

heartfulness

EMOTIONS

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Yogic Psychology - Sleep

CHRIS GERMER

Self-Compassion

DONNA CAMERON

Power of Pause

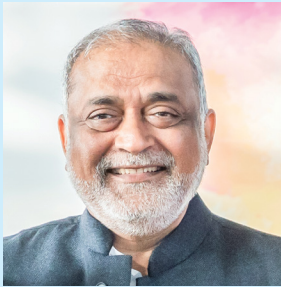
RAMNATH NARAYANSWAMY

EI & SI in Management



Happy reading,
The editors

contributors



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Known as Daaji, he is the current Heartfulness guide. A yogi with the capacity of Yogic Transmission, he offers a practical, scientific approach to spiritual training in the field of consciousness to millions worldwide.



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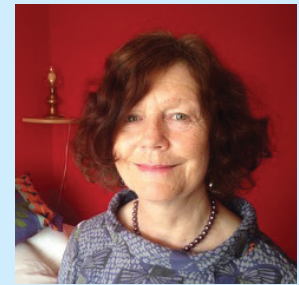
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Donna Cameron

After many deeply-satisfying years in non-profit management, Donna spends her time blogging about the power of kindness, and always looks for ways to convey the power of stories. She believes that we can change the world through our stories, and through kindness. Her new book is called *A Year of Living Kindly*.



Ros Pearmain

Ros lives in Abingdon near Oxford, UK, and has worked with groups of all ages during her working life. She has always been interested in how we can change and transform. In recent years she has been teaching psychotherapy and qualitative research and is a Heartfulness trainer.



innerview

36

*Professor Ramnath
Narayanswamy*

*A Spiritual Revolution in
Management Science*

focus: *Emotions*

08

Dr Chris Germer

*The Power of
Self-Compassion*

15

Ferdinand Wulliemier

*Become Faster
Than Your Emotions*

18

Vasco Gaspar

*Bringing Your System to a
Balanced State*

21

Natwar Sharma

*The Play of Emotions
On Our Health
And Well-Being*

thought in action

26

Ravi Venkatesan

*The Heartful Leader
- part 2*

30

*Theophile the Elder and
Theophile the Young*

Anger Towards Enemies



inside



it changes everything

46

Thierry Casasnovas
Choosing Life
- part 3

50

Donna Cameron
The Power of Pause

be inspired

56

Kamlesh Patel
Yogic Psychology
- part 3



64

Sister Nivedita
The Ancient Science of
Psychology

taste of life

70

Naren Kini
Art Essay – Bhikku Monks

74

Rosalind Pearmain
Heart Roots

77

Heartfulness Yogasanas
Sarvangasana




what's up

80



focus
EMOTIONS



*You may not control all the
events that happen to you,
but you can decide
not to be reduced by them.*

Maya Angelou

THE POWER OF *Self-Compassion*

– PART 1



DR CHRIS GERMER is a clinical psychologist, meditation practitioner, author and teacher of mindfulness and compassion in psychotherapy and everyday life. He is the co-developer of the Mindful Self-Compassion training program. Here AMIR IMANI interviews him during a webinar for mindfulness practitioners.

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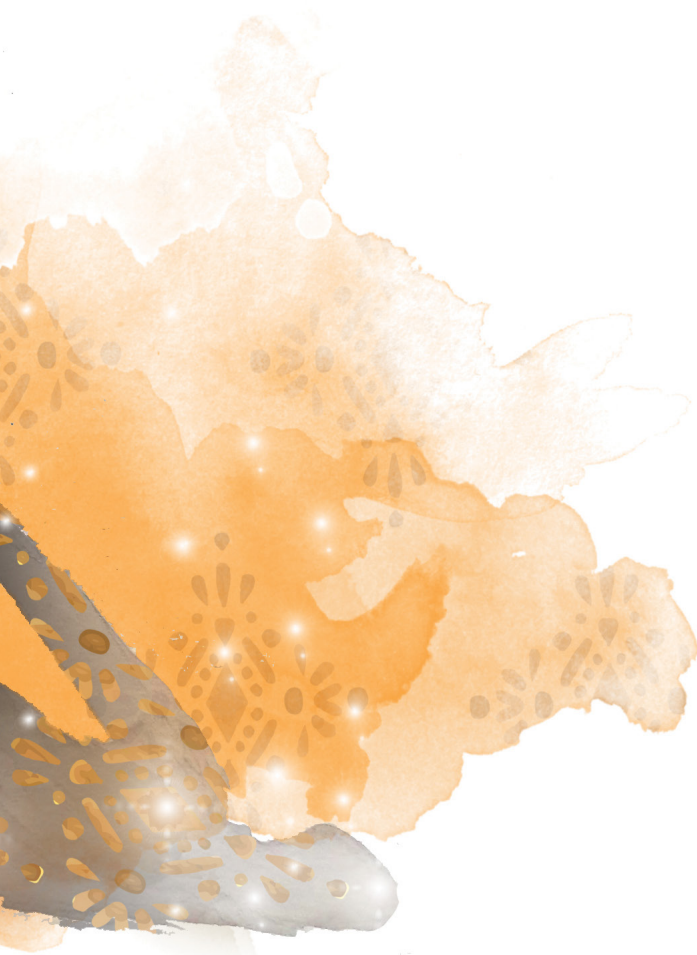
Q: I am very happy and delighted to have you with us Chris, to speak about Mindful Self-Compassion.

Thank you. It's an honor to be speaking right now with everyone.

Q: You're a psychotherapist. You teach and lecture at Harvard University, and you are the co-developer of Mindful Self-Compassion with Kristin Neff. I hear that you and Kristin have also released a new workbook on self-compassion.

I have been reading your book on self-compassion and it gives me the feeling of how important it is in our lives. Somehow personally, when I'm reading your book, I feel that mindfulness that is not softened by self-compassion is dry and clinical without heart. So to me this is such an important topic to cover, and I'm happy you're here to talk to us about it.

Thank you, Amir. Well, I appreciate Saki Santorelli's expression that love, kindness and compassion should be echoing through our awareness, through mindfulness. And as you were talking about this, it was clear to me that it is echoing through your awareness. I appreciate your sensibility about this.



What I have found in my own personal life is that sometimes when we're confronted with really difficult situations, really difficult emotions, we need to actively practice compassion and self-compassion, or else we cannot be mindful. As a clinical psychologist, all the time we're dealing with really difficult emotions – with shame, despair, dread, fear – intense emotions. And when they come up, in order to be able to live within our own bodies and selves, and with others, we need a lot of compassion.

Rumi once said: Close your eyes. Fall in love. Stay there.

It's such a beautiful thing to say! Sometimes when we close our eyes and we see something good, we fall in love; in other words we have appreciation for the miracle of life. But when difficult emotions come, like when we feel shame or despair or fear, then we actually cannot stay in love, because we feel disgust. We want to get away. In other words, we can't fall in love and stay there. So what does it take to actually stay there in our own experience? That's self-compassion practice.

It's a great struggle sometimes to remain compassionate toward oneself and toward others at such times, because we do feel intense emotions, but I do think that self-compassion can help. In order to grow in compassion for others we actually first need to grow in compassion for ourselves. That means:

1. We first need to *know* what we're experiencing in a spacious way. That's mindfulness.
2. We also need to be able to see that we're not alone. That's what we call common humanity: a sense of 'we're together' and 'just like me'.
3. And then the third part is self-kindness. In other words, we actually need to learn to be as kind to ourselves as we are to others.

So these are the three components of self-compassion that have been identified by Kristin Neff who began the scientific study of self-compassion in 2003.

What I have found in my own personal life is that sometimes when we're confronted with really difficult situations, really difficult emotions, we need to actively practice compassion and self-compassion

Self-compassion is not new; it's been with us as long as humanity has been here. But it is now more clearly understood as an inner resource, like mindfulness, that allows us to be healthy mentally and physically and to thrive. And the three components of self-compassion that Kristin identified are: mindfulness, common humanity, and self-kindness.

In this series you've been learning a lot about mindfulness, which is generous, spacious, moment-to-moment awareness; to be with things as they are, in a steady way. That's the first part of self-compassion – knowing when we're struggling. What's really important, though, is the element of self-kindness when it's hard to be mindful. So an informal definition of self-compassion is: Treating ourselves with the same kindness and understanding as we would treat a dear friend in the midst of suffering.

I would like you to think for a moment, as a mental reflection, about those times when something goes wrong in the life of a dear friend or someone you love. They suffer, or they fail, or they feel inadequate, and you have just a few moments with this person. What do you feel inside when you discover they are struggling? What is your attitude? And what kinds of words are you likely to

say to your friend at that time? Take a moment to think about it. I think you can get a feeling for that.

The next question is: Think of a situation when you are failing, when you suffer, when you feel inadequate, or when something really doesn't go right. How do you treat yourself? What kinds of feelings emerge towards yourself? What kinds of words do you say to yourself? What is your posture? How do you sit when you have failed or you're suffering? Take a moment to think about it.

You probably notice a difference. The vast majority of people are so much kinder to other people when they're suffering than to themselves. Usually we beat up on ourselves, we feel alone, we feel ashamed and we distract ourselves. We can't take it when it's us.

So self-compassion simply means being able to have that same attitude toward ourselves as we do toward others when they're struggling. Now, this is not so easy to do. And the reason why it's not so easy to do is because we are so closed to ourselves. In other words, we don't have space. When we're with a friend, we have a little space, but when we're with ourselves there is no space, so we just react in a fearful way.

People who are high in self-compassion are also high in wisdom. More specifically, people who are high in self-compassion have emotional resilience.





Self-compassion really is a very humble undertaking. All we're doing is including ourselves in our circle of compassion. In the same way we treat a family member or a friend or a pet – any living creature that we're kind to – we treat ourselves the same way. This is all we're doing.

Still, we will always be more compassionate toward others. There are obstacles to self-compassion: some people think that it will make them selfish, that it will make them lose motivation, become absorbed in self-pity, or make them weak or self-indulgent. These are common myths about self-compassion, because the research shows that it's actually the opposite.

There are now 1,600 articles in the scientific literature on self-compassion. Over and over, it has been demonstrated to be a very powerful factor for mental health, for physical health, for reduced anxiety, for reduced depression, for healthier habits, better relationships and even wisdom. People who are high in self-compassion are also high in wisdom.

More specifically, people who are high in self-compassion have emotional resilience. When things go wrong they bounce back more easily. When they make mistakes, they're also more likely to admit their mistakes and work hard to fix them. In their relationships, they are actually more compassionate to others. They are not more selfish; instead they're more compassionate to others.

Most interestingly, people who are high in self-compassion are more motivated to achieve their goals. In other words, their standards are as high as people who are low in self-compassion, but they have more motivation to reach their goals because they're motivating themselves with kindness. They're not beating themselves up with a stick. So self-compassion is a very, very good thing even though we often worry that it isn't. And if you practice self-compassion, you'll actually see how it will improve your life.

So then the question is: How do I practice self-compassion? Many people think, “Oh, I need to meditate,” and actually meditation helps. Meditation is one method – like when you want to strengthen your body, you go to the gym and lift heavy weights. You focus on developing the skill, like the skill of Mindfulness or the skill of self-compassion.

You can also practice self-compassion in daily life. The way to do it is to ask yourself a question that you’re likely to ask somebody whom you truly love. That question is: What do you need? When somebody else is suffering, the words will come: “What do you really need?” When we’re suffering we usually don’t ask ourselves that question, but if we do, and answer it from the heart, we will be practicing self-compassion.

But people usually think, “I don’t know what I need!” Then we can break it down a little. For example:

If you’re feeling afraid, ask yourself, “What do I need to feel safe?”

If you’re physically under stress, you can ask, “What do I need to soothe myself?” Maybe I need to take a warm bath, or maybe I need to exercise.

If you’re emotionally stressed, you can ask, “What do I need to comfort myself emotionally?” Maybe you need to walk in nature. Practice kindful resting. Being in nature.

Or maybe you need to listen to music to comfort yourself emotionally or to soothe yourself physically.

Another way to ask the question, “What do I need?” is to ask, “What do I need to do to validate myself?” In other words, maybe you need to acknowledge that “This is really hard.” Maybe nobody has ever said that to you. Maybe you’ve never said that to yourself. So, what do I need to comfort myself, soothe myself, validate myself?

But that’s only half the picture! That is the area of nurturing and nourishing. Sometimes you will need to support yourself to move into the world. Here you can ask, “What

do I need to protect myself?” Maybe you need to say, “No!” That’s often a very compassionate thing to do.

Or to provide for yourself, maybe you need to eat well or care for your body or sleep more. You can ask, “What do I need to provide for myself?”

And sometimes we need to ask, “What do I need to motivate myself?” Sometimes the best thing we need to do is to get out and do something that we’ve avoided. How do we do that? With self-compassion we do that with encouragement. With self-compassion we invite, we talk to ourselves in a way like, “You can do this. You definitely can do this. You’ve done things like this before. This is not easy, but you can do it.”

So, what do I need?

Behavioral self-compassion is the foundation of self-compassion. Actually, how are you accompanying yourself in your daily life? As a friend or an enemy? We want to be a friend – that is self-compassion.

Now those of you who have a contemplative attitude and would like to meditate, there are many different meditations you can try for free, that you can download from my website, www.chrisgermer.com, and this new workbook also has a lot of things. But what I would like to do is introduce you to a brief practice called the Self-compassion Break. It takes five minutes. It is an exercise that you can do any time of the day or night. It consists of the three components of self-compassion: Mindfulness, common humanity and self kindness.

In daily life you can also do just one of these components: the mindful part, the common humanity part, or the self-kindness part. What I will do now is give you an experience of using language to activate self-compassion within yourself.



SELF-COMPASSION BREAK

<https://chrisgermer.com/>

When you notice that you're feeling stress or emotional discomfort, see if you can find the discomfort in your body. Where do you feel it the most? Make contact with the sensations as they arise in your body.

Now, say to yourself, slowly:

"This is a moment of suffering."

That's mindfulness. Other options include:

- This hurts.
- Ouch!
- This is stressful.

"Suffering is a part of life."

That's common humanity. Other options include:

- I'm not alone. Others are just like me.
- We all struggle in our lives.
- This is how it feels when a person struggles in this way.

Now, put your hands over your heart, or wherever it feels soothing, feeling the warmth and gentle touch of your hands.

Say to yourself:

"May I be kind to myself." Another way of saying this is, "May I give myself what I need." See if you can find words for what *you need* in times like this. That's self-kindness. Options may include:

- May I accept myself as I am
- May I learn to accept myself as I am
- May I forgive myself
- May I be strong
- May I be patient
- May I live in love

If you're having difficulty finding the right words, imagine that a dear friend or loved one is having the same problem. What would you say to this person? If your friend would have just a few words in mind, what would you like those words to be? What message would you like to deliver, heart to heart?

Now see if you can offer the same message to yourself.

To be continued.

Edited for publication. You can listen to the full interview at <https://m.facebook.com/pg/cfmin/videos/>.

BECOME FASTER THAN YOUR EMOTIONS

FERDINAND WULLIEMIER, MD, explains some of the neuroscience behind our emotional reactions, and why heart-based practices are so helpful in managing them.

Emotions are rapidly aroused and rapidly reach their target. They may be expressed physically, energetically or psychologically. The etymology of emotion (*movere* = to move) attests to its dynamic nature, and recent neurological studies have explained the rapidity of our emotional reactions because they bypass the cortex of our brain.

Let's take an example: I'm expecting a student for a meditation session at 8:00 a.m. She is the first of four, scheduled to come almost one after the other. In addition I have to make two phone calls in between. It is an unusual situation and I already feel some inner tension when my wife, who is sitting close to my smartphone, tells me that the first student has just sent an SMS to say that she will be 10 minutes late. It is not the first time she has been late, and so far I have not reacted emotionally, even when she repeatedly asks to change the time or the day of our appointments. But on that particular day, I feel immediately irritated.

When she arrives I tell her that my retirement should not be an excuse for thinking I have a lot of time at my disposal, especially today when there will be three other students coming after her. She explains that she was late because of a traffic jam, as she had mentioned in her SMS message. I hadn't read her SMS and because I was already angry I was unable to moderate my emotions immediately.

For a more complete understanding of this short story, let me add that my father was rigid on punctuality with us during my childhood, resulting in my own disciplined behavior in this domain. Both my sister and I were afraid to be late because of the risk of being told off. In fact, it was only during the meditation session that a sensible way of dealing with the situation appeared clearly to me: to explain to her that we would start the session immediately so that the next person would not have to wait.

This example illustrates the rapidity of the ‘motion of emotions’ and the persistence of such emotions coupled with some learned behavior stored in our memory. Neurological studies have shown the crucial importance of the cerebellar tonsil for memorizing such emotional reactions coupled with specific events. I had known about my tendency for a long time and had worked on it during psychoanalysis during my training as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. Unfortunately that didn’t produce notable changes.

But when we examine the neuroscience, the lack of results is not surprising; such knowledge is intellectual, implying that it needs to pass through the cerebral cortex. The

consequence of information having to traverse the cerebral cortex is that it will reach too late, because its trajectory is too long. It is much slower than the more direct and rapid emotional reaction, which bypasses the cortex.

Researchers have shown that using the nerve pathways from the heart neurons, via the pneumogastric (tenth) cranial nerve, to subcortical structures like the cerebellar tonsil, is an example of such a rapid trajectory of feelings.¹ In addition, the powerful heart’s electromagnetic pulsations have another rapid influence on the whole body and beyond.²





What can we do to become quicker than emotions?

The inference from all this is profound: using our heart to respond, based on *feeling* rather than *thinking*, is the only way to manage and prevent our emotional reactions when we are facing daily challenges, which are so numerous in our modern way of living.

Here are two examples of such beneficial practices³:

The HeartMath Institute⁴ researchers have tested the effects on many volunteers of some specific exercises they have created, such as Freeze Frame and Cut Through⁵. They showed that love and positive feelings, such as compassion, gratitude and recognition in the heart, create coherence that spreads health and well-being throughout the body. In addition, the electromagnetic field of such a coherent heart also positively affects other people around.

The Heartfulness Way⁶ uses a method of meditation on the heart, a technique of purification (called cleaning) of

the field of consciousness, and Yogic Transmission (*pranahuti*). The absorption and integration of the effects of the practices allow meditators to remain in a preventive vibratory remembrance, which is made up of feelings of love.

When we become conscious of the multiple opportunities we have to react with inappropriate emotions during our daily interactions, practicing these effective methods seems very worthwhile.

¹ Feelings, such as love and compassion, are altruistic in their nature. They should be differentiated from emotions, such as anger or sadness, which are egocentric.

² Childre, D. & H. Martin, 2000. *The Heartmath Solution*, Harper One, USA.

³ For an extensive review, Wullemier, F., 2018. *Vers un Civilisation du Coeur*, Recto-Verseau.

⁴ <https://www.heartmath.org/>

⁵ See note 2 above.

⁶ <https://heartfulness.org/us/>



Bringing Your System to a Balanced State

VASCO GASPAR is a Mindfulness consultant and Heartfulness trainer living in Portugal. Here he shares a simple effective practice to down-regulate emotions.

We all sometimes feel stressed, anxious, fearful or angry. It's part of the experience of being human to feel emotions, something we share with all other mammals to some extent. Actually the part of our brain that is involved in the processing of emotions is called the limbic brain or mammalian brain.

Emotions have been helping us for thousands of years to deal with the environment and survive. For instance, if we're crossing a busy road and a car is coming straight towards us, it is very good for us to feel fear. It will mobilize our physical resources to run away or jump back from the front of the car. And we don't even think about it because most emotions are faster than our conscious mind. That is also an advantage from an evolutionary point of view. Taking the car example again, it would not be useful for us to think about whether it is a Mercedes or a Ford. That split second of reflection could cost us our lives.

But that evolutionary advantage comes with a price. I had a teacher who used to joke that we are all descendants of the nervous monkeys. Why? Because all the relaxed ones didn't make it. The ones that were the first to run were able to survive and reproduce. In fact most of us, by default, constantly keep scanning the environment for threats, and we react to them using the same mechanisms we used to fight lions or run away from other ferocious beasts.

In our modern lives fortunately we don't have as many physical threats as our ancestors, but we're using the same brain mechanisms to deal with problems that are mostly conceptual, like the fear of losing a job, the anxiety of speaking in public etc.

What can we do when we are in an emotional state that is not useful? For instance, imagine that you have to speak in public and feel so afraid that you lose the capacity to think clearly; or you had an argument with a colleague

in a meeting and now you arrive at the next meeting still angry with him. Or even that you feel mad after spending an hour in the car on your way home after a frantic day at work and don't want to take those toxic emotions to your small child waiting for you at home.

Is there a simple practice we could do before stepping onto the stage, into the meeting, or arriving home? Something that would help us down-regulate the excessive emotional state and bring us to a balanced and coherent state. If you're a Heartfulness practitioner my suggestion is to use the Cleaning process, which I find very useful.

Another possibility is to do the following steps that take less than five minutes:

- Go to a place where you can be alone. It can be a room, your car or even the toilet.
- Breathe in deeply, filling your lungs, and then breathe out as if you were blowing a candle, until your lungs are completely empty.
- Repeat the process three times. That will help you bring oxygen to your system and balance your inner state.
- Allow your breath to come to a regular rhythm and put one hand on your belly and the other on your chest. Sense the hand you prefer on these parts of your body. Normally one combination will feel more familiar than the other.
- For one minute or so, notice how your hands move as you breathe. Is it the hand on your chest that moves more, or is it the one on your belly? Are they moving more or less the same way? Just follow the movement, with a sense of curiosity. Some people notice that just by doing this they feel calmer. Some scientists argue that

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it is related with our physical memory of a hug, especially when our parents held us when we were babies, when we were crying.

- Now just move the hand on your belly along with the breath. Do it as if you had a balloon in your belly: As you breathe in the 'balloon' fills and your hand moves away from your body. As you breathe out the 'balloon' empties and your hand moves closer to your body. Your breathing process will become more abdominal. Since the lungs are bigger at the bottom, you will bring more oxygen to your system, allowing you to be more awake, aware and able to self-regulate. Try to keep this abdominal breathing going for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Continuing abdominal breathing, now add some counting to the breathing process. Breathe in and count mentally up to four. Breathe out and count mentally up to six. Do it at your own pace. Breathe in counting to four; breathe out counting to six. Keep doing this for one minute, coming back to the process of counting if you are distracted.
- This will help your mind to keep focused on an object and not to think about what is stressing you. And by regulating the breathing process it will also impact your heart and circulatory system, bringing your whole system to a more coherent state.
- In the last minute of the exercise see if you can bring your mind to an image of someone you love and care about. It can be someone from your family, a friend, or even an animal. Just hold that image in your heart for a while.

- You can keep doing the breathing process if it is useful, or simply just rest in the image of a loved one. The rationale here is simple: the same way that you feel stressed when you think about something that stresses you, you feel calmer and more balanced when you think about someone who evokes positive emotions in you.

That's it. Very simple, right? Even my almost 90-year-old grandmother does it daily. And it takes less than 5 minutes.

Just give it a try. The next time you feel that your emotional system is out of control, just stop and go through these simple steps. You can do them together or just do one or two. Notice which steps have a deeper impact in down-regulating your emotional state and then use them whenever you need. After that, go into your day.





THE PLAY OF EMOTIONS ON OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

DR NATWAR SHARMA explores the world of feelings and emotions, their effect on the physical body, and how we can learn to manage them effectively.

Our life is largely the interplay of feelings and emotions. It is important for us to understand why they surface and how we react to them, because that in turn will develop our mental perception and improve our physical health.

What Are Emotions?

Emotions are basically ‘energy in motion – e-motion’. They generally carry a weight or leave an impression on our physical and subtle bodies. They are responses, primarily of ‘flight or fight’, which come from the subcortical regions of the brain, especially the amygdala

and the pre-frontal cortex, when we face a particular situation or condition. Thus they are part of the subconscious.

Emotions potentiate the memory associated with any incident or event. A memory without the backing of any emotion is not strong enough to last through time, nor does it have much impact on our current physical and mental make-up. In contrast, a memory with an associated emotion is more likely to influence our present situation.

This is one of the primary reasons that it is so important to be aware of and handle our emotions in a sane manner.

How Do Emotions Affect the Human Body?

In the current world, where many of us live in cities with busy routines, we are not able to be in touch with our

feelings and emotions, let alone deal with them. We keep going on and on, until we cross the threshold and feel overburdened and stressed. Every individual has a threshold for emotional tolerance, and when we overstep that threshold it adversely affects our physical health.

How does this happen? When our capacity to cope with a particular situation crosses this threshold, the subcortical region of the brain, or the amygdala, is activated, in turn triggering the neocortex, which ultimately produces signals that manifest in the physical body as physical sensations.

Try these experiments:

Observe your physical body during various activities. For example, note the reactions in your body while watching an emotionally charged program on television, like a horror movie or thriller. Your muscles may contract without your knowledge and your heart may beat at a faster rate. These somatic changes in the body, directly or indirectly determine the level of stress you experience during the day.

Similarly, uttering a word or phrase or sentence that is charged with an emotion produces a physical sensation in the body. For example, you may feel tightness or heaviness, weakness or pain, or a tingling sensation in your body while recollecting something that scares you while repeatedly uttering, “I am feeling scared of ...”

Repeat this experiment with different sentences conveying positive and negative emotions, and see what reactions they produce in the body.

You may be amazed with what you observe and feel.

Often the words ‘emotion’ and ‘feeling’ are used interchangeably. They are two sides of the same coin, yet they are different. For example, I may feel left out in a particular situation, but what emotion is backing this feeling? As an adult I may be *sad* that I was not included. As a child I may be *angry* at my parents for leaving me

out of some talk or activity, or I may even be *guilty* that I did not do what I was supposed to do and automatically missed being a part of something. I may also experience a mixture of all these emotions.

Thus, one situation can produce a cocktail of emotions – and when such a cocktail is suppressed for too long it can be debilitating. Suppressed emotions generally manifest in the physical body as some kind of an ailment or disease – this I can duly validate through my work and research with my patients and clients, both as a physician and a therapist.

Emotions in Children

The depth of feeling and emotion in children is much stronger than in adults. One reason is that they are empty books: everything is written afresh on their pages. A second is that the subconscious mind is very powerful when they are young. And a third reason is that their capacity to discriminate is not strong enough; they still need to grow in wisdom in order to reason and come to a conclusion.

Children are very sensitive and receptive, so we must be extra careful when we deal with them. How do we explain things to them? How do we allow them to come to a conclusion in a simple way?

One way is to just be with them and go through whatever they are experiencing in that moment. For example, if your child is scared of the dark, instead of admonishing her, sit with her in a dark room and go through the experience together. In my practice, I have found this to be more effective as it may actually help children to open up and confide in their parents.

Basically, we need to devise different ways and methods to deal with children. Once they form an impression and come to a conclusion about something, it conditions them for life, so that they run according to the same program the mind has created. When writing on a new page, ensure that you write it well!



How to Deal With Negative Emotions?

It is important to release negative emotions from the subconscious, preferably as soon as they are triggered. Another interesting observation is that seemingly negative emotions, like fear and anger, may actually be used positively in context to the situation. For example, it may be good for a student to feel some tension or stress, to the extent that it drives them to work hard and do well in life. But when we continue to feel the same over a period of time, when we carry the negative emotion, it not only affects our own health but also the moods and conditions of people around us. A typical case would be that of the boss who walks into the office in an angry mood, which cascades down to the employees and everyone else he meets during the day.

One way to refine our emotions and feelings, purifying them of negativity, is the Heartfulness Cleaning – a proven and effective technique in this context.

Another method to deal with negative emotional reactions, such as anxiety, anger or fear, is to activate


the parasympathetic nervous system, our ‘rest and digest system’. When such emotions surface, try closing the right nostril with your thumb and breathing deeply through the left nostril. It helps to activate the parasympathetic nervous system.

Last but not least, pause before reacting in any situation. By doing so, you are most likely to *respond* in a heartfelt manner instead of *reacting*.

Much of the research today in the field of pathology of diseases traces their roots to deeply suppressed emotions in the human subconscious over a length of time. Medical science is opening up to various alternate therapies and modalities of treatment, such as psychotherapy, Emotional Freedom Technique, and other cognitive therapies, to deal with the root cause at the base of physical ailments. Slowly but surely, we are moving towards more holistic ways of healing, combining mainstream medicine with alternative therapies, facilitating the well-being of the body, mind and soul.



Thought
in action



*It takes many good deeds
to build a good reputation,
and only one bad one to
lose it.*

Benjamin Franklin

THE HEARTFUL LEADER

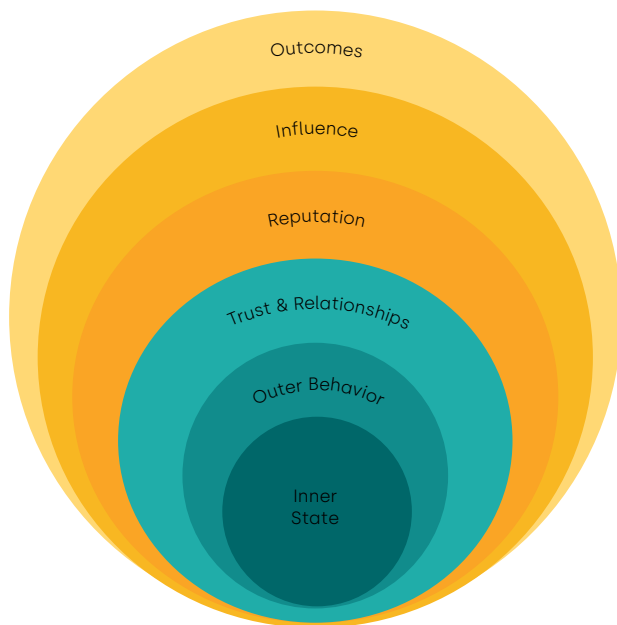
- part 2 -

Extraordinary outcomes through inspiration

UNPACKING REPUTATION

RAVI VENKATESAN introduced the Heartful Leader framework shown below in part 1 of this series. He also established paradigm shifts that require leaders of the future to get more done with influence versus control. They need to navigate situations where they don't have authority but rather need to collaborate. They develop and use 'soft power' to accomplish what is needed. He discussed how our inner state reflects in outer behavior, which either does or doesn't create trust & relationships, which over time create reputations. The combination of trust, relationships and reputations results in the influence that we have. In this article he looks at reputation more closely.

The word 'reputation' comes from the Latin *reputare*, which means 'to think over'. The thinking over happens over time. It is defined as "beliefs and opinions generally held about someone or something". It is also defined as "a widespread belief that someone has a particular characteristic". Some examples from day-to-day-life are:

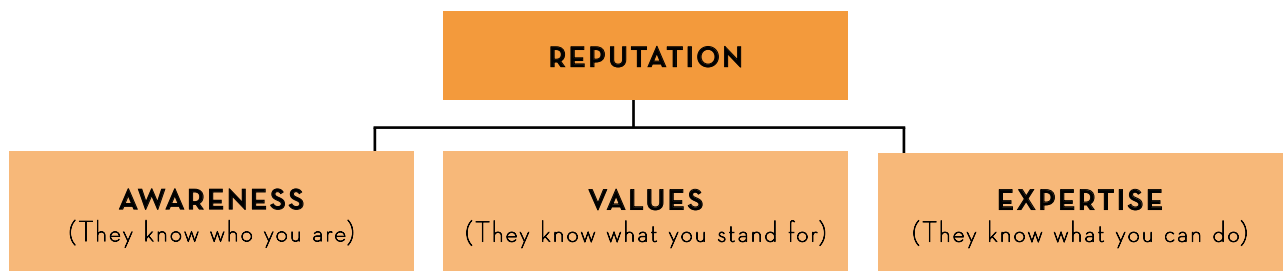


- A person in your family circle who has a reputation of being helpful to everyone.
- A manager at your workplace who has a reputation of getting things done at all costs.
- A politician who has a reputation of not being trustworthy.
- A neighbor who has a reputation of being a naysayer to all new ideas that are brought up in your Home Owner's Association meetings.
- The CEO of a non-profit organization who has a reputation of high integrity.

Reputations can be good or bad, like being viewed as an expert in a certain field, or not being trustworthy. They can also be good or bad based on context. For example, a leader who has a great reputation for being a visionary may not wield enough influence to lead the execution of a new initiative. On the other hand, a leader who has a reputation of being very good at getting things done, but not at vision and strategy, may not be taken seriously if he tries to rally a team behind a new strategy.

Most of us don't think about our reputation. There are a couple of reasons for this. We rely on authority or influence through direct relationships to get things done. This works well up to a certain extent, but it doesn't scale. Sooner or later in our leadership journey we arrive at a point where someone will, or will not do something based on our reputation, and we don't have a direct relationship with them. Most people cannot have a direct meaningful relationship with more than a couple of hundred people, even in this hyper-connected age of social media. So how else will you influence beyond these people, except to consciously build and manage your reputation?

Let's look at three components that make up a reputation and some of the ways to develop and manage these more consciously. Towards the end we will also discuss a 3-step approach to rebuilding a damaged reputation.



1. AWARENESS

If people are not aware of you, you don't have a reputation. So the first step is to find ways to create awareness about yourself as a leader. When I became a manager at Accenture, as part of new manager training we were taught to develop one or two things that, over time, we would be known for. This can be "Very good at data analysis," or "Great at developing people," or simply "Rock solid reliable in getting things done." It applies even in a family situation. Think about a girl that married your cousin and has a reputation for being tough to get along with, or the aunt who will go all out to help everyone.

THOUGHT IN ACTION

Strategies to spread awareness include:

- Highlight what you want to be known about yourself in a natural and subtle way in conversations. Keep in mind that being very explicit or overt with this doesn't work and will come across as inauthentic.
- Seek feedback when you make a presentation on some topic or express an opinion about what to do in a situation etc. People 'think over' more when asked for feedback.
- Remember the word reputation comes from 'think over'.
- Publish blog posts, articles or white papers in whatever forums you can access.
- Expressing your opinions in a structured manner is a great way to spread awareness.

2. VALUES

What values do you embody on a day-to-day basis, and how do you express them? For example, if one of your key values is respect for everyone, do you visibly treat people that report to you the same way you treat your boss? The old recommendation of treat the janitor like your CEO is very true. Many times, how you treat people that you perceive as lower in socio-economic status is noticed by others consciously or subconsciously and forms an impression in them about you.

Strategies to managing this:

- Find words and ways to express the values that you stand for, e.g. respect, honesty, truth, integrity, courage, or any others.
- Keep in mind that you cannot fake this, so if you are unsure of your values then you will have to first do the inner work to find them within yourself, and then apply approaches to project and express them. For most people, fortunately, they have the values, and just haven't figured out how to project them.



3. EXPERTISE

What are your areas of expertise that are relevant to the context of your workplace, family or circle of friends? Do your friends know you as a financial wizard and hence connect you with someone who needs advice on retirement planning? Do people in your organization recognize you as a big thinker and come to you for new product ideas? Does your extended family believe you are a great ‘fixer’ of relationship problems and bring you in to counsel the couple that are working through challenges?

Strategies to manage this:

- Pick only one or two things that you are really good at, and start finding opportunities to showcase them. Let the word spread organically and naturally. You cannot explicitly advertise your skills to build a reputation.
- Find ways to use your expertise to help others, especially when you don’t have to do this. People always talk about unexpected help or out of the way help that they received.

In most cases we are not starting from scratch. We have a reputation that unfortunately may be tarnished. We may have changed, but people still perceive us based on past behavior. The way to rebuild a reputation is through a three-step process: Acknowledge, Act and Reinforce.

For example, let’s say that you are a manager in building construction with a reputation of not being transparent when things are going wrong, and telling people with little notice that deadlines will be missed. Over the years, you have suffered because of this reputation and haven’t progressed through your organization as well as you could have. You have recently made changes and are starting to tell people early if things are getting delayed, but they still have the perception of the old you. Your steps for rebuilding would be:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE

First of all acknowledge that in the past you have not been transparent with delays and have made changes to correct the way you operate.

2. ACT

Let the actions speak for themselves. Make sure you provide information early and often regarding delays.

3. REINFORCE

Articulate the changes made to ensure that perceptions change. Find opportunities to create a summary of how you have changed your approach. Great opportunities are ‘Project reviews’, ‘Executive summary meetings’, ‘Transition meetings’ etc. Make sure you highlight the fact that based on past feedback you made a change, and here are the results.

Rebuilding reputations can take a long time but following this 3-step process will help you make a big difference fairly quickly.

In subsequent articles we’ll look at trust & relationships, behaviors and inner state (of our hearts and minds). We’ll then work inside out to create the right state, behavior, trust & relationships and bring this together with reputation to create influence and great leadership outcomes.

ANGER TOWARDS ENEMIES

The dialogue between **THEOPHILE THE ELDER** and **THEOPHILE THE YOUNG** continues, this time about the topic of anger and reactions to injustice.

That particular morning, Theo the Young was very agitated. He had hardly sat down, facing his friend, than he started exposing his problem.

Theophile the Young: I have been developing intense anger all these years due to a neighbor who has harmed my family and me. I hate him and I can't help it.

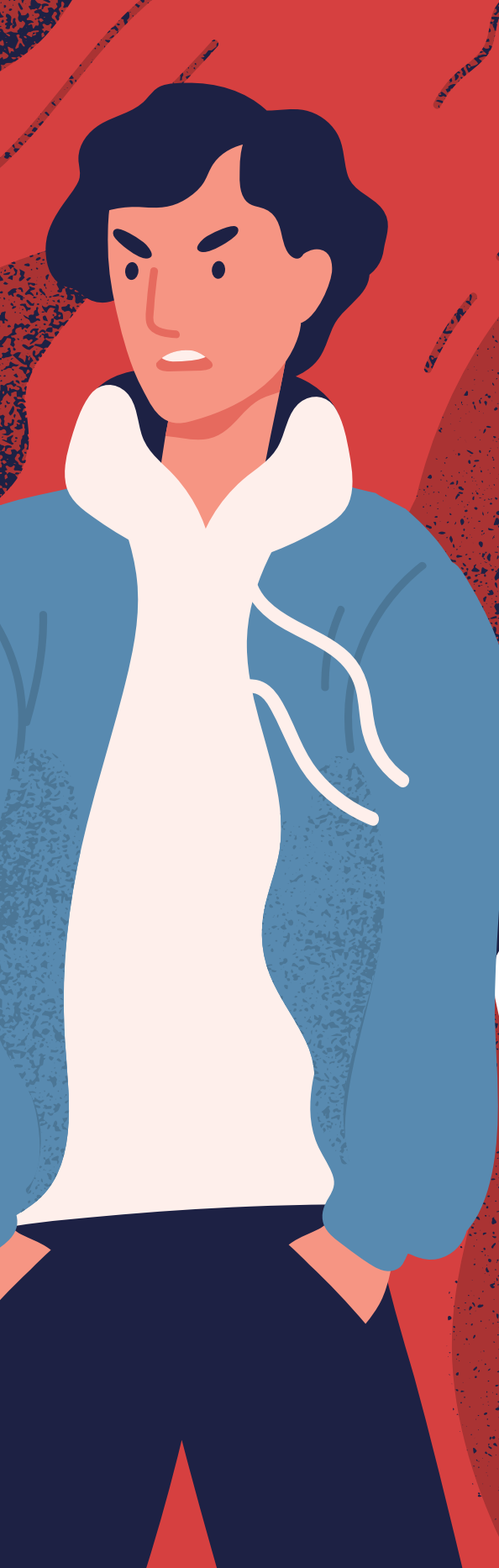
The Elder looked at him, quite amazed.

Y: Yes I know. But it's all about his wicked, twisted and unfair behavior. I feel as if he is a chewing gum stuck to the sole of my shoe. I can't get rid of it. As soon as I see him or merely think of him my anger is back.

Theophile the Elder: You are going to make yourself sick!

Y: I'm already sick. My stomach hurts, there are moments when I feel oppressed, and I often have a headache.





THOUGHT IN ACTION

Once a warrior has won or lost a war, he agrees that the war has ended. He has no more enemy. He is at peace. He will only have to make himself ready for another battle, whenever it may come. Meanwhile, he practices peacefully.

E: According to Traditional Chinese Medicine, the Liver Fire is what gives you such symptoms, which are caused by anger and resentment.

But tell me what you did?

Y: I went to court to assess my rights.

E: And what happened then? Did you win that legal fight against your adversary?

Y: Yes, legally, but he did not pay enough for my liking, considering all the harm he had done to me.

E: So the fight is still on! Your neighbor has succeeded in crossing your barriers and he is now partly occupying your inner space. You may also be in his mind, since you won the case against him. He probably hates you. Your anger is what provides access to his anger. Through your mental and emotional attitude, you have opened a way for him to penetrate within you. So now he can overrun you, reach your heart and plague your life.

Y: You make it sound like war!

E: Currently your life is effectively a constant state of war, so you'd better live it as a warrior would.

THOUGHT IN ACTION

The book, *The Art of War*, by Sun Tzu, is traditional literature in China, and it is still in use in War Colleges in many countries, since strategy is first and foremost simple psychology. For example, making the adversary's general angry is a clever trick, as it will destabilize him and confuse his mind. He won't be able to clearly see the way the battle is developing or to devise sustainable strategies. Being angry, he will tend to just charge ahead and seek revenge at all costs. Therefore, his engagement will have a weakness based on his own self-delusion, boldness and temerity. Some people will call it courage but, in fact, an enemy is more easily defeated once you have provoked anger in them and thus opened a breach.

Y: But I have won.

E: Do you really think so?

The Elder paused while Theo seemed to be thinking the matter over.

E [calmly]: You have not won the emotional and mental war.

*"Please God, give me the
courage to change the
things I can change,
the serenity that will help
me accept the things to
which fate binds me,
and enough wisdom to
discriminate one from the
other."*

Once a warrior has won or lost a war, he agrees that the war has ended. He has no more enemy. He is at peace. He will only have to make himself ready for another battle, whenever it may come. Meanwhile, he practices peacefully.

The problem comes when your head and emotions go on fighting, cutting you off from your heart. It might be tragic for you and your balance. Basically, your neighbor has shown you the significant weakness that still abides in yourself.

Y [interrupting nervously]: So now you are going to ask me to be very grateful to him I guess.

E [smiling]: That's almost it! In fact you should thank the Divine who let you see the weakness, the tendency you still have, and who gave you an opportunity to correct it. Your neighbor will become a mere indicator for you. That indicator could have been someone else or several other persons.

The strength of your recurrent emotions is only a sign, a symptom of the weakness within you.

Y [irritated]: But he was proven wrong!

E: So? You won, didn't you? And justice was done. Then why should you continue the war?

I'm sorry to tell you, but that weakness of yours will be used against you by your enemies or by any other person. Any serious adversary will easily defeat you.

Y: I don't think so. I am strong and intelligent enough to know how to defend myself. Next you are going to tell me all about love again, aren't you.

E: I might.

Silence.

Isn't that what we've already done on many occasions in the past?

The old man paused again and remained quietly focused on his hotheaded friend. Then he said:

E: The warrior instinct is in you. That is another way to approach the Divine, but it is a demanding one. Arjuna is a good example of it, in the Bhagavad Gita.

But Theo's anger was not yet soothed.

Y: I'd like to plague his life just as he has plagued mine. That's a fair return, isn't it?

The Elder tried to temper him.

E: Let's keep calm. Some families have carried their hatred through generations. Sometimes they even forget the root cause of the hatred, but their war has become a tradition and the families will hate each other forever.

Y [*sulking*]: So now you see me as a dunce.

E: [*mockingly*]: More or less!

Y: Well, do tell me. What would you do in this situation?

E: I would take all necessary action to address it on the purely material level. Then, once it is done, I would forget all about it. Life is great. So it's really worth living it completely, enjoying all the gifts it offers.

Y: And what of the difficulties, the problems entailed?

E: I would deal with them as best as can be. Marcus Aurelius used to say:

"Please God, give me the courage to change the things I can change,
the serenity that will help me accept the things to which fate binds me,
and enough wisdom to discriminate one from the other."

Otherwise I am happy under all circumstances – almost all of them anyway.



The old man realized that Theo's anger was one of the oldest and most enduring forms of anger. So he did not insist anymore and decided to think over all they had been talking about that day.

Before leaving his friend, he said:

E: Theo, an enemy is supposed to be fought on the battlefield. Once the war has ended, he is no longer an enemy. That is sheer chivalry, an art Lord Krishna taught to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita.

Looking very thoughtful, Theo watched the Elder as he walked away after having thus invited his young friend to stay calm and serene.

Dialogues with Theophile the Elder: Theophile the Younger's Initiation

<https://theophilelancien.org/en/anger-enemy/>



Interview



*Our scientific power
has outrun
our spiritual power.
We have guided missiles
and misguided men.*

Martin Luther King Jr

A Spiritual Revolution in MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

PROFESSOR RAMNATH NARAYANSWAMY from the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, shares with **V. SRINIVASAN** something of his own journey, and the importance of spiritual, emotional, social and cultural intelligence in the world of management.

Q: Sir, the first question is regarding the integration of spirituality and management. How do both these concepts come together and what is their relevance?

To answer this question you need to have a perspective on the discipline of management and its historical origin. Management is a North American discipline that arose amidst the context of two movements: one was Fordism, and the other was Taylorism. Fordism refers to the revolution ushered in by Henry Ford, as a result of which every average American family got access to an automobile. One of the foremen was Frederick Winslow Taylor, and he was the father of the modern assembly line.

So, as a discipline, management arose in the North American context. It later spread to different parts of the world, and there are still two countries where management is not strongly institutionalized. One is Japan, and the other is Germany. But the reasons for that don't concern us here.

Spirituality came into management much later. It was preceded by the induction of emotional intelligence, with the publication of Daniel Goleman's landmark work on

emotional intelligence in 1997. Spiritual intelligence entered the field of management around the year 2000, when the Academy of Management inaugurated an interest group on management, spirituality and religion. Since then, during the past decade or so, some spectacular work has been emerging on providing original, often disconcerting, often revelatory insights into the relationship between spirituality and management.

To summarize: there are two types of education, two types of management, two types of engineering. One is outer management, the other is inner management. One is outer engineering, the other is inner engineering. One is outer education, the other is inner education. Broadly speaking, outer education refers to knowledge of the outer world – the world that we experience through our five senses. Inner education is driven not so much by the intellect, but by personal experience.

The point I am trying to make is that emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, social intelligence and cultural intelligence are as important to management as analytical intelligence. This realization has come more strongly in the past 10 years when management educators, management instructors and management practitioners are becoming



Outer education refers to knowledge of the outer world – the world that we experience through our five senses. Inner education is driven not so much by the intellect, but by personal experience.

intimately aware of the links that connect the analytical space, the emotional space, the spiritual space, the social space and the cultural space.

As we move ahead in the years to come there will doubtless be a convergence, a consensus view, according to which spirituality will have to play a critical role in management, especially in leadership development.

Q: So referring to the area of leadership, how does a spiritual approach fuel or foster leadership qualities?

Every human being has the potential to develop their leadership potential, but not everybody is cut out to embark on the spiritual path. Not everybody is cut out to become a leader. To enter both these domains is tantamount to walking on fire. It requires perseverance. It requires commitment. It requires practice.

What is leadership? Leadership is about transformation from within. It is about conquering the inner space. It is about realizing the perfection that is present inside to engage the imperfection of the outside. Effective leaders, irrespective of the domain they belong to, live off their higher energies, not their lower energies.

When a manager embarks on their professional life, especially in the early years, it's about creature comforts. It's about material needs, finding a good spouse, getting a good house, a good job, good children, good schools, and so on. Twenty to twenty-five years down the line these objectives are by-and-large met. The question arises: What then?

There comes a stage in a manager's life when they start asking: How do I sustain the sources of my motivation? How do I re-energize myself constantly? What can help me to improve each time I practice it? And this is where spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence have a critical role to play in leadership development:



1. They help leaders articulate their vision, both personal and the companies’.
2. They help them articulate their values.
3. They help them to develop clarity and alignment of vision and values. Both of them must cohere; they must be congruent.
4. And finally, they give them a heightened understanding of both the internal and the external context.

These four ingredients are critical to leadership development.

As the father of this country, Mahatma Gandhi had so much to teach us in this vital domain. At a certain time in his life, he had bought a pair of first class tickets, entered the train, and despite having his tickets with him was not allowed to sit in a first class compartment. He was pushed out.

In an interview that he gave towards the later part of his life, he was asked, “Mr Gandhi, what is your message?” He could look at his interlocutor eye to eye and say, “My

life is my message.” This was a very powerful line, because it means that everything he thought, everything he said, everything he spoke, and everything he did radiated what he stood for.

One of the most beautiful definitions of leadership comes from the Mahatma. He said, “Become the change you want to see.” It’s such a powerful line, such an astonishing line. What does it mean? Whenever you have time on your hands, don’t spend it frivolously. Don’t waste what is being given to you. Don’t fritter it away. Instead, use that time and energy to see what you want changed in society, to make that happen. Exert your efforts in that direction. This is essentially what leadership is about.

Q: Can you shed a little light about your work in integrating spirituality and management at IIM Bangalore?

I came to spirituality through crisis. It is often when we are in crisis that we think of God. It need not necessarily be the case, but this was certainly true in my case. It was

some time in late 1998 or early 1999. I went through a series of unfortunate experiences, which helped me turn inside. And that's how my spiritual journey began.

It ignited an intense search for self-revelation, an intense search for Godliness, an intense search for the sacred over the profane. I went from pillar to post, and I did things that under normal circumstances many people would hesitate to do. But I was relentless in the pursuit of my goal.

In 2007 I realized that I needed a guru. This is a term that is highly misunderstood both in India and in the West. A lot of outlandish if not crazy things are written about it. But there was no doubt in my mind at that time that this yearning became very intense. I started praying to Lord Shiva to send me a living guru with whom I could relate, who could give me wisdom, who could show me the way, who could chart my path.

This prayer was fortunately answered very quickly, and I had the good fortune of meeting a Self-realized Master in the form of Sadhguru Sri Sharavana Baba. I met him when he was 27 years old, and there was nothing youthful about the advice that he gave me. It was extremely wise counsel. He helped me connect with my inner self. It's a debt that I can never repay. When I think of it my heart fills with gratitude. He ignited and illuminated the path, and he showed me the way.

After I met my Guru I realized that spiritual life really extends to all life in general. It is the intense search to know who we really are that constitutes the core of the spiritual search.

The core of Hindu *dharma* is *seva dharma*, the *dharma* to serve selflessly those around us – loved ones, institutions, and the society at large. How do we effect this service? The Gita speaks of two instruments: The first is *dharma*. In my simple, humble understanding, anything that contributes to creating harmony in this universe is *dharma* – any thought, any word, any deed that helps to accomplish this objective.

Only spiritual intelligence can help a person live off their higher energies. There is an invisible sense of order that governs the visible worldly disorder. This invisible sense of order is spirituality. To grasp its working through intuition and personal experience is both a duty and a privilege.

Truth is a little more complex. Sometimes masters say it's not wise to speak the truth all the time. By this they mean that truth is usually bitter, and therefore one has to speak it with caution. If the person who is the recipient of truth does not have the mental, intellectual or emotional strength to absorb that truth, it is better to keep silent. In this case, what is your *dharma*? In this case, our scriptures answer, our *dharma* is to prepare the person, to provide them the wherewithal to absorb this truth.

It is a beautiful and profound teaching: we must use caution in the way we communicate truth. But the Gita is unambiguous on its insistence, on its fidelity, on the necessity of us human beings to be faithful to these two principles: *satyam* and *dharma*. These are the instruments that we use in our spiritual pursuit.

In general, if I were to draw an X-axis and a Y-axis, and put tools and techniques on the X-axis, and character and attitude on the Y-axis, I would see that practitioners of management, students of management, and managers and instructors have taken a severe beating on the Y-axis. Management education is still a prisoner of its early historical orientation. It is heavily weighted in favor of analytical



intelligence. Emotional, spiritual, social, creative and cultural intelligence have yet to be integrated into mainstream management science.

My efforts have been largely on the Y-axis. In most of my courses I emphasize character and attitude. This is the reason why in the early '90s I started a course on creativity, in collaboration with the India Foundation for the Arts, called 'Tracking Creative Boundaries'. We would call accomplished artists from across a wide variety of the arts to speak to us and share with us their insights, their creative biographies. The idea was to inspire our students to think differently, to go outside the box, to be bold, audacious and innovative in the way they think, in the way they can practice their future careers.

All education is about sowing seeds. Spirituality is no exception.

The next course I started was on leadership. A friend of mine introduced me to the stories of Vikramaditya, and later to the work of that outstanding scholar and mythologist, Joseph Campbell. That led and inspired me to investigate the domain of leadership, to see what is needed from the inside to perfect the outside. That's how I started.

The third area that I entered was spirituality, in the year 2000. And like all causes, especially those that deal with the emotional and the spiritual, we try to plant a seed in the soul of the learner. The metaphor of the seed is entirely appropriate because all seeds require nourishment, water, love, care and fertilizer. Sometimes you even have to prune

a rose to make it grow faster. You don't criticize a doctor because he gives you pain. He gives you pain to eliminate more serious pain.

So I started the course on spirituality to plant seeds in the souls of the students. And, like all seeds, they require care if they will some day give rise to saplings, then trees that later produce flowers, and finally produce an outstanding inimitable fragrance that is able to spread its sweetness all over the universe.

18 years down the line I am persuaded that all life is deeply and profoundly spiritual. The foundation of our lives is nothing but spirituality. So I would describe spiritual intelligence as the foundation and the rest as the scaffolding. It is spiritual intelligence that builds a person's character. It builds attitude. It builds fortitude. It provides equanimity of mind, which is something that the Bhagavad Gita exhorts us to do. Lord Krishna is very specific in his advice and counsel to Arjuna: "Practice Yoga, Arjuna, because Yoga is nothing but perfect equanimity of mind."

So, is it important for leaders to inculcate spirituality, and practices like Yoga and meditation? The answer is an emphatic yes. Why? Because it helps leaders go inside. It helps leaders develop equanimity of mind, of temper. It creates a temperament that leads to compassionate, caring citizens. It encourages mindfulness.

To me, mindfulness is about being acutely and deeply aware of the consequences of our actions upon others. Managers and leaders often have to take decisions that affect the lives of other people, sometimes mildly, sometimes very dramatically. It is imperative that they take these decisions with discrimination, caution and understanding.

Only spiritual intelligence can help a person live off their higher energies. There is an invisible sense of order that governs the visible worldly disorder. This invisible sense of order is spirituality. To grasp its working through intuition and personal experience is both a duty and a privilege.

Leadership is about transformation from within. It is about conquering the inner space. It is about realizing the perfection that is present inside to engage the imperfection of the outside. Effective leaders, irrespective of the domain they belong to, live off their higher energies, not their lower energies.

Q: How do you see leadership in organizations evolving over the next 10 to 20 years.

One of the most distressing features of the times we live in is that the space for innocence, joy and spontaneity has drastically diminished. In Hinduism we speak of it as the *Kali Yuga*, where *dharma* stands only on one foot. Its consequences are distressing.

We live in a world where when we have a good idea, a selfless idea, not motivated by personal gain, if we speak about it to people a lot of them will respond by saying, "Why do you go after that? Don't do it. Mind your own business." So even when we have something positive to do, people will frown upon it and discourage us from doing it.

The good news is that we are already becoming more and more aware in the world of management that mere analytics will not do. Aristotle once said, "Education must include education of the intellect, but also it must include goodness," and it is perhaps for this reason that even in an institution



like Harvard Business School they have a course on happiness. Should they? They certainly should. What is the use of living a life that is deeply unhappy?

It is spirituality that can lend direction in a world that lacks it, and we are already experiencing the positive effects of emotional and spiritual intelligence coming to the fore in management science. We are slowly making a transition from the world of thought, from intellectual celebration, to the world of the heart and feeling. And this is happening even in the corporate world.

It is becoming increasingly certain that companies today need to understand what consumers want. They need to put themselves in the shoes of the consumer. In the post-industrial age, they are discriminating consumers, not necessarily interested in mass products. They are more interested in products that are customized to their unique taste and to their way of life, that correspond to their values, their beliefs, and their shared beliefs. This is becoming increasingly recognized even in the world of management.

So I suspect that, in the future, all that is being treated as radical will become commonplace. Sometimes things have to worsen before wisdom prevails. And I think that is what is happening in the world today. There will soon come a time when values such as caring, compassion, solidarity,

sustainability, paying our respect to the Earth that nourishes us, will become more and more deeply embedded in corporate practice.

We need to restore a lost sense of innocence. We need to restore joy and spontaneity. And in some sense the industrial age contributed to creating a certain conceit and arrogance amongst us – that nature was only there to be exploited. At that time resources seemed to be inexhaustible, but in the post-industrial age it is now being universally recognized that we live in a world where resources may not be replenishable. They can be irreversibly lost.

This recognition has contributed to creating an acute awareness of the need for responsible living, responsible consumerism, and having a lifestyle that is congruent with sustainability on a long-term basis, on an enduring foundation. And it is for this reason that spirituality will start playing a major role in corporate practice and all aspects of life.

Q: What do business schools need to do to become truly relevant in imparting management education to future leaders?

In the past 150 years there is a lot that management education has accomplished. The ability to transform a

powerful idea into a working process, system, product, is indeed commendable, yet we have a long way to go.

There is great scope to incorporate elements of spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, social intelligence and cultural intelligence, and integrate all these five intelligences into mainstream management as a discipline. This needs to be done; it is already happening. But we perhaps need to make a more conscious, deliberate effort to make this integration possible.

The head and the heart have to go together. It is not enough to address the head; you have to conquer the heart. The world of thinking and the world of feeling have to collapse into one. Both need development, both need nurturing, both need consolidating. Why? Because only such a merger will create a fully rounded individual, a well-rounded individual, a well-rounded professional and a responsible global citizen.

Q: Beautiful. Wonderful. It really encapsulates the essence so impactfully. What is your experience with Heartfulness?

My experience with Heartfulness has been for more than four years now.

The Heartfulness Institute supported our first conference on 'Spirituality in Management', which will result in the publication of at least three good volumes, the first of which saw the light of day on 17 March 2018, and two more volumes are expected this year.


The more I associated with Heartfulness, the more I started involving them in my teaching programs. We did conferences together, and got to know each more intimately and developed a mutual respect for what both of us were endeavoring to do. This brought us closer and brought about a collaboration that has helped both of us. That it has helped me I don't have the slightest shadow of doubt.

The head and the heart have to go together. It is not enough to address the head; you have to conquer the heart. The world of thinking and the world of feeling have to collapse into one. Both need development, both need nurturing, both need consolidating.

My own Guru had told me to practice meditation two years ago, and this is what took me to Kanha. My first meeting with Daaji was about exploring the path of meditation, and it led me to explore meditation more deeply. And when I met him again several months later, I decided to take a sabbatical and actually dip into the world of meditation. I spent some time with Heartfulness seekers in New Jersey, which proved to be one of the best experiences of my life. I wanted to be alone. I wanted a degree of solitude and a degree of calmness to help me go into that path. And I am glad to say that something very good, something very positive resulted from that effort.

I wish to explore that path further. And if we can help others ignite and illumine their own journeys – isn't that part of our responsibility? So we started introducing the idea of Heartfulness, living from the heart, meditating upon the heart, in many of our executive education programs. And, again, I'm glad to say that it has received an overwhelmingly positive response. It encourages us to the view that we should deepen this initiative further.





it changes everything

*Pause and try to
remain poised,
especially when
everyone is rushing
around you and there
is pressure. Go into
your heart, feel your
Center and recalibrate
yourself. Approach
the task at hand with
poise and grace.*

Daaji

Choosing LIFE

PART 3

In part 3 of this interview, **THIERRY CASASNOVAS** continues his advocacy for life. He shares his own journey with **CELINE FRÉSARD**, and the role of fasting in the healing process.



Q: Can we move to a subject that is very dear to you – fasting? Can you tell us about your experience of fasting and its role in the body's regeneration process?

In fact, this topic is a continuation of what we have just been speaking about, because the approach I propose is:

1. Realization of life itself
2. Observation of life itself
3. Worship of life in itself

We discover it, we understand it, and we love it.

Now, you don't love something without respecting its needs. So you start honoring and serving life, which means respecting the vital needs of your body. And in this context, fasting is magnificent.

Fasting is a complete turn around from modern, secular science, which asks us to do this analysis, take this remedy, have this operation, and so on. In fasting, we sweep it all away. It's science for dummies, healing for dummies. There is nothing to understand, nothing to buy, nothing to do. You do nothing and let it all happen.

Fasting is an experience in which you realize that your outwardly oriented hyperactivity deprives you of all the



life that is within yourself. Fasting is doing nothing on the external physical level.

Normally, fasting means abstaining from food, sometimes even abstaining from liquid, abstaining from frenetic activity, and remaining quietly at rest. The law of homeostasis tells us that any living system returns spontaneously to a state of equilibrium, and it returns to balance all the more spontaneously if we are at rest. Fasting is the experience of rest, therefore the optimal experience of the development of life itself. It is an extraordinary moment when you can drop everything and observe life spreading inside yourself. You have nothing to do, so you remain quiet, and all of a sudden the fire that was dying out in you grows and strengthens. Imagine that possibility, if each of us realized it!

We start with a lot of fire, we have this very important flame, we are young and we have energy. Then as life

*Fasting is an experience
in which you realize that
your outwardly oriented
hyperactivity deprives
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within yourself.*

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

progresses, the flame begins to decline. At some point, we open our eyes and 'Ooh la la' we see that it has really diminished. So we stop, let it grow again, and return to life. Can you imagine what a healthy lifestyle that is? It is beautiful. Every time you see your flame go down slightly, you know what you have to do. Stop. Fasting is a perfect way to achieve this. It is the fastest way to let life flow through you when you need it.

But a lot happens in the body. Things we don't understand. It is necessary to simply cross them with the conviction and certainty that everything that happens during fasting goes in one direction only – towards life. Everything that happens is good. Absolutely nothing can happen in our body that does not go in the direction of life. It's impossible because life is moving towards life.

So fasting is the maximum experience of deploying the life force in oneself. Moreover, in this process of introspection, there is a physical and a spiritual dimension. It comes back to *Lekh lekha*. In fasting, even on the spiritual level, what must happen happens.

Q: You present fasting as a return to life, but there are certain uncomfortable stages and moments when you feel weak, when you question yourself. It can create fear and anxiety. Can you explain to us what's going on?

I work from the conviction that the fasting process is moving towards life. Let's take a concrete example: this summer I injured myself. I received a heavy load on my leg that cut my skin right down to the tendon. Today my skin has reconstituted itself. It is all pink. This I call life. But to get there, I had to go through the healing process, with a phase where the scar was nasty and painful; it was a necessary step.

Life goes towards life, and to achieve this it uses its own paths of regeneration. Sometimes we understand them,



sometimes we don't. It is important to study them, because there is indeed no reason to suffer just for the sake of suffering, and we can learn to relieve the body to the maximum in order to facilitate this path. But it is still necessary to go through the process.

For example, when I hurt my leg and the wound was purulent, and not at all pretty, if I had opened the wound so as not to see that, I would have blocked the repair process from happening naturally. I supported my body by putting Aloe vera on the wound to soften and accelerate healing, and honey because it is a wonderful adjuvant for healing, but I could not prevent the wound stage. We can relieve and support healing, and we can promote the cleansing of the body, because it is important to help it remove the waste it has accumulated, but there will be some uncomfortable moments.

Imagine you are driving on the highway and your fuel gauge lights up. You have two options. First, you can take a hammer and destroy the dashboard so that you no longer see the fuel gauge. The equivalent is often done when the body shows symptoms: we go to the doctor and come out



with products that treat symptoms, without solving the underlying problem, which seems to be of no interest to anyone. We suppress the body's signals: if we have inflammation, we take anti-inflammatory drugs; if we have a fever, we take medicine to reduce the fever; if we have pain, we take a painkiller. It is not complicated to cut off the functioning of the nervous system to eliminate pain, but did we solve the underlying problem that caused the pain?

In the second option, you see your gauge light up, you're in a hurry, you really don't want to stop because it's raining and cold, but you stop anyway to refuel. The healing process is similar – we stop and refuel. It's not always unpleasant, but it can be. The body has a lot of waste to dispose of, so it shows symptoms. And we have learned to run away from the symptoms all our lives.

Discomfort or pain is a normal signal from the living that indicates we have reached our limit. We have to slow down. Sometimes we are confused by what happens in the body during the cleaning and regenerative processes, but whatever happens, the only thing to remember is that

it goes in the direction of life. This is the nature of the living. At the beginning we need to repeat it to ourselves: "The body is moving towards life." I try to support, help and accompany people through the process, especially when it is unpleasant, to make it easier.

Q: So if we can get through the inconvenience of cleaning, what we call detoxification, we get to something else.

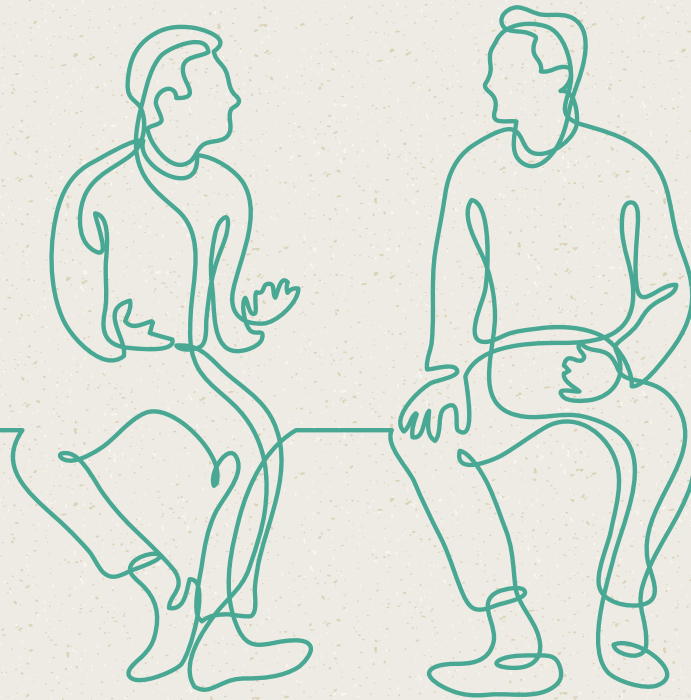
Yes. This is what I call crossing the veil. The first is the fear of symptoms. This is what we are hooked on in today's medicine. We are so afraid to feel, to be sensitive, and so afraid to suffer even a little, so as soon as we see a symptom approaching we run to the doctor and take medicine. In doing so, we may take a step back and not cross the veil. At some point, however, we have to cross it. And this requires conviction, commitment, determination, trust and tranquility. And this tranquility and conviction can only be based on one thing – the knowledge of the living. We can only cross the veil when we know why we are crossing it. Often it's not much, though we make a big deal out of it.

For example, if you have a liver problem and you fast, the liver will produce bile when it cleans itself, and you will probably vomit it up. One of my associates had hepatitis B that spoiled his life, and he had been in treatment for many years. While fasting, he vomited for three days, but it wasn't a disaster because after those three days his liver was healed.

So turning around every time a symptom appears is not living. We stay in a warm hell, while we are asked to go through that mirror and access life. Life awaits us on the other side, it awaits us in complete confidence in its power – a confidence that allows us to cross the illusion of symptoms and truly begin to live.

To be continued

The Power of THE PAUSE



DONNA CAMERON is the author of *A Year of Living Kindly*. Here she reflects on the importance of creating space between stimulus and response in everyday life activities, learning to master the art of the pause.

“Human freedom involves our capacity to pause, to choose the one response toward which we wish to throw our weight.”

—Rollo May

Some time ago, a friend happened to be looking at the huge collection of quotations I have tacked to a bulletin board covering one wall of my den. Inexplicably, she started to cry. Then she grabbed a pen from her purse and copied down this quotation from author and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl:

“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

“That’s it exactly,” she explained. “Whenever I’m tempted to take a drink, I need to pause in that space between stimulus and response. If I stop and think about it, I won’t drink. If I don’t, I slip and have a drink.”

I knew my friend was in AA and that sobriety was still a struggle for her.

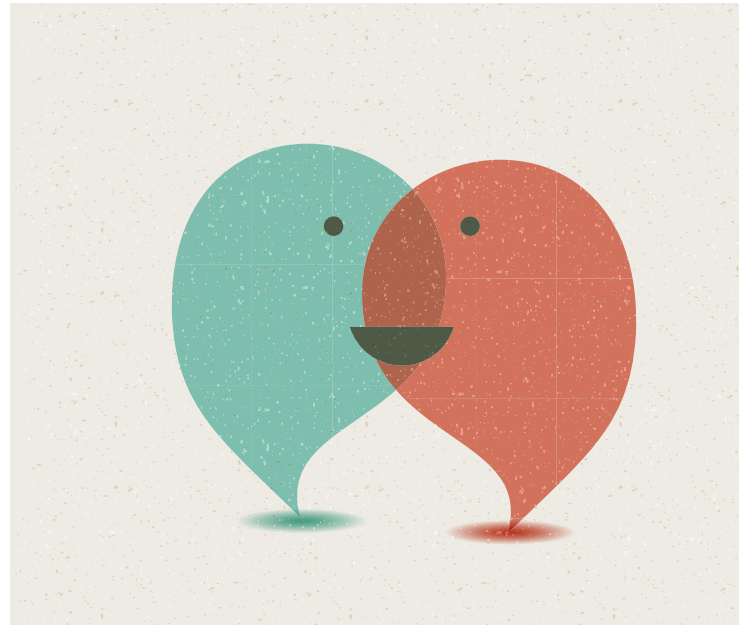
I thought about Frankl’s words and saw how many things they applied to. Not just alcohol, but overeating, smoking, spending ... any number of actions we take automatically with little or no thought. We allow an addiction or a learned response to overtake our free will. And, as Frankl describes, each time we don’t give in to the reflex response, we grow and claim our own precious freedom a little more.

His wise words are just as relevant to kindness. Approaching the post office not long ago, I saw a man blast his horn at a woman whose car was blocking his exit. When she didn’t move quickly, he blasted it again, and then a third time, even louder and longer.

I’d like to think that if he had paused, perhaps he would have chosen a different response. Maybe he would have shrugged and looked at his watch and said, “I’ve got time.” Or maybe he would have tried for a quick tap on the horn to alert her to his car, instead of three sharp and aggressive blasts.

I know I’ve been guilty of speaking sharply in response to someone else’s rudeness or bad behavior. But that’s their behavior. It becomes mine if I let their rudeness provoke me to similar conduct. I don’t have to do that. I have a choice. When I react in kind, it doesn’t improve the situation, and it doesn’t make me feel any better.

I also know that when I snap back at someone (as often as not, my spouse), it’s because I’m tired, feeling overwhelmed, inadequate, or – I admit it – hungry. A timely pause can prevent me from saying or doing something I’ll later regret. It maintains harmony. A timely pause enables me to adjust my course and be the person I want to be. It’s one of those lessons we learn and relearn over and over, until finally the pause becomes the automatic response.



A pause may give way to understanding; it may silence hurtful words; it may avert a broken heart. Instead of speaking or acting in instant response, taking the time to pause and think about what I want my response to activate – and why – has been transformative.

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

There's a reason why our mothers used to tell us to stop and count to ten when we got angry. It's the power of the pause. There are things that need to be said and things that don't need to be said. If we pause to think before we speak, we generally know the difference.

Rotarians have the right idea. Rotary International – the service organization focused on human rights around the world – has a four-question test that helps members decide whether and how to act or speak. Before responding, they consider:

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and friendship?
- Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, they keep silent. Wise people, those Rotarians. Politicians could learn a lot from them.

There is enormous power in something as simple as a pause. It allows us to delay long enough to decide if the action we're contemplating will really get the result we want. Sometimes, when we hit pause, we recognize that we should make that pause permanent and simply do nothing, say nothing. The pause gives us the gift of grace.

There is another time when the pause is a gift we offer ourselves – a gift of appreciation. Next time you perform an act of kindness, or you are the beneficiary of one, or you simply witness a kindness, pause and notice all the

good things you are feeling. A pause allows us to acknowledge the importance of kindness in our lives, and to reaffirm the choice we have made to walk the path of kindness.

I would put the power of the pause up against the power of the Hoover Dam. It's that big. A pause may give way to understanding; it may silence hurtful words; it may avert a broken heart. Instead of speaking or acting in instant response, taking the time to pause and think about what I want my response to activate – and why – has been transformative. In the space of that brief pause, I might totally change my reaction, or perhaps decide not to respond at all. That pause has always guided me to a better place.

A pause is not a vacant space. It's a place of enormous potential and growth. It's where we choose who we will be in this moment, and the next.

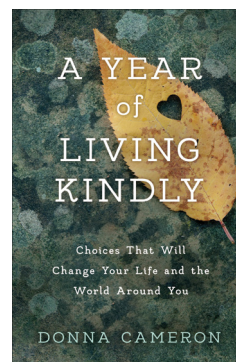
Kindness in Action:

Can you recall a situation where pausing before responding might have brought about a better outcome? Are there times when you know you are most likely to respond sharply or unkindly – such as when you are tired or frightened? Would a well-timed pause be welcome here? Set an intention to pause the next time your buttons are pushed. And the next time you experience or witness a kindness, pause to notice how it makes you feel.

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A Book by DONNA CAMERON
'A Year of Living Kindly'
<https://ayearoflivingkindly.com/>



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Sister Nivedita

YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY

PART 3

NIDRA

Yoga incorporates the science of all the bodies – the physical body, the mind, and the soul. In other words, it covers the whole field of psychology. The word 'psyche' itself comes from the Greek *psukhē*, meaning life force or soul. Historically, psychology was the study of the relationship between the mind and the soul. In recent times, however, the role of the soul has been neglected in a lot of western psychology, whereas it is central to Yoga.

Through Yoga we explore consciousness, and what results in changes to the field of consciousness as we evolve through various chakras and *koshas*. In this series of articles, DAAJI explains the fundamentals of yogic psychology, with its foundation in Patanjali's descriptions of the various mental modifications, some of which lead us to balance and well-being, and some of which take us away from balance. DAAJI gives us guidance and solutions to create mental well-being through yogic practices. In this third article of the series, he explores the fourth *vritti* described in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras: sleep, known in Yoga as *nidra*. In sleep we go beyond consciousness.

VRITTIS

The five *vrittis* are the five types of energy patterns or tendencies we create in the field of our consciousness or *chit*. 'Whirlpool' is a literal translation of the word *vritti*, and the *vrittis* are the whirlpools, waves and ripples that form according to how we perceive and interact with the world around us.

So try to imagine the original state of our being, the Center of our being, where there is only stillness. From that Center everything we think and do manifests. You can call it the default position, the zero position. Of our three bodies, it is our soul that is closest to our Center. That is why the soul is so much at home in the balanced state of nothingness.

Contrast that with the interplay of senses, thoughts, feelings and tendencies that draw us out into the world of movement and thinking, creating the various *vrittis* in the field of consciousness. But our soul is also embodied, and is connected with the physical body. So the soul, the *atman*, is also involved in movement and thinking (*atman*: *ath* means 'movement' and *man* means 'thinking'). In fact it is involved in everything that we think and do. Without it we would not exist for even a billionth of a second. So our soul is at home with movement and thinking, as well as with stillness. There is a constant flux between stillness and activity, as Vivekananda says, between activity and repose.

So try to imagine the original state of our being, the Center of our being, where there is only stillness. From that Center everything we think and do manifests.



Therefore, in Yoga, we try to maximize our potential in all three – stillness, thinking and movement. To do this, we are concerned with two main things: turning our attention inwards during meditation towards stillness, and refining our outward activities so that thoughts and movement are conducive to evolution, happiness and balance. We cannot exist in total stillness all the time or we would be dead, and that is not the aim of Yoga, which is also all about skill in action. So instead we learn to integrate stillness and activity into a happy balance in our daily actions. I have written about this in an earlier article on [“The Stillness Paradox”](#).

This combination of stillness and activity, when lived out in purity and simplicity, allows the soul to shine forth, meaning inner joy and happiness. When the waves of the *vrittis* settle to calmness, as happens during meditation, we see our true nature. As we master the art of meditation, we then learn to externalize that true nature

in all our other activities. This is another one of the specialties of Heartfulness – to carry the meditative state with us into the day, through the practice known as Constant Remembrance.

So if the soul is happy in stillness, thinking and movement, why are we not content all the time? It is because we create our own personal blend of *vrittis*, based on our likes and dislikes, and these pull us away from our Center. Our particular blend of *vrittis* is an expression of our personality. And a yogi of caliber can ‘read’ those patterns in the consciousness field and straight away describe a person’s state – peaceful or troubled, loving or angry, light and still or heavy and turbulent etc. and much more.

Patanjali describes these *vrittis* as being either colored (*klishtha*) or clear (*aklishtha*); in other words, they can be impure or pure. Impure *vrittis* lead to turbulence and pure *vrittis* lead to stillness. The mind is either a source

of bondage or a source of freedom, depending on how we cultivate and train it. Yoga is concerned only with this: how do we use the mind? Mastery of the mind, removal of all the impurities in the mind, is Yoga.

Patanjali goes on to describe the five *vrittis*: right knowledge (*pramana*), wrong knowledge (*viparyaya*), fantasy or imagination (*vikalpa*), sleep (*nidra*) and memory (*smriti*).

And a yogi of caliber can ‘read’ those patterns in the consciousness field and straight away describe a person’s state.

Pramana – means of right or valid knowledge

Viparyaya – false or wrong knowledge

Vikalpa – fantasy, imagination

Nidra – sleep

Smriti – memory

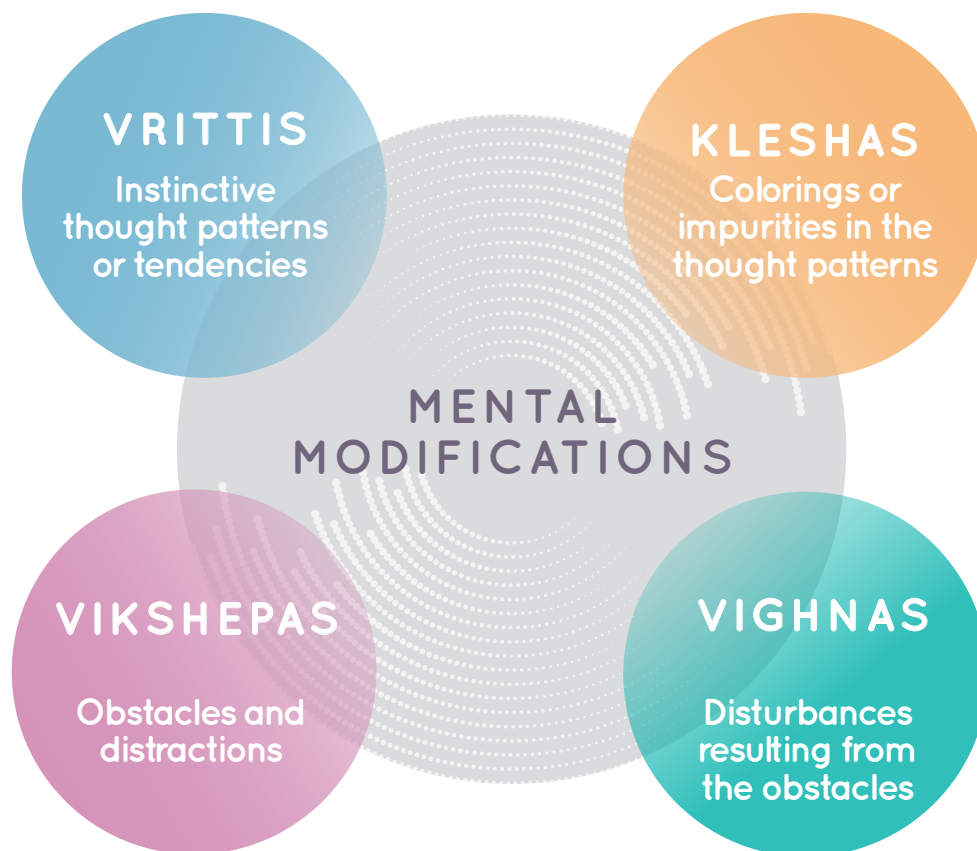
Avidya – ignorance, veiling

Asmita – mine-ness, egotism

Raga – attachment, addiction

Dvesha – aversion, repulsion

Abhinivesha – clinging to life, fear of death



Vyadhi – disease, illness

Styana – mental laziness, dullness

Samsaya – doubt, indecision

Pramada – carelessness, negligence, haste

Alasya – laziness, sloth

Avirati – lack of abstaining,
absence of non-attachment

Bhranti-Darshana – false perception

Alabdha-Bhumikatva – failing to attain
stages on the journey

Anavasthitattva – inability to maintain
the stage, instability

Duhkha – pain, mental and physical

Daurmanasya – despair, depression

Angam-Ejayatva – trembling of the body,
nervousness

Svasa – inhalation (irregular)

Prasvasa – exhalation (irregular)

SLEEP

All manifest life seems to require
a period of sleep, of calm,
in which to gain added strength, renewed vigor, for the
next manifestation, or awakening to activity. Thus is the
march of all progress, of all manifest life – in waves,
successive waves, of activity and repose.

Waves succeed each other in
an endless chain of progression.

—Swami Vivekananda

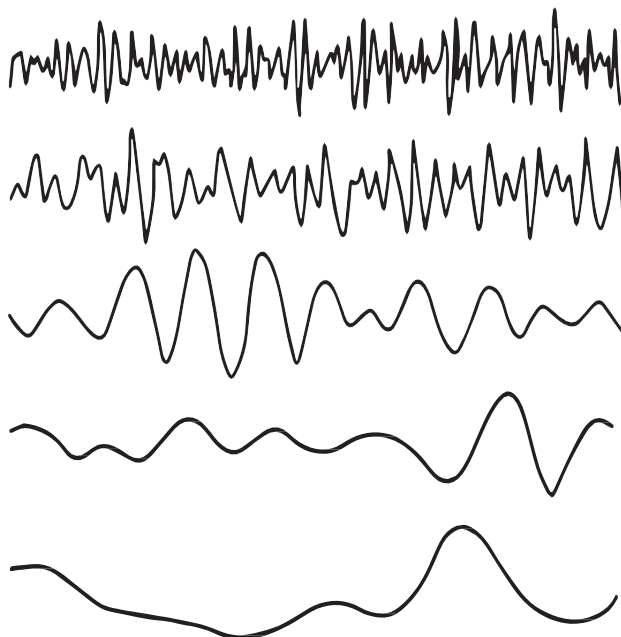
So far we have explored the first three *vrittis*: *pramana*, *viparyaya* and *vikalpa* – right understanding, wrong understanding, and imagination. The fourth *vritti* is sleep, defining yet another state of mind, for a completely different purpose. Patanjali says:

1.10: *Abhava pratyaya alambana vritti nidra*

Deep sleep is the subtle thought pattern
that embraces nothingness
– the negation of other thought patterns.
It is defined by the absence of content.

Deep sleep is an unconscious state with no content. In deep sleep, our brainwave frequencies slow right down, almost to zero, and these are known as Delta waves between the frequencies of 0.5 to 3 Hertz. There is minimal activity. At all other times, except during *Samadhi*, we have thoughts; but not during deep sleep. *Samadhi* and deep sleep are not all that different. It is only that in *Samadhi* we can be aware.

Why do we need to sleep? Delta wave sleep is rejuvenating and refreshing, because when we rest the body and mind other healing processes are able to purify and restore our system. Freshness comes as a result of deep sleep – we are mentally inactive, so our brainwave frequencies are almost zero, reflecting the stillness in our mental process. There are very few waves in the mind – the lake of consciousness is almost still.



Gamma Waves

31 - 120 cps

Hyper brain activity which is great for learning and active problem solving

Beta Waves

13 - 30 cps

Engaged in normal everyday activities and conversations

Alpha Waves

8 - 12 cps

Very relaxed. Deepening into meditation

Theta Waves

4 - 7 cps

Drowsy and drifting down into sleep and dreams

Delta Waves

0.5 - 3 cps

Deep sleep with no dreams, no thinking, no consciousness



More importantly, when the body and mind are not demanding attention and creating waves, we are able to withdraw into the soul. In Yoga, this deep sleep state is known as *sushupti*. The knowledge of the physical body comes in the waking or *jagratha* state. The knowledge of the mind comes in the dream or *swapna* state, and the knowledge of the soul comes in the deep sleep or *sushupti* state. In fact, it is the soul itself.

In deep sleep we are absorbed in the soul in a state of oneness. This is a deeply spiritual state, close to God, but we are generally not aware of it. Because we are close to God, resting in the soul, we experience joy and bliss, also without knowing it.

Some yogis speak about retaining consciousness in the deep sleep state of *sushupti*, but is it really conscious? Not as we generally think of it. We can say it is conscious without familiar awareness. Consciousness is a function of the mind, whereas in *sushupti* we are at the very center of the mind, in the realm of the soul. In Heartfulness it is beautifully described as the state of higher ignorance, beyond the conscious mind, beyond the thinking mind, and beyond the observing mind. The early Christian mystics called it

‘the cloud of unknowing’. It is a state so much subtler than consciousness, on the verge of absolute nothingness. As the measured brainwave frequencies show us, it is not completely zero, but these very low Delta wave frequencies reflect minimal autonomic activity necessary for rejuvenation. It is baseline existence.

Adepts of meditation are able to attain a similar state to *sushupti* while meditating, in deep *Samadhi*. What is the difference between *sushupti* and *Samadhi*? *Samadhi* can be with full awareness and consciousness. But it is not always so – there are various stages of *Samadhi*, starting with the deep sleep like state of unconscious stone-like *pashantulya*, and ending with full conscious awareness. It depends on how we meditate, how we expand our consciousness, and how we connect with the soul.

The fully aware state of *Samadhi* is known as *Sahaj Samadhi* or the *Turiya* state – awareness in nothingness. In this *Turiya* state, very low frequency Delta brainwaves are measured just as they are in deep sleep, and in Heartfulness this can happen even in the very first meditation due to the effects of Yogic Transmission. We touch the soul, we nourish the soul, and we

feel as rejuvenated by meditation as we do by deep sleep.

With the help of Transmission, it becomes quite easy to experience the *Turiya* state. While our body is fully relaxed, our mind perceives things. We are not sleeping, but we are in such a relaxed state. And then we learn how to take this condition out into daily life with eyes open. We transcend the *Turiya* state to the *Turiyatit* state, which happens when we carry that deep meditative state within us all the time. This will only happen when the mind is so pure and elastic that there are no complexities or heaviness blocking our ability to traverse all these states of being. It is the result of two things: our ability to let go of all the colorings (known as *vairagya*) and our practice (known as *abhyas*).

*With the help of
Transmission, it
becomes quite easy to
experience the Turiya
state.*



Patanjali says:

1.12: Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tat nirodhah

The *vrittis* are stilled through *abhyas* (practice that takes us towards the Center) and *vairagya* (the letting go of all the mental colorings).

Through practice and arriving at state of *vairagya*, we start to resonate with the Absolute state, the original state of stillness. We not only touch the soul during deep sleep but also during *Samadhi*, with more and more awareness. That connection then continues on through all our daily activities. Restlessness disappears. Our waking and deep sleep states are no longer so different.

To simplify, we can say that:

Consciousness + thinking = waking state, *jagratha*

Unconsciousness + thinking = dreaming state, *swapna*

Unconsciousness – thinking = deep sleep, *sushupti*, death

Consciousness – thinking = *Sahaj Samadhi*, *Turiya*

So sleep is the vritti that takes us deepest and closest to the profoundness of our Center, and we do this every night of our lives, from the time we are in the womb until the time of our death. If we can discipline our sleep cycles, it will change our lives. How well we sleep and how deeply we sleep determines our state of mind throughout the day.

Witnessing can exist in any of these four states, but whether it does or not will depend on how evolved our consciousness is and the potentiality behind that consciousness. And the most difficult state for witnessing is *sushupti*. How many of us can be a witness to what happens in deep sleep or death? Practice is the key. It allows us to make use of these deep states of *sushupti* and *Samadhi* for spiritual growth.

There is an interesting question we can ask here: Why is it that we believe we are ignorant in *sushupti*?

One perspective is that our conscious mind is not active in this deeper state of sleep and hence no information is possible from that state.

Another perspective is that there is nothing to be known there! What can we know about the soul, about nothingness? Why should we want to know about something that is beyond knowledge? On entering that state, the elements of the waking and dream states withdraw and merge into seed form. From that point of view there is usually no awareness. So we call it ignorance, without understanding the real thing.

So sleep is the *vritti* that takes us deepest and closest to the profoundness of our Center, and we do this every night of our lives, from the time we are in the womb until the time of our death. If we can discipline our sleep cycles, it will change our lives. How well we sleep and how deeply we sleep determines our state of mind throughout the day.

Generally, it is better to sleep early to be in tune with natural cycles. On the night you miss your sleep, observe how you carry out your activities the next day. Lack of sleep makes us irritable and angry, and we can never claim to be so creative. At best we will create more enemies! Now compare that with a night when you go to bed early, before you are already exhausted, and then see how you carry out your activities the following day. Sleeping well allows us to be creative. The difference will be so obvious.

When we sleep well, our morning meditation will also improve drastically; when we meditate with a rested mind we have a good grip over consciousness. And when we meditate well, we will be able to dive into deep states with awareness, into *Sahaj Samadhi*, so that we nourish the soul and let its joy radiate into every aspect of our lives.

THE ANCIENT SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

SISTER NIVEDITA shares her insights on yogic psychology, the supernatural, the master, consciousness and the purpose of life in this enlightening article about yogic psychology and the highest goal of human attainment.

India is undoubtedly the land of the understanding of psychology. To Hindus, more than to any other race, it may be said that men appear as minds. Concentration of mind is to them the ideal of life. Such differences as between talent and genius, between ordinary goodness and the highest sainthood, between moral weakness and power, are by them understood as simple differences in degree of concentration. This preoccupation of the race is partly cause and partly effect, doubtless of the fact that the study of psychology has been organized in India as a science from the earliest times.

Long before the value of writing (for the notation of knowledge) was even suspected, the quiet registration of phenomena in the communal consciousness had begun by the interchange of ideas and observations. Millenniums before instruments and laboratories could be thought of as having any bearing on scientific enquiry in general, the age of experiment was fully developed amongst the Indian people with regard to this most characteristic of their sciences.

Millenniums before instruments and laboratories could be thought of as having any bearing on scientific enquiry in general, the age of experiment was fully developed amongst the Indian people with regard to this most characteristic of their sciences.

NO SUPERNATURAL

It is not surprising that in the singularly wide range of knowledge thus accumulated in India, many phenomena of the mind, which appear to the West as abnormal or miraculous, should be duly noted and classified. Thus, hypnotism and many obscure forms of hyperæsthesia and hyperkinesis – the most familiar of these being healing, thought-reading, clairvoyance, and clairaudience – offer no overwhelming difficulty to the student of the ancient Indian psychology, or Raja Yoga as it is called.

We all know that the great value of scientific thought lies in enabling us to recognize and record phenomena. It matters little that a disease is rare, if only it be once noted as within the field of medical practice. It has a place thenceforth in the human mind. It is no miracle, only because sooner or later it will be classified. It has a name. The conjunction of diagnosis and treatment is now a question of time only.

Something of the same sort applies to the trustworthy fraction of what are commonly referred to as 'psychic phenomena'. Occurrences falling under this head, when authentic, are obviously no more supernatural than the liquefaction of air, or the extraction of radium. Indeed the propriety of the word 'supernatural' is always open to dispute, inasmuch as if once a thing can be proved to occur, it is clearly within nature, and to call it supernatural becomes, by that very fact, absurd.

In India, the phenomena in question are regarded as cases of extension of faculty, and their explanation is sought not in the event but in the state of the mind witnessing it, since it is to be supposed that this will always, under given conditions, register a perception different from the accustomed.



The Swami was able, on his arrival in the Western sphere of psychical inquiry, to classify all knowledge as subconscious, conscious, and superconscious.

STRANGE FACTS

In Ramakrishna Paramahansa, living in the garden of Dakshineswar, his disciples had been familiar, for years, with many of those mental characteristics which are noted in the books as distinctive of the highest degree of concentration. He was so responsive that he would meet them at the door on their arrival and begin at once to answer, without being told of them, the questions that the boys carried written in their pockets.

His perceptions were so fine that he could tell by touch the character of anyone who might already have come in contact with his food, his clothes, or his mat. It 'burnt' him, he said, of an impress from which he shrank; or, on another occasion, "Look! I can eat this. The sender must have been some good soul!" His nervous system, again, had been so charged with certain ideas that even in sleep he shrank from the touch of metal, and his hand would, apparently of its own accord, restore a book or a fruit whose return to its owner the conscious mind had failed to prompt.

No Indian psychologist would say of one of the world-seers that he had talked with angels, but only that he had known how to reach a mood in which he believed himself to talk with angels. Of this condition, the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna saw plentiful examples. ...

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

... By such stimulating of each man to his own highest and best, or by such communication of experience as one and another could bear at the time, Ramakrishna Paramahansa built up the rigorous integrity and strong discrimination that one sees in all who were made by his hand. "We believe nothing without testing it," says one Ramakrishnananda by name. "We have been trained to do this."

And when I enquired from another of the disciples what particular form this training took, he answered, after deep thought, that it lay in some experience given of the Reality, from which each gained a knowledge that could never be deceived. "By our own effort," says Vivekananda in one of his earlier lectures, "or by the mercy of some great perfected soul, we reach the highest."

LIMITS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Now the life of the guru is the disciple's treasure in hand; and it was undoubtedly by an instantaneous analysis of all that he had seen and shared of the extensions possible to human faculty that the Swami was able, on his arrival in the Western sphere of psychical inquiry, to classify all knowledge as subconscious, conscious, and superconscious.

The two first terms were in common enough use in Europe and America. The third he himself added to the psychological vocabulary by a masterly stroke of insight, authenticated by his own personal knowledge. "Consciousness," he said on one occasion, "is a mere film between two oceans, the subconscious and the superconscious."

Again he exclaimed, "I could not believe my own ears when I heard Western people talking so much of consciousness! Consciousness? What does consciousness matter! Why, it is nothing as compared with the unfathomable depths of the subconscious and the heights of the superconscious. In this I could never be misled, for had I not seen Ramakrishna Paramahansa gather in ten minutes, from a man's subconscious mind, the whole of his past and determine from that his future and his powers?"

*Only to the soul that is strong
enough to avoid these temptations
does the door stand open. In the
words of Patanjali, "To him who is
able to reject all the powers, comes
the cloud of virtue."*

The certainty of the dictum laid down in Raja Yoga that intuition, when genuine, can never contradict reason, is also indisputably due to the same comprehensive range of experience. ...

THE GOAL OF ALL

But even if so, knowledge of the phenomenal could never be the goal of effort. The return of wandering wills from one plane of physical tension to another could throw but little light on any true concept of immortality. Only by renunciation could this be reached. Any dwelling upon the occult led inevitably, in the Swami's opinion, to increase of desire, to increase of egotism, and to the fall into untruth.

If the ordinary good of life was to be given up, for the sake of the soul, how much more assuredly so these vanities of supernatural power! Buddha's abhorrence of wonders was the eternal glory of Buddhism. At best their value could only be to give a little confidence, and that only for the first steps. "If there be powers, they shall vanish away; charity alone remaineth." Only to the soul that is strong enough to avoid these temptations does the door stand open. In the words of Patanjali, "To him who is able to reject all the powers, comes the cloud of virtue." He alone attains the very highest.

Excerpts from:

Noble, M., 1967. *The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita*, 'The Master As I Saw Him', Chapter 13, 'Our Master's Relation to Psychic Phenomena So-Called', Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, India.





TASTE OF LIFE

Trees must develop deep roots in order to grow strong and produce their beauty. But we don't see the roots. We just see and enjoy the beauty. In much the same way, what goes on inside of us is like the roots of a tree.

Joyce Meyer

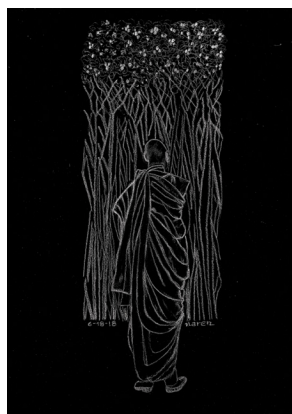
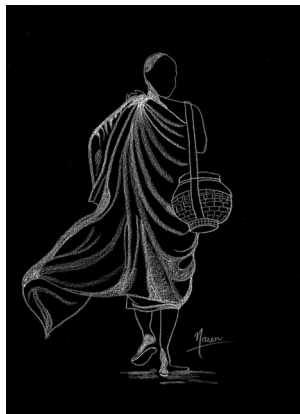
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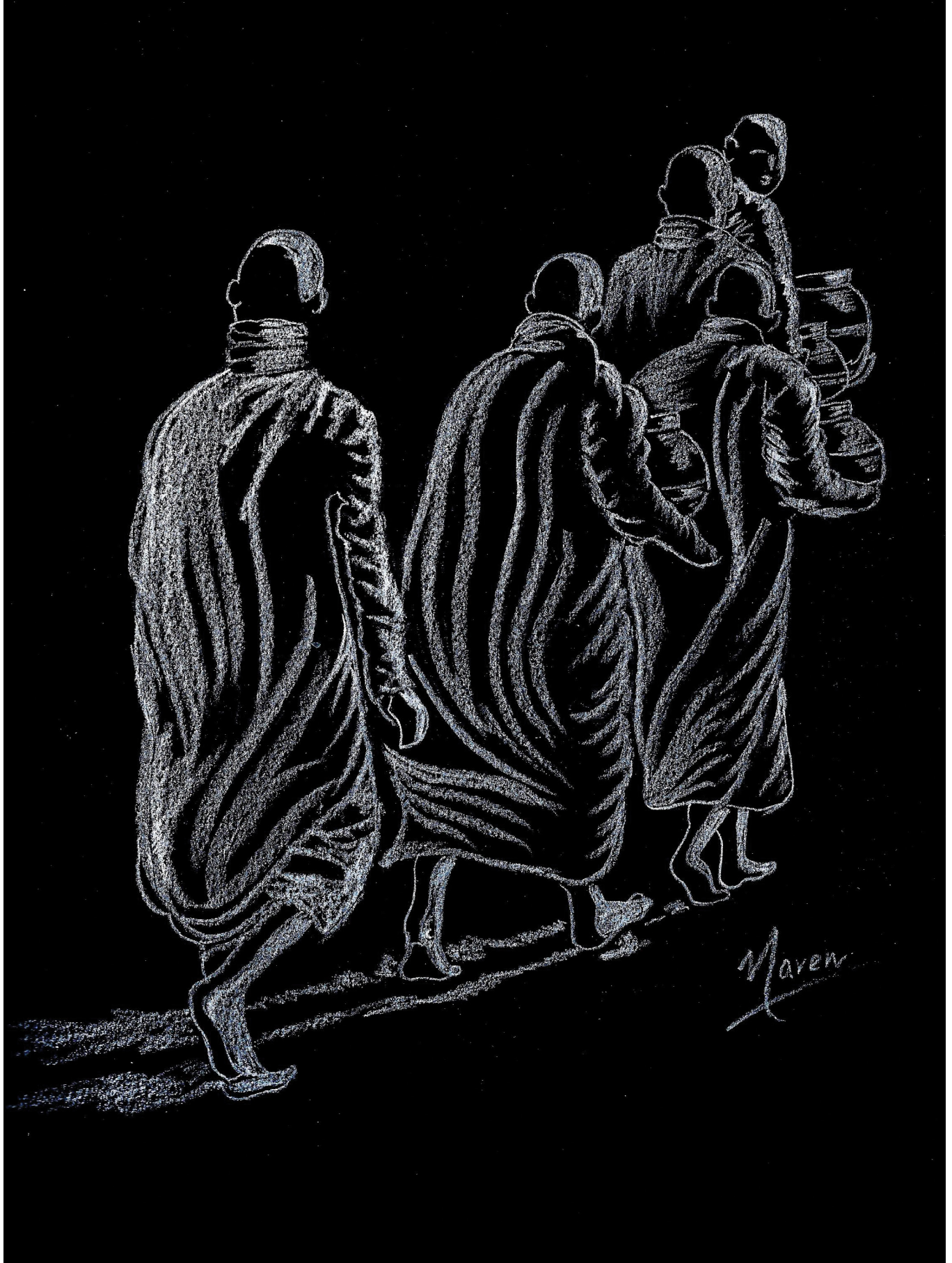
ART ESSAY by NAREN KINI

The Buddha said: These four are the foodstuffs, ye *bhikkus*, which sustain the creatures that are born, and benefit the creatures that seek rebirth. The first is edible food, coarse or fine; touch is the second; the thinking capacity of the mind is the third; and the fourth is consciousness.

Understand that you own nothing; everything that surrounds you is temporary; only the love in your heart will last forever.

Whatever is not yours, let go of it. Your letting go will be for your long-term benefit and happiness.









Heart Roots

ROSALIND PEARMAIN looks at the emotional issues facing young people today, and shares her research findings on the importance of feeling safe and grounding ourselves in the inner shelter of the heart.



It seems as though there is a strong human feeling towards old and tall trees as if we want them to keep growing and expanding onwards into the sky. We are drawn to look up wondrously. How do they manage to do this without falling over? Perhaps there is an echo of our own longing towards transcendence and the expansion of our consciousness.

As one of the '60s and '70s generation, I realize that we had that yearning to go beyond limits, to experience as many different kinds of mind-expanding opportunities as possible. We wanted to disrupt and change things that seemed limiting. Did we also undermine the roots of our societies that had allowed this heady growth to evolve? Perhaps we made it harder for our children and even more so for our grandchildren to find stability and an inner base of support?

When my son was 18, his best friend died in a tragic accident, falling out of a car. Within a short period of time, another friend fell off a balcony at a party and also died. One more later fell out of a tree. Needless to say, this shocking loss of poignant, youthful promise had a deep rippling impact on many. Symbolically, they alerted me to the question of how we fall out of our lives, ourselves, so easily in our youth in different ways.

At present, we are aware of the escalating problems of young people around the world, who are often depressed, lonely, despairing, anxious. They are on the front line of a world that we have created and they are showing us that it is not working for them. We fall out of ourselves often as teenagers trying to fit with outside demands and pressures from others. We may feel that we have to hide ourselves away to fit in. We lose faith with our own inner self. Can we ever find a way to fall back inside?

At the time of these deaths, I wanted to do something constructive. Having observed the transformative effect of Quaker summer schools for teenagers for my own children, I wondered if they could be offered far more widely. Finding an American model based on creative arts, I worked as an adult volunteer in both. I also visited a summer program

It anchors us into the environment of our true Self, our ground of being, and into the earth and connection with others. We can be sheltered in our divine source as well as connected with the world. This is Heartfulness. It is a way to fall back inside ourselves and never fall out again.

for teenagers run by Heartfulness in Europe. From a small piece of qualitative research carried out in each, I discovered that the most significant aspect for the young people was the sense of safety they got from all of these structures which had ground rules of inclusion and encouragement for everyone equally.

"I had never felt so safe," said one. "I cried when I had to leave." It was a bit of a shock to hear how these young people felt so unsafe to be themselves. They felt a lack of supportive acceptance from their parents and peers. They felt a level of conditional love, dependant on pleasing their parents. They also experienced exclusion and denigration from peers and constant pressure from expectations in the education system. Some experienced far more dangerous conditions in urban settings from crime and gangs. Ten years later, the situation appears to be worsening. The pressure of social media now adds to the feeling of shame and self-hatred that young people may feel in comparison with an illusory ideal projected outside and beyond reach.

TASTE OF LIFE

Another small piece of research emerged in my doctoral study: Heartfulness meditators experienced far higher levels of a deep sense of safety at some time in their experiences of meditation than another comparison group.

All the studies of attachment and neuroscience show us that we cannot learn and integrate information if we are feeling anxious or under threat. This can be aroused from our own inner self-attack as much as from others. So how can we fall back inside to the inner shelter of our heart, the source of love and our true being?

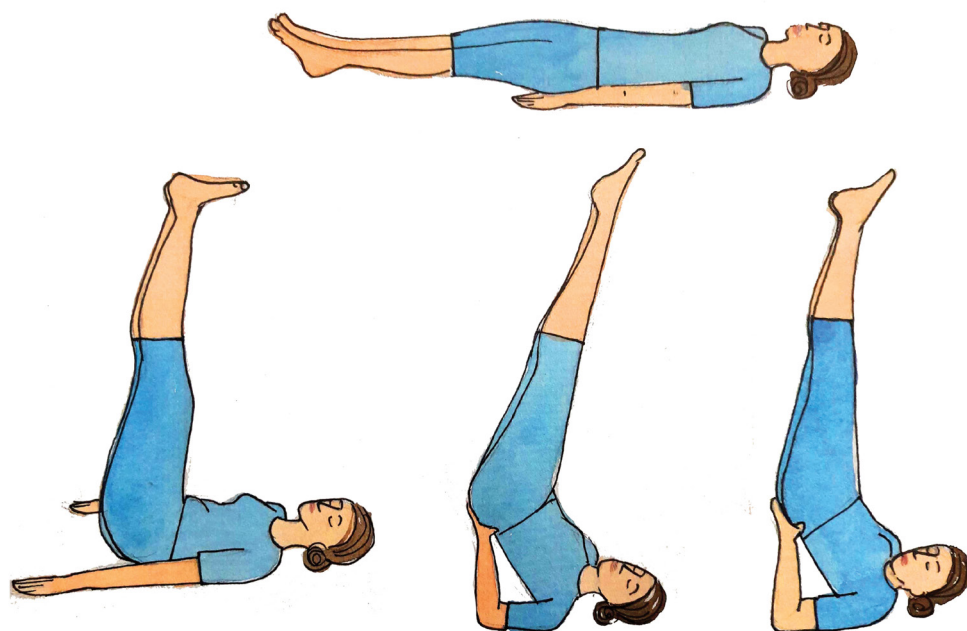
I had thought it was the deep taproot in a tree that anchored it so securely. But on further investigation, it seems that it is a system of shallow, thin horizontal roots that give trees their stability. These roots spread two or three times as wide as the height of the tree. Thin delicate roots mix with other fungi and fibrous material and put down vertical shoots as well. So it is the small horizontal roots that reach out and support the tree in its connection with the earth and other organisms.

This is a beautiful metaphor for the working of the heart. It anchors us into the environment of our true Self, our ground of being, and into the earth and connection with others. We can be sheltered in our divine source as well as connected with the world. This is Heartfulness. It is a way to fall back inside ourselves and never fall out again.



Heartfulness Yogasanas

SARVANGASANA



Lie flat on your back with legs straight and together, arms by the side of your body.

Breathe in, raising your legs up together keeping the knees straight, till they are perpendicular to the ground.

Lift your hips off the ground and place your palms beneath your hips.

Straighten your body by sliding your palms higher on your trunk, while raising your hips and legs further up till the trunk and legs are in a straight line; and until the whole weight of the body is resting on your shoulders.

Rest your elbows on the floor with palms supporting the back and moving the elbows closer to each other.

Bring your chest towards your chin and form a chin lock. Raise your hips and legs further up till the trunk and legs are in a straight line.

Close your eyes, hold and stay in the position with gentle, long and deep breaths - in and out six times.

SUPINE POSES

STAGE I

Stretching legs to the sides

Slowly spread both legs to the sides. Keep the knees straight and feel the stretch.

Take slow and deep breaths - in and out six times.



STAGE II

Adopting Namaskar Mudra

Slowly fold your legs, bringing your feet together and soles touching each other.

Take slow and deep breaths - in and out six times.

Breathe in, slowly raise the legs and come back to Sarvangasana.



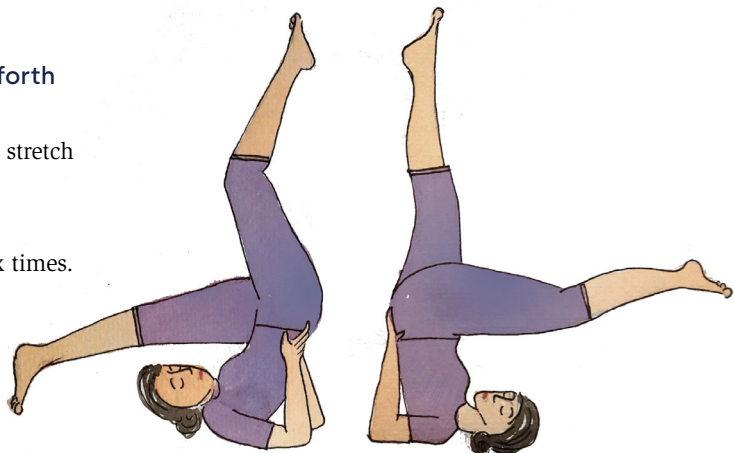
STAGE III

Lowering the foot and stretching back and forth

Breathe out, lower your right foot to the ground and stretch the legs.

Take gentle, long and deep breaths - in and out six times. Breathe in, take the legs up.

Repeat with the other leg and come back to Sarvangasana.



BENEFITS OF SARVANGASANA

Sarvangasana acts on the thyroid gland, the pituitary and the brain. By simultaneously balancing them, *Sarvangasana* helps to balance the entire endocrinal system as well as all the systems that are dependent on the hormonal system such as the circulatory, respiratory, digestive and reproductive systems.

Due to its direct influence on the thyroid gland, the *Asana* helps to remove many diseases and maintain good health of the entire body.

By improving the efficiency of the thyroid gland (controls the metabolism of the body controls the metabolism of the body) through *Sarvangasana*, one can maintain correct body weight. *Sarvangasana* helps to normalize the body weight by balancing the endocrinal system.

Regular practice of *Sarvangasana* helps to maintain youthfulness and rejuvenate an aging body.

Sarvangasana improve the blood supply to the brain and nourishes the brain with more blood.

Wrinkles and spots on the face are reduced by improving the blood supply.

The influence of *Sarvangasana* on the parathyroid gland helps to ensure normal bone growth and regeneration and can prevent premature ossification of the bones.

Sarvangasana bends the cervical region of the spine in a forward direction, improves the flexibility of the vertebrae and tones the nerves that pass through the neck, to and from the brain. The nerves in this region receive a fresh supply of oxygenated blood, which helps to keep them in good condition.

Bending of the spine at the neck helps to remove backache and headache.

Sarvangasana is useful for asthmatics, and treating varicose veins.

This *Asana* is very useful for toning the legs and removing fatigue.

Regular practice helps to remove various types of digestive ailments, especially where they are caused by blood congestion or general inefficiency of the organs.

Sarvangasana tones the reproductive organs. It had been found useful in helping to relieve menstrual and menopausal disorders.

Sarvangasana helps to eliminate and prevent various types of throat and nose ailments. During *Sarvangasana*, the whole region of the neck, throat and face is flooded with fresh oxygenated blood which helps to improve the nourishment of the entire area and the many organs in this vicinity – the tonsils, the ears, the eyes, the lungs, the thymus and so forth all benefit from the improved blood supply.

Sarvangasana increases the resistance of the body to disease by influencing both the tonsils and thymus.

Sarvangasana is an excellent method for tranquilizing the mind and helps to bring harmony and peace into one's life.

more



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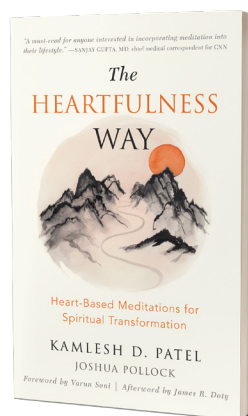
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