often they are done in an enforced or mechanical way, as imposed practices, but discipline cannot be at the cost of love. Love means joy, because love elicits joy. If in discipline there is no joy, it is no less than self-torture.

If something is imposed on a person against their wishes, it is dictatorial or adverse. Enforced discipline, either upon ourselves or upon someone else is like imprisonment. So imposed *Niyama* cannot become the means of liberation.

What happens when we enforce Niyama on others? There is an enforcer and an enforced being, and they remain opposed to each other. Then there is no joy in being together. Likewise, if my conscience or a brief moment of inspiration temporarily causes me to prescribe myself the discipline of Niyama, the fun begins when the initial inspiration dries up. I will be torn between my earlier



resolution to be disciplined and my later weakness, unpreparedness, lack of interest, lack of joy or lack of love. A common example of this happens with New Year resolutions. Once the inspiration wanes, the resolution becomes a chore.

I end up giving birth to two of me. One wishes me to do something and one resists, the one that cajoles or taunts. One of me says, "I feel enslaved and need to rest a little more. I can always postpone what I am supposed to do." The other says, "You had better wake up and do what you promised yourself."

When discipline is backed by joy, we look forward to a certain rhythm. For example, when a person who is used to exercising every day cannot go to the gym for some reason, his body feels the difference and he misses it. So when there is joy in doing something, such joy in its trail establishes discipline. And such discipline is enriching, ennobling and showers freedom, as it is done out of joy. Yoga means union – union of my lower self with the Higher Self. It also brings with it the art of listening to the deeper Self. When

the Self imposes rules versus someone else imposing rules, the outcome is very different. When we are united with the Higher, integrated with the Higher, life is guided by conscience (con-science) and not by fixed or limited knowledge and dogmas. Then our integrity oozes joy, arising out of following the inner conscience. We can easily then be a disciplined individual, who is now fit to become a disciple.

This gives us some insight into another word, 'confusion' (con-fusion), which arises when too many things are mingled together, but there is no fusion or union with the higher Self.

Think for a moment of walking on a trail versus cycling versus driving on a single-lane road versus driving on a multi-lane freeway versus traveling by plane versus soaring in a rocket. In which of these would we have the greatest freedom to move or travel? You probably think it is a rocket, but is it? While walking we are bound by very few rules. We can stop and start whenever we wish, change direction and go faster and slower at will. On a bicycle we have a few more rules. In a car there are more and more rules in order to keep everyone safe, and the more lanes on the road and the faster the speed, the more careful and disciplined we need to be. A pilot in a plane has even less freedom than the driver of a car, and those in a rocket have their freedom completely curtailed, including what movements they can make, what time they eat, sleep and work.

So the higher we go, the more discipline we need, and the more joy we need so that it is willing, loving discipline.

Let's compare two scenarios. In the first a person wakes up early in the morning to go

dissolving any ego-attachment to those things that we think, say or do. As a result it brings skill in action, as Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna.

³ Swami Vivekananda, Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. 6, chapter 'Concentration'

to the airport at 5 a.m. to fetch his beloved. In the second, that same person is required to wake up to clean the house at 5 a.m., which is something he resents. What will be the difference in his attitude?

Similarly, which attitude will be productive in following the *Niyamas*? They must be followed with tremendous joy and, more importantly, without feeling enslaved. Otherwise they will not serve the purpose of bringing about a higher order, a higher level of osmosis with the Higher Being.

Commonly there are two types of acts: the first arising out of suppression, and the second arising out of excessive indulgence in the name of freedom. Both are against the evolutionary scheme and both violate true freedom. True freedom is to do what is right, and how do we decide what is right? That capacity comes with the first of the four *sadhanas* in Yoga, which is called *viveka*, meaning the ability to discriminate or make wise choices. Unless we have understood that first step in *Sadhana Chatusthaya*, we will not be able to choose what is right.

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In *Reality at Dawn*⁴, Ram Chandra describes the qualities of all the four *sadhanas*, starting with the first two, *viveka* (discrimination) and *vairagya* (renunciation). He says, "*Viveka* and *vairagya* are states of mind developed at different stages by constant practice of certain yogic *sadhanas*, for example, remembrance, devotion or love, etc.

"Viveka in the true sense never develops unless the senses are thoroughly purified. This happens only when the mind gets properly regulated and disciplined, and egoism (or ahankara) assumes a purified state. Thus it is that viveka is in fact the result of practices followed in order to bring about the desired

results." He then explains how *vairagya* is likewise the result of *viveka*.

At this point, Ram Chandra introduces an innovation to the traditional approach that is possible because of Yogic Transmission. He explains that the yogic practices of Heartfulness automatically result in the development of *viveka* and *vairagya*, rather than them having to be done as the first two *sadhanas* or practices. He says that they "are not treated as *sadhanas* but are left aside to be developed automatically by an aspirant during his progress."

In Heartfulness we start with the third sadhana, known as shat-sampatti. "The first of these sampattis is sham, which pertains to the peaceful condition of mind leading to a state of calmness and tranquillity. When we practise it, viveka and vairagya follow automatically. ... No practice is really of any avail if it does not naturally result in viveka and vairagya. The real form of viveka is when a man begins to realise his own defects and shortcomings and at the bottom of his heart feels repentant for them."

So by doing the Heartfulness meditative practices sincerely, the heart is purified and we are able to dive deep within its vastness and tap into the universal wisdom. In this way *viveka* develops naturally, without undue effort or enforcement.

Let's go back to the two common types of act. Acts of suppression promote inner slavery, and this limits the expansion of consciousness. Acts of uninhibited indulgence sow the seeds for desires to further flourish, and these enslave us in a different way. Both aversion and indulgence are culprits. They are the likes and dislikes that create the impressions that accumulate in our heart, forming heaviness and taking us away from the source of our being.

Let your heart express
itself in any event, do not
restrain it. It must play
its role in your Earthly
existence; it embellishes it,
it gives it its letters of
nobility. The latter will
outlast this incarnation.
They will remain imprinted
on the tables of time.

How to rise above aversion and indulgence? That is why *Niyama* has to be established in our lives. To let the flow of the river of life keep moving towards the infinite ocean, checked by two banks that guide us to our destination. Imagine a river without the banks that define it!

The Heartfulness practices prepare us to respond to all sorts of situations in life that require discipline and refinement of character, including rising above our weakness, working with our ego, making wise decisions, selfanalysis, solving problems and conflicts with others, and our own continuous improvement. No longer do we make rules without understanding the consequences of what we are doing. In everyday life, the rules of discipline can be of various levels. For example, military discipline flourishes with patriotism, courage and obedience; religious discipline flourishes because of the carrot of liberation or heaven, and the stick of fear of death or hell; while true discipline must flourish out of love and joy, otherwise it becomes slavery.

When Yogic Transmission connects the seeker with the Guide, it can magnify the effect of positive suggestion, known as *sankalpa*, and this can bring about miraculous results. For example, when the Guide or a Heartfulness trainer makes a subtlest thought, "May suchand-such a quality develop in the seeker," if the seeker cooperates, then that *Niyama* is established.

But ultimately, "The perfection of human nobility lies in the devotee being always within the sphere of devotion," as Ram Chandra has said in his sixth maxim. Not even a capable spiritual Guide can infuse noble qualities into us if the heart is not prepared and willing to nurture them, and in osmosis with its higher calling. And Ram Chandra gives us yet another hint about how to cultivate *Niyama*⁵:

"This stay on Earth is a determining stage in your evolution; do not let your chances be lost in the turbulence of the days. The vagaries of life must be useful to you; your good or bad experiences must help you progress, be enlightened on the reality concealed behind all these tribulations.

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"This succession of moments lived in the spirit, characterising you now and resulting from wisdom acquired over the days, makes your life a permanent enlightenment. Be receptive to all that can occur; do not disregard any detail, everything is important. Signs – which mark your way – are given to you; it is up to you to decode them.

"Let your heart express itself in any event, do not restrain it. It must play its role in your Earthly existence; it embellishes it, it gives it its letters of nobility. The latter will outlast this incarnation. They will remain imprinted on the tables of time."

Heartfulness

⁴ Ram Chandra, 2015. *Reality at Dawn*, chapter 9, 'Realisation'. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.

⁵ Whispers from The Brighter World, Tuesday, May 8, 2001 - 10:00 a.m.

AWARENESS of the Heart



continues his mentorship with his teacher,
THEOPHILE THE ELDER. In this
series they discuss the topic of death.

Death has nothing to do
with going away.

The sun sets and the moon
sets, but they're not gone.

Rumi

THEO THE YOUNG: How is it that you have never been afraid of death?

THEOPHILE THE ELDER: I don't know. It is just the way I have felt.

Y: You must have thought about it, though?

E: For me, death is a fact, just like the fact that God exists. I believe it. It is by no means to my credit. You could as well ask me, "Do you believe oxygen exists?"

Y: Is it all a question of faith then?

E: Not even that. It is just a fact; it is obvious.

Y: Then why do you have to seek the Divine? What does your lifelong quest for God mean then?

E: Today, I'd rather say that God is looking for His own Self, and He finds It back.

Y: Don't you find it strange?

E: It is. But how else to explain it? God is Self-seeking in each one of His creatures, and He is bound to find Himself back.

- Y: So is there nothing special there?
- **E**: It is an all-pervasive divine process.
- Y: And what does His creature feel once He finds Himself within us?
- E: It is like a supernova explosion, though there is no exploding. Only an eternal silence remains, which holds all life and bliss.
- Y: Is it the 'All-Nothing', the Infinite Zero you evoke time and time again?
- E: There are no proper words to describe it. Let's resort to our usual process, if you please.

Immediately, Theo the Young put himself in a position to receive, by quietly closing his eyes. As his breathing calmed down, he plunged into meditation under the soothing guidance of the Elder's soft voice.

E: Imagine the supernova is happily exploding within your self ... Silence Remove it ... Silence

The simple Presence remains ... Silence Remove the Presence and the sweet bliss it generates ... Silence

What is left could be your so-called Infinite Zero ...

Remove it too ... Silence

This is the most sensuous perception of God a human being can have.

Y: So, we can erase the Infinite, just like that!

E: (amused) We certainly can!

Y: Now let's come back to Death. What was your response when you had to face

such a possibility in 2007? Learning of your disease and of your possible ensuing death must have been a real shock for you.

- E: It made no difference to me, do not doubt it. When my doctor and friend announced the diagnosis, I just thought: "Well! I probably won't see my sixtieth birthday." But within me, it was all perfectly balanced. I didn't mind being here or beyond. I enjoy being with my family down here, but the Brighter World is also my home. Sooner or later, we have to die, which comes as no surprise. Then, why shouldn't we integrate the fact and live a full life, while realizing our destiny?
- Y: I can't understand very well what you really mean.
- **E:** When you live through your soul, the *atman*, death is no longer an issue. You just contemplate the end of the precious vehicle your shining soul has borrowed for a while.
- Y: Aren't you attached to life?
- E: I like life very much, and I appreciate it all the more as I have danced with death. Life is a precious gift God bestows on a human being for him or her to realize fantastic deeds.
- Y: What happens later, in the other dimensions?
- E: You'll see for yourself when the time comes.

Then Theophile the Elder kept quiet for a long moment. Theo the Young knew it was best not to insist further and he decided to approach the topic in a different manner.

Inner search

- Y: What should I do so as no longer to be afraid of death?
- **E**: Know yourself, discriminate what is ephemeral, what is bound to personality, and have no attachment to it. Identify yourself with what belongs to your eternity, which is in fact the being's permanent reality.
- Y: What we call the *atman*, right?
- E: Exactly! You visit your soul every time you meditate deep in your heart. You only have to sustain that condition, to raise it to the surface of your being and live your daily life with intensity.
- Y: Then why are people afraid of death?
- E: It's a natural fear. It is due to the survival instinct which is included in the program all animals have inherited. It is the same thing as our natural instinct to protect babies, who are so fragile and fall easy prey to their predators.

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- Y: Do you mean that Nature's laws are responsible for that fear? So, Nature has not made life easy for us, has it?
- E: For human beings only, because it is not the case for other animals. For instance, gazelles are on the lookout only when the lion is hunting. Then they know that their lives are at risk, and fear bids them run so they have a chance to escape. But the rest of the time, they just graze quietly a few metres away from their predators. They know. Animals will fully live their lives in the present moment, whereas men tend to be trapped in their past and constantly planning for their future.

- Y: They forget the present. Is that the reason why we meditate? Is it to fully live and savor the moment?
- E: The eternal present, which gives you access to the inner Infinite and to a sublime
- Y: Then, could we say that man has corrupted his own self?
- E: I'd rather see it differently; let's say that man has been endowed with consciousness. Primitive human beings first developed consciousness of themselves in order to satisfy their basic needs. Then, they were able to conceptualize life, so they became aware of their capacities, which allowed them to reach a higher consciousness.
- Y: But man is also the first among all the predators here on Earth!
- E: The problem is not that man is a predator; the problem is that man disturbs Nature's balance and harmony. Human beings are not properly attuned with either Nature or with their own higher Nature.
- Y: What are the consequences?
- **E**: Destruction and misery for themselves and for their environment.
- Y: Hence the need for ecology.
- **E**: Ecology is only a first step. But above all we should develop an inner ecology and gain access to higher levels of consciousness.
- Y: Animists and shamans are in tune with Nature. Whenever they have to take an animal's life, they do it as if they were



making a sacrifice and they thank the sacrificed animal for the gift of its life. They kill only for the sake of survival.

- E: Men have forgotten a lot. Their frantic egocentricity has cut them off from Nature's higher powers, as well as from other elemental powers.
- Y: Do you mean the *devas*, the elves and any other spirits present in Nature?
- E: I particularly think of the so-called cosmic higher forces ruling this universe, but I don't want to give them any name.
- Y: Do you think of the angelic hierarchies, of the Masters and the *devas*?
- **E**: They can be described in that way, yes.
- Y: Then why did God have to create a world such as ours?

- E: God has created a world for us, for the best of our abilities, and He has endowed us with free will. What we see today is what we have done with that world; a world that can be turned into hell or paradise, depending on us
- Y: What is man lacking?
- **E**: Awareness of the heart. If only ten percent or even one percent of the human population were aware of their hearts, the Earth would be quite different.

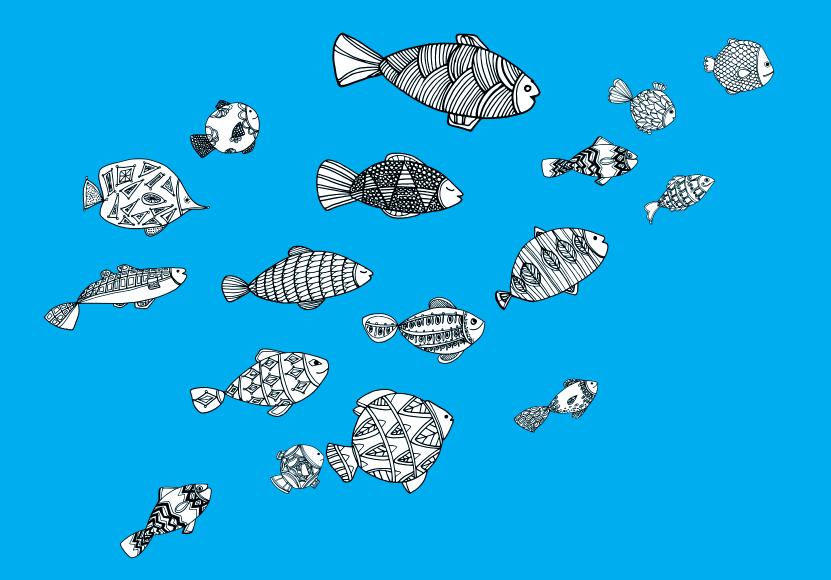
Hearing his mentor's statement made Theo the Young remain pensive and silent. He whispered woefully:

- Y: So, we have to pray for humankind to awaken and finally become Love.
- E: It will come. God is infinitely patient.

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Heartfulness

February 2018



OF I E

One of the most important principles in life is to be in tune with nature. You can swim with the river's flow or you can swim against the flow, but what will you get by resisting?

Kamlesh Patel

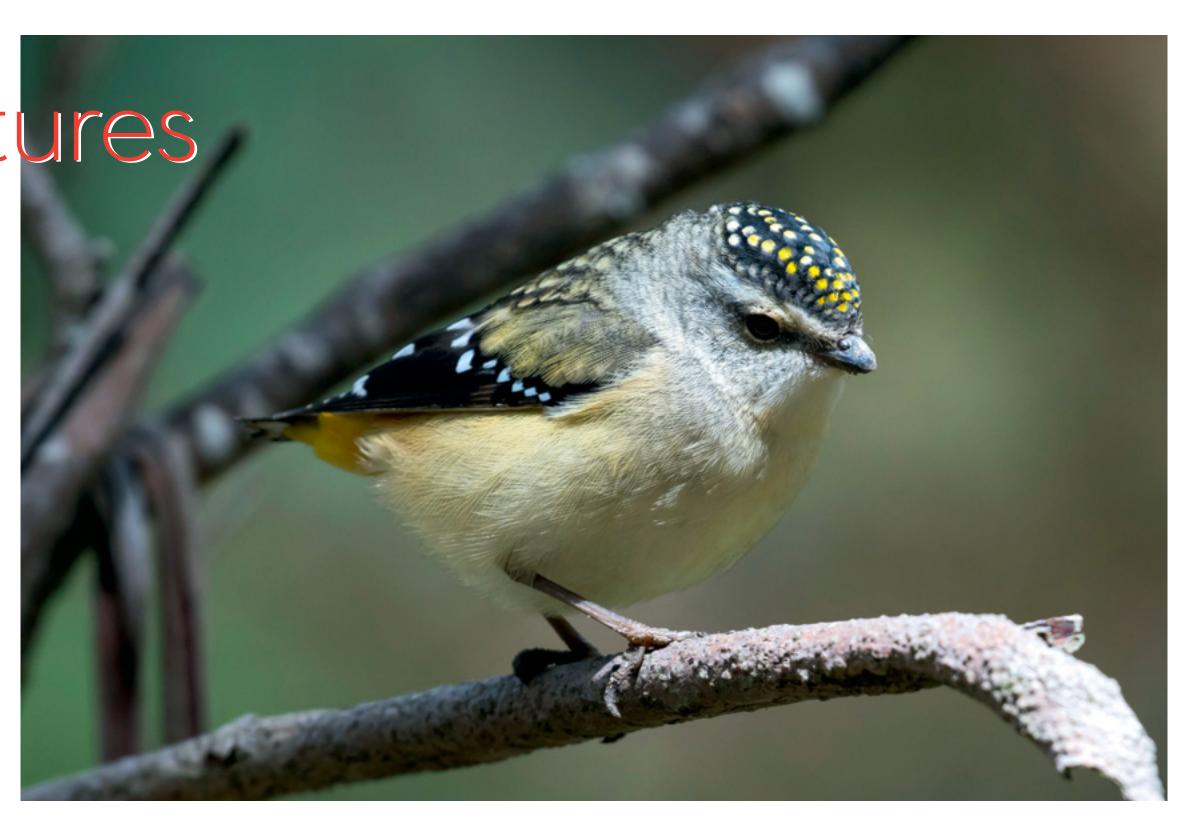
A photo essay by **ANDY KLOTZ**

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t is always a privilege to be in Nature. I love it. I come alive and feel in touch with the Divine, especially when there is another creature, another life form. I love to wait and watch. Also the challenge of trying to get a clear shot and then to show other people, so they too can feel happy seeing how beautiful Nature can be. Later on the photograph reminds me of the time spent waiting for some creature, in silence.

Pardalote >

In Blackheath in the Blue Mountains on a picnic. This is a juvenile pardalote. It didn't know how to be scared, so I got right up close with a big lens. He only stood still for a mere fraction of a second, so I took many shots to get this.







Pigeon >

There is a beautiful Bronze Pigeon that is always there in the afternoons at my friend's garden in Hazelbrook in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. I liked seeing the light shining through her tail.



I was just waiting and watching these two Sulphur-crested Cockatoos on a drizzly day.

Heron >

This is a White-faced Heron at Cygnet in south-eastern Tasmania. We were camping by the river, and this heron would come to fish in the river near us. I liked being able to get a photo of the bird through the grass.

Contains the container of the contain

Beautifully-colored dragonflies in Queensland, at a river by the side of the road. When I looked at the shot afterwards, there hiding underneath was a little spider, just to add a surprise.





Leisure

What is this life if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass, Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight, Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance, And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this is if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare.

William Henry Davies

On time AND HEALING

MEGHANA ANAND writes about the demands and joys of motherhood, and the beauty of giving time to children

read this poem, Leisure, for the first time when I was in school. It's simplicity yet profundity touched me. Even today, upon reading it I feel like taking the time out from simple joys and beauties reasons to do so.

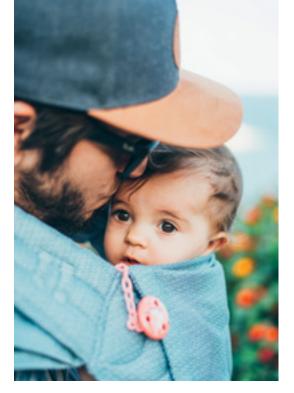
five-month-old son to sleep flashed across the little one's every morning. face - the very first smile

my routine to cherish the For a moment I could do nothing but stand and stare. surrounding me. Being a I felt loved. I felt blessed. I him spend his energy in parent gives me greater felt healed. When he was five years old, those same twinkling eyes would peep I recollect swinging my from behind the windows of the yellow school bus, as in my arms, softly humming I waved him goodbye on a lullaby. Suddenly a smile his way to the kindergarten

that he had ever gifted his The aspect of time is storehouse of high-power mother. The memory is the greatest challenge I so vivid: twinkling bright have faced since my son eyes staring at me, melting was born. It seemed very my heart in a strange way. difficult to move away

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from a routine that was centered around myself to a lifestyle that completely revolved around my child. Often I would be at a loss as to how to encourage a fruitful and constructive manner. He would not be satisfied with my physical presence alone, but sought my attention even mentally and emotionally. While he jumped from one activity to another, with what seemed like an inexhaustible energy, I struggled to maintain my enthusiasm



and patience while trying to keep pace with his energy level.

I wonder how, in the olden days, families with at least half-a-dozen children prospered and thrived with ease and naturalness, and all without playgroups, day-care centers and kindergartens. There were always several children, but there were also many more elders around to give attention and help with the upbringing of the children. The atmosphere was very conducive for the wholesome upbringing of the child, with a beautiful blend of love, freedom and discipline. I see this naturally reflected in my son: his happiness knows no bounds when he is with his grandparents!

After initially trying to hold on to my time and space, I slowly learnt to let go. The more I let go, giving priority to my child's needs over my wishes, the more it made him happy. The happier he was, the more I felt healed and at peace with myself. I tried to ensure that when I was with him, I was with him in every sense of the word – physically, mentally and emotionally. He was so sensitive that he could sense even the slightest preoccupation in me and would immediately demand my undivided

attention. Whether it is an outing with him or reading from his favorite storybook, I sensed that these moments with him are special and may not be replicated in future.

Sometimes I would join my son and his group of friends from the colony in their games and bicycle rides, mostly as a spectator. These hours of play would be punctuated by small fights, bickering, patching up and studying the surroundings. The smallest of nature's creation seemed to be a source of wonder for the little ones. From a dump of freshly-laid cow-dung to the very fascinating touch-me-nots, their innocent squeals and exclamations reflected the freshness with which they viewed things. As they explored and discovered the world around them, I discovered the meaning of being young at heart.

Some of the most beautiful moments that I get to spend with my son are at bedtime. There is something sacred about this hour, during which I find him most receptive and willing to listen and absorb. Most of the time, he insists upon listening to a story or a song before going to bed. Sometimes he says, "Mumma, talk to me," so I talk to him about the day and its happenings, about him and me, about this and that. He seems to absorb everything with the joy of togetherness. He is eight years old now, but he still takes profound interest in going through this bedtime ritual almost every day. And I am more than happy to oblige and indulge.

I remember one particular evening when he was riding his scooter up and down a slope. Suddenly he came and sat on my lap. Looking up into the clear blue sky, he seemed amused with the passing clouds. As he pointed at the different shapes, I began to share his amusement. There was nothing out of the ordinary, yet time seemed eternal. As the two of us sat and stared into the vastness of the blue sky, I felt loved. I felt blessed. I felt healed.

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Alkaline food



NAPOLEON LASAGNE

This is a hearty and decorative recipe that you can serve as a delicious meal. Instead of pasta, the thinly sliced raw zucchini and baked eggplant make a very nutritious, delicious and fresh alkaline lasagne. It is simple and can be made as a lasagna dish as well.

As you prepare, stay centered and peaceful, and feel how your loving vibrations help you enjoy making this life-giving meal for the people you love.

FRESH 'PASTA' LAYERS

1 big zucchini (courgette)

1 big eggplant (aubergine)

1/2 lemon, the juice

Extra virgin olive oil

Himalayan salt to taste

Prepare and wash all the vegetables. Keep the skin.

Pre-heat oven to 3550 F/1800 C.

MARINATED ZUCCHINI

Prepare the zucchini, thinly sliced with a mandolin or cut with a sharp knife, roughly 1/8 inch or 1/4 cm.

Marinate the slices with 1/2 teaspoon of salt, 3 tablespoons of lemon juice and 3-4 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, for about 30 minutes.

ROASTED EGGPLANT

Cut the eggplant into thin slices with a sharp knife or a mandolin, roughly 1/8 inch or 1/4 cm.

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Lay the eggplant slices on a baking sheet. Brush on both sides with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Grill or roast until the slices of the eggplant are tender, about 5 minutes for each side of the eggplant.

Pay attention it doesn't burn.

Variations:

You can use zucchini only or you can bake or grill both, the zucchini a little less than the eggplant.

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Heartfulness

Fillings

TOMATO SAUCE

1 cup sun-dried tomatoes, soaked 1 hour or more

2 big tomatoes

2 cloves garlic

1 small onion

1 tablespoon dried oregano

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Himalayan salt to taste

Process in a food processor or blender until smooth.

Drain the tomato sauce if it becomes too watery, and use it in other meals.

GREEN PESTO

2 cups fresh parsley
2 cups basil leaves
1/8 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Himalayan salt to taste

Blend all ingredients. Keep a thick consistency.



RICOTTA DE MACADAMIA

2 cups macadamias, soaked at least 2 hours 2 tablespoons lemon juice 1 teaspoon yeast-free bouillon 1 tablespoon fresh oregano (or dried) 1/2 teaspoon Himalayan salt Fresh-ground pepper to taste 1/4 cup water (or more)

Process all ingredients together in a blender or food processor, adding as little of the water as possible, until a fluffy consistency is achieved. You can use 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil for flavor and richness.

As an alternative to macadamia nuts, you can use cashew nuts or a mix of both.

SPINACH LAYER

2 handfuls of fresh spinach.

Mix the spinach, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Let it stay for 10 minutes.



Now we come to the fun part, where you create your beautiful dish.

Place one marinated zucchini slice layer, then one layer tomato sauce, then a slice of eggplant and one layer of the ricotta.

Repeat with zucchini, green pesto, spinach, eggplant and tomato sauce.

Add the last zucchini layer.

Place your Napolean lasagne dish in the fridge for 1-2 hours.

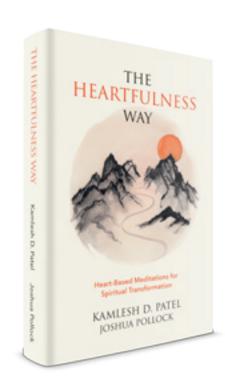
Just before serving

Top with a little layer of ricotta and sprinkle green pesto on top.

Garnish the Napoleons with fresh ground pepper.

Recipe and photographs by SIMONNE HOLM

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Extract from

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The Heartfulness Way: Heart-Based Meditations for Spiritual Transformation

by Kamlesh D. Patel and Joshua Pollock

theheartfulnessway.com

often nervous about trying meditation," I said. things." "They think they will have thoughts."

nature is to be restless," that notion."

difficulty so entrenched?" I asked him.

"Many If you believe the mind And what do you do with enemies?"

"You fight them," I answered.

becomes a battle," he said. But tell me, have your efforts to concentrate. thoughts and emotions ever prevented you from enjoying a good film?" "No," I said.

have found that "A film draws your new aspirants are attention," I said. "Then, you don't notice such

"Exactly," said Daaji. trouble handling their "When something draws your attention and holds it there, you become "Many say that the mind's unmindful of unwanted thoughts. You said Daaji. "They say that need to give your mind its natural state is one of something to sink its disturbance. I disagree. In teeth into - something fact, I would like to dispel really absorbing. Then you will observe just how "Why is the idea of naturally it stabilizes, how effortlessly it focuses. You see, we do not suffer from established an inability to focus. We teachers have espoused focus effortlessly upon this view," said Daaji. "In our interests. But can we my opinion, they perform choose our interests? It a disservice to the cause. seems that certain objects simply appeal to us more to be inherently unstable, than others. The reason is it becomes your enemy. the impressions that we carry in our consciousness - but we will explore that topic later. Anyway, when something appeals to you, you become almost meditation enraptured. You are totally focused. It is only when "It becomes an exercise an object does not interest in suppressing the mind. you that you must make

"For instance, happens when you read a book on a subject that "And why not?" he pressed. does not speak to your heart? Your mind wanders effortless, involving no So let us forget about concentrate. If we try to every second sentence, force at all. right? Eventually, you realize that you have no "In concentration, you be necessary, but it fails be found within. When idea what you have just have to marshal your entirely in the spiritual its refreshing breeze read. You scan back in mind. You focus on a the text until things start single idea to the exclusion to look familiar. To finish of all the other ideas that "But we define meditation the book, you really have you would prefer to be as a state of focus," I said. to concentrate!"

force does not," I said.

"Right," idea attractive, it is averse else. to stay on that topic. It would rather focus on something else."

they?" I remarked.

attempt to focus.

meditation not Concentration is forceful, while meditation is

"Interest succeeds where deeply you concentrate, corrected. "In such a state, said Daaji. awareness becomes. At its on one thought. This "Without interest, any highest pitch, your entire happens by itself, when activity becomes a drag. awareness focuses on a an object is able to attract Unless the mind finds an single point, excluding all and hold your attention.

"This requires effort! It is are in a state known as not easy to arrest the flow absorption. That is another of thoughts. The mind has word for the meditative "And can you feel that "Concentration and focus a natural momentum. It are not the same thing, are wants to go in a certain "So direction, but you are meditation is extremely "True focus is effortless," forcing it to go elsewhere. important," I commented. or your elbows? The heart he replied. "It happens It is like trying to divert a "Yes, the object also naturally. It is only when rushing river. Even if you determines the effect that it doesn't happen on do manage to wrestle your our meditation will have its own that we have to mind into submission, upon us," he said. ... make efforts. That is what you then have to hold concentration is - the it there! The moment "What is the unlimited you relax your efforts, it bounces back, like a "We define meditation as tightly coiled spring. How "It is Divinity itself – thinking about one thing long can you maintain the original wellspring. continuously. Therefore, such intensity of effort? To seek Divinity with people mistake And can meditation be the mind is to seek concentration. relaxing or peaceful when it externally. Then, it is we are applying so much becomes too cerebral, concentration. effort to concentrate? too abstract. If we try

concentration. realm."

thinking about! The more "Effortless focus," Daaji the more exclusive your your mind naturally settles When your attention is thus harnessed, you state of mind.'

the object

object?" I asked.

"The Source," said Daaji. to concentrate, we find nothing upon which to

For grasp it, it eludes us. It worldly matters, it may is something that must first reaches us, it comes through feeling.

> "Thinking is narrow, but feeling is broad. It is holistic. It encompasses thinking, but it is beyond thinking. It encompasses all our faculties, but it is beyond them, too. Through feeling, deeper truths are revealed. Divinity cannot be known, you see, but its presence can be felt.

presence with your liver of or in your heels? Can you feel it with your shoulders is the organ of feeling, and so it is with the heart that we feel it. Therefore, the heart is where we must seek it, and this is why we meditate upon the heart. Here ends our journey in the realm of knowledge, concepts, and forms."

YUM



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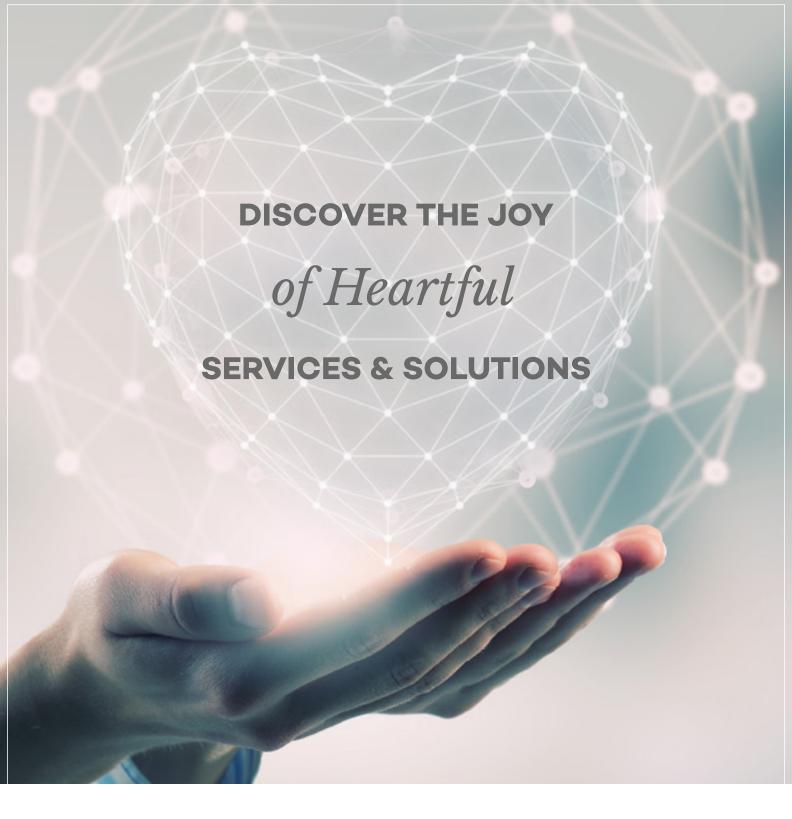
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