

February 2019

heartfulness

Synchronicity

DAAJI Yogic Psychology - Imagination

AMISH TRIPATHI Liberalism & Lord Shiva

ANITA MOORJANI Tapping Into Infinity



www.heartfulnessmagazine.com

heartfulness

CREATIVE TEAM

Editorial Team — Meghana Anand, Sylvie Berti Rossi, Genia Catala, Elizabeth Denley, Emma Ivaturi

Design Team — Hélène Camilleri, Emma Ivaturi, Uma Maheswari, Stephanie Rappl, Jasmine Rathod, Nehal Tania

Photography — Areeya Ann, Sanne Berg, Pinakeen Bhatt, Katarina Hoglova, Viktoria Kurpas, Daria Shevtsova

Art — Jasmine Rathod, Alexander Ivanov

Writers — Ichak K. Adizes, Elizabeth Denley, Alanda Greene, Alexander Ivanov, Andreas Kramer, Anita Moorjani, Ankur Naik, Karen O'Neill, Veronique Nicolai, Kamlesh Patel, Ravi Venkatesan

Interviewees — Thierry Casasnovas, Nipun Mehta, Amish Tripathi

ISSN 2455-7684

CONTRIBUTIONS

contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

ADVERTISING

advertising@heartfulnessmagazine.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions

EDITOR – Rishabh Kothari

PRINTED BY – Sunil Kumar

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

PUBLISHER – Sunil Kumar representing Spiritual Hierarchy Publication Trust on behalf of Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation, Chennai.

© 2015 Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation Printing, publishing, distribution, sales, sponsorship and revenue collection rights vests with the Publisher alone. www.heartfulnessmagazine.com

All rights reserved. 'Heartfulness', 'Heartfulness Relaxation', 'Heartfulness Meditation', 'Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation', 'SMSF', 'www.Heartfulness.org', the 'Learn to Meditate' logo, the 'Heartfulness' logo are registered Service Marks and/or Trademarks of Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the Publisher. The views expressed in the contributions in this publication do not always reflect those of the editors, the Heartfulness Institute, or the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation.

Synchronicity

Dear readers,

Carl Jung coined the term 'synchronicity' to describe those meaningful yet acausal connections we find happening very often in day-to-day life. In this edition we focus on this fascinating topic, along with the various meanings and events associated with synchronicity.

Daaji shares with us the yogic perspective on imagination in his series on Yogic Psychology, Nipun Mehta continues his interview on the Gift Ecology, and Thierry Casasnovas describes his experience of recovering from death's door to wellness through a series of lifestyle changes and attitudes. We also hear from Anita Moorjani on tapping into infinity, Dr Ichak Adizes about his learning from Yoga, and Ravi Venkatesan starts a new series on the Heartful Leader.

The icing on the cake in this issue is an exclusive interview with Amish Tripathi, the very popular author of the Shiva Trilogy and the Ramayana Quintet. He tells us about his childhood, his liberal and rebellious nature, and the inspiration for his books which are about some of the greatest figures of ancient India.

The editors

contributors



Kamlesh Patel

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



Amish Tripathi

A self-professed liberal who at the same time loves the religious traditions of his native India, Amish has brought to life the mythology of Lord Shiva and the Ramayana for readers worldwide, and has developed a pop culture celebrity status as one of India's most popular authors.



Alexander Ivanov

A contemporary artist and the creator of more than 150 abstract and photorealistic artworks, his art has received multiple international art awards. Alex currently resides in the suburbs of Moscow with his wife and daughter.



Nipun Mehta

Founder of ServiceSpace, Karma Kitchen, DailyGood and KindSpring, he successfully works to integrate the Gift Ecology, technology and volunteerism. He is recognized globally for creating a culture that brings harmony and inclusiveness.



Anita Moorjani

The New York Times bestselling author of *Dying to Be Me* and *What If This is Heaven?*, Anita is also an international speaker and cancer survivor. She came to the world's attention as a protégé of Dr Wayne Dyer, for her near death experience and miraculous recovery, spreading the powerful message of embodying love in a fear-based world.



Veronique Nicolai

A pediatrician by training, she coordinates the Heartfulness Yoga and wellness programs, including the internationally certified Heartfulness Yoga Teachers Training Program. These programs integrate a deep knowledge of the human system from yogic, ayurvedic and medical science.



interview

22

Amish Tripathi

Tradition, Liberalism
& Lord Shiva



focus: *Synchronicity*

08

Anita Moorjani

Tapping Into Infinity

10

Karen O'Neill

Connecting the Dots

12

Ankur Naik

Signals

13

Elizabeth Denley

Synchronicity



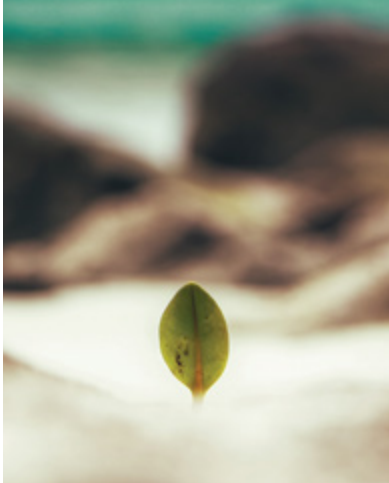
in the field

16

Veronique Nicolai

Heartfulness
Wellness & Yoga

inside



it changes everything

32

Ichak K. Adizes

Learning from Yoga

34

Ravi Venkatesan

The Heartful Leader
- part 1

38

Thierry Casasnovas

Choosing Life
- part 2

be inspired

46

Kamlesh Patel

Yogic Psychology
- part 2



56

Andreas Kramer

The Rhythm of Nature

58

Nipun Mehta

Gift Ecology & Ecosystems
- part 2

taste of life

68

Alanda Greene

Earthworms & the Unseen

72

Heartfulness Yogasanas
Uttanapadasana

74

Alexander Ivanov

Art Essay – Synchronicity



what's up

88



focus *synchronicity*

*Synchronicity is an ever present reality
for those who have eyes to see.*

Carl Jung



TAPPING INTO *infinity*

ANITA MOORJANI



Synchronicity and the idea of attraction have been given a lot of attention in recent years. The thought of things falling into place effortlessly because we're attracting them, is alluring, but I prefer to think it is allowing rather than attracting.

We're one with the universe, our purpose is to be our magnificent selves, and the external world is only a reflection of what's inside us. A breakdown came in my life when my focus was outward, due to the comparisons I made, and the competition this created. I used to feel that there wasn't enough for everyone, which caused greed and competitiveness. I always felt the need to convince others to think the way I did, instead of embracing our uniqueness and differences.

All these feelings came from the view that the universe is limited, when it's actually infinite. It's capable of growing and encompassing as much as we are. It's up to us to expand and allow in as much as we want, but it has to be done from the inside out, not the other way around.



Once I realized that there's nothing outside my infinite self, I could begin to focus on viewing myself as an ongoing work of perfection – but in a way that's dynamic not static. Like a kaleidoscope that turns from one exquisite image to the next, perfection is constantly in motion.

Once I realized that there's nothing outside my infinite self, I could begin to focus on viewing myself as an ongoing work of perfection – but in a way that's dynamic not static. Like a kaleidoscope that turns from one exquisite image to the next, perfection is constantly in motion. To me, this means seeing beauty in the journey and in the apparent mistakes as they take me to another level of understanding. My aim is to feel good enough about myself to get to a point of trust, and to let go of the outcome. When I observe my own infinite nature, my external world reflects this. Then I attract what's best for me, which is also the best thing I can do for the universe.

connecting the dots

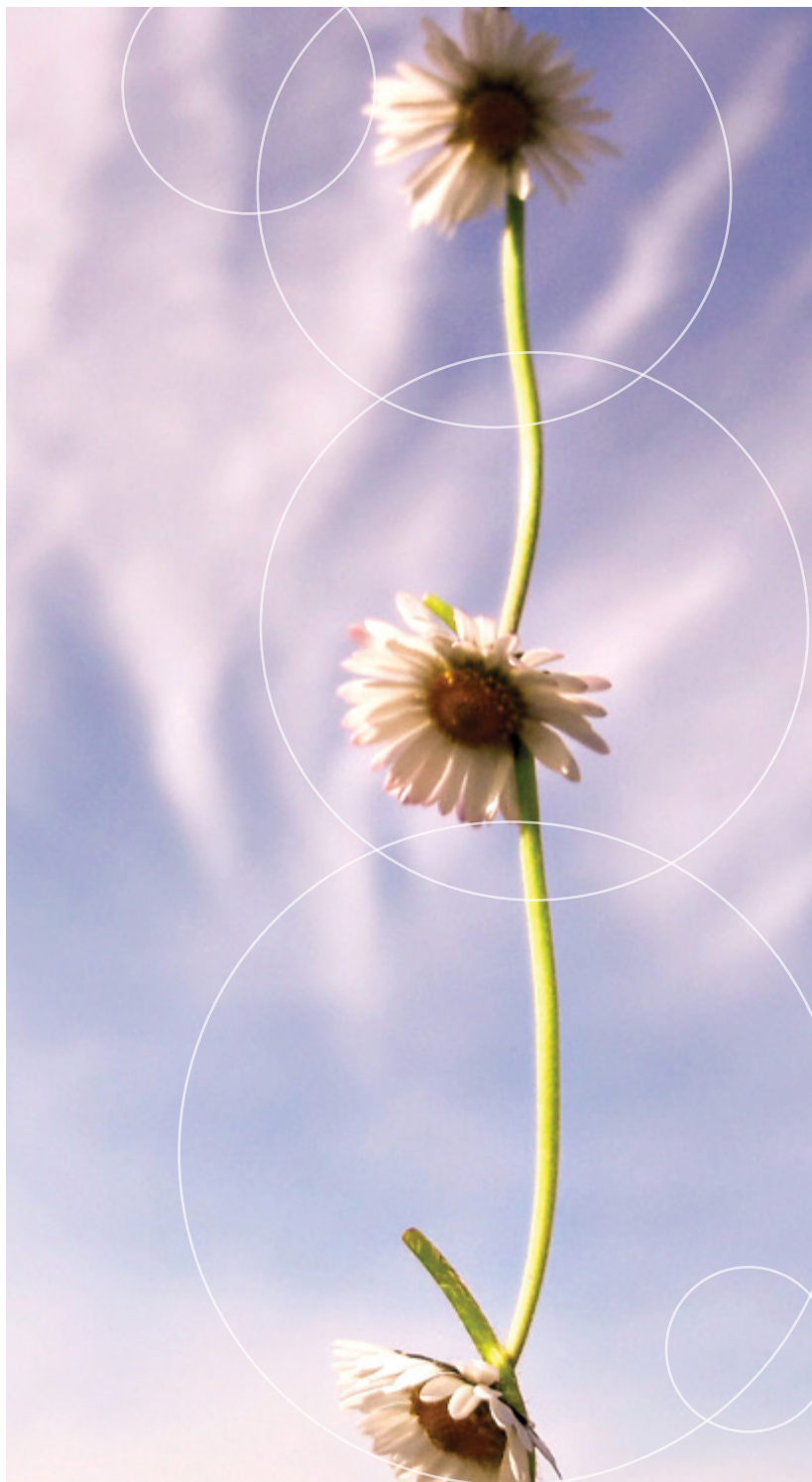
Has something ever happened to you seemingly out of the blue?
Are such random incidents related, if at all? **KAREN O' NEILL** muses on
our connection with each other and with the Universe.

Maybe you are thinking of an old friend who coincidentally calls you, or you unexpectedly bump into an acquaintance. A song keeps playing wherever you go, or a sequence of numbers continuously crops up everywhere you look. Later when another seemingly random event occurs, suddenly the mismatched pieces of the puzzle of your life fall into place and, in that moment, the full picture comes into focus. It seems as if the Universe has illuminated the path from behind you, pointing you towards the future.

We may all have had such experiences. In those moments the separateness of the parts of our lives, boxed into the predictable and the ordinary, is suddenly turned upside down. The mysterious working of the Universe is briefly exposed to us, and we marvel at how our destinies made up of random and disparate events can be so subtly intertwined. This is called synchronicity.

Steve Jobs said, “You can’t connect the dots looking forward, you can only connect them looking backwards.” Sequences of chance encounters and events, and of symbols that may seem mundane, can find meaning if only we expand our awareness to distil the method from the madness. The Universe has strewn daisy chains of its workings for us to stumble across, if only we open our eyes to what is under our feet.

The mysterious working of the Universe is briefly exposed to us, and we marvel at how our destinies made up of random and disparate events can be so subtly intertwined. This is called synchronicity.



In 2015, I made the decision to move to India. A couple of months before I left, a woman I knew gifted me some crystals. I cannot say that I was hugely enamored with the crystals at the time. One was rose quartz in the shape of a heart. I tried to refuse, but she insisted. "Take it," she said, "you'll be needing it soon." Puzzled, I packed it among my belongings.

Some months later I came across Heartfulness Meditation. These seemingly unconnected events signaled to me that something had been set in motion from the moment that she had gifted me the heart to the moment I meditated on the heart.

So the next time you have a eureka moment, when things fall into place, when the dots connect and you realize that they form the outline of a beautiful galaxy, take a moment. Cherish it. It is a sign that you are on the right path.



Coincidences. Are they random? Or can they have meaning? **ANKUR NAIK** explores the mystery behind their occurrences.

When you experience coincidences over and over again, you try to make sense of them by finding meaning. Then they are no more coincidences but a manifestation of your deepest subconscious or conscious thoughts.

When I was going through an intense spiritual transformation, there were some rather mysterious coincidences. It even felt magical. The first time I came across synchronicity was when a friend and I were having an intense conversation about our spiritual lives. He mentioned how he kept seeing the numbers 11, 111, 1111 at random places: he would flip open a book and land on page 111 or take out the phone when it showed the time 11:11.

The conversation moved on and suddenly, after a while, with an expectant expression on his face he said, “Look at your watch.” When I looked, the clock read 11:11. I had goosebumps.

They are no more coincidences but a manifestation of your deepest subconscious or conscious thoughts.

Seeing a repeated pattern of numbers is a very common example of synchronicity. These are known as angel numbers, and they are believed to be signals from your guardian angels whenever you are in sync with your soul and your steps are aligned with your goal.

When I look back at some of my experiences, I see synchronicity. For example, how I came to participate in the Heartfulness Fellowship could be a form of synchronicity with my soul’s craving for mergence with the Source.

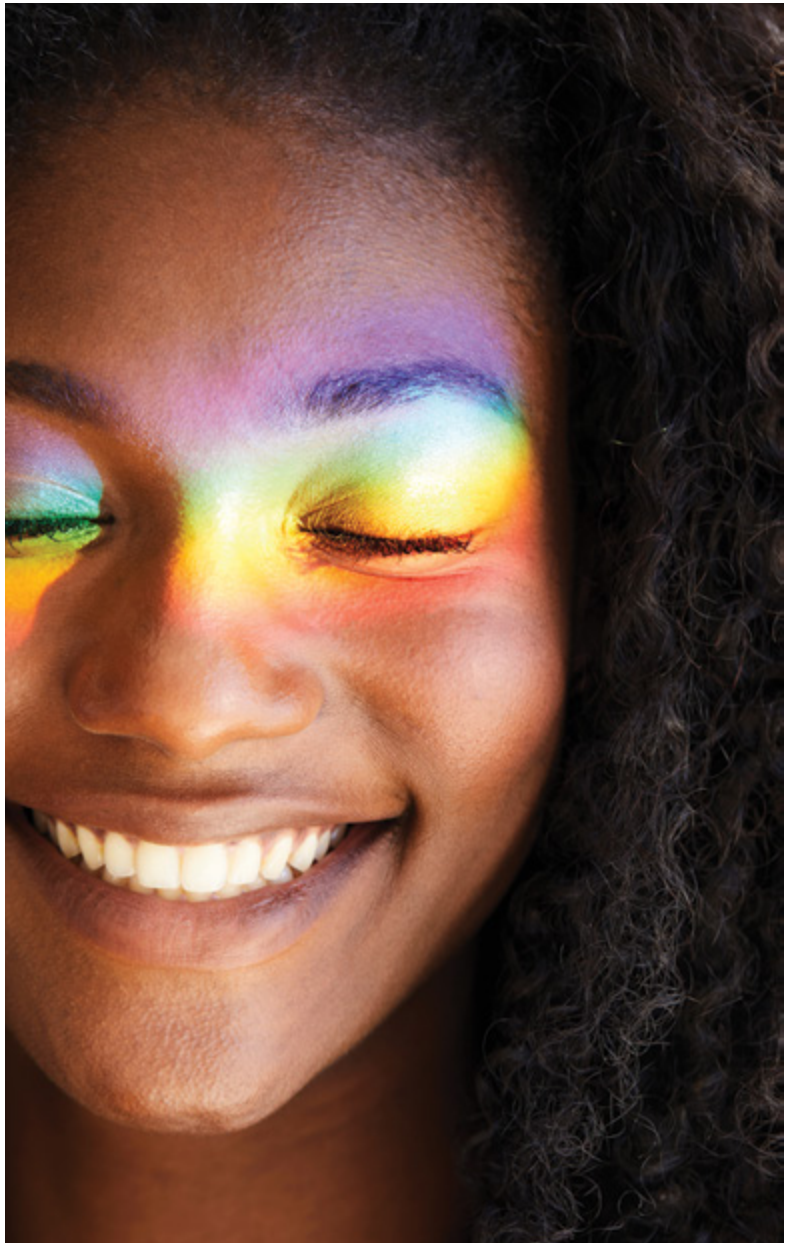
SYNCHRONICITY

ELIZABETH DENLEY defines some of the key qualities of synchronicity and how it manifests in our daily life. She also explores our rational, scientific focus in recent centuries that has limited our awareness of synchronicity and our understanding of cause and effect.

Meaningful coincidences. Fated meetings. Chance encounters. Turning points. Events that are so significant they have the fragrance of synchronicity about them. It is as if the universe is conspiring to bring something about. Such curious events used to be known as ‘magic’ in ancient times. Today we refer to them as synchronicity.

What is synchronicity? Is it a chance coming together of events and circumstances without any design or purpose? I don’t believe so. Perhaps the purpose is beyond our consciousness, so we dismiss the possibility that there is a connecting correspondence in these events. Perhaps synchronicity is a resonance with the divine plan, with the realms of Nature that we don’t see and so don’t understand?

Carl Jung coined the term ‘synchronicity’ in the 1920s to describe meaningful connections that are not a result of cause and effect – he called them acausal cross-connections, or the occurrence of two meaningfully but not causally connected events.





But Jung was not the first person to describe or try to understand synchronicity. Such meaningful connections had already been described by the ancients, including Avicenna and Albertus Magnus. In fact, before the scientific method focused all our attention on the need for visible proof of cause and effect, synchronicity was considered to be as fundamental as causality within natural law. It was only in the 18th century, with the rise of natural science, that causality became dominant and correspondence theory slowly vanished. Even today, however, for the so-called primitive mind, synchronicity is self-evident, needing no proof or justification. And all acts of creation are included.

In fact, the ancients had a much more holistic worldview. Hippocrates wrote, “There is one common flow, one common breathing, all things are in sympathy. The whole organism and each one of its parts are working in conjunction for the same purpose ... The great principle extends to the extremist part, and from the extremist part it returns to the great principle, to the one nature, being and not-being.”

Shakespeare also expressed the same principle in his play, *As You Like It*, in his famous monologue about the seven ages of humanity, where Jacques starts by saying, “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players.” I wonder if Shakespeare understood the nature of the playwright?

Carl Jung wrote extensively about synchronicity – about acausal connections and meaningful cross-connections between events. He called it acausal orderedness. In his book, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, he presents many experiments demonstrating examples of synchronicity. He also reasons that without space and time there is no causality. Anything that exists beyond space and time is, by definition, no longer bound by the laws of cause and effect. Jung considered synchronicity to be “a psychically conditioned relativity of space and time.”

It begs the question: What about consciousness? Is consciousness bound by causality? And what about the human potentiality that lies beyond consciousness? Once we move beyond the physical realm into the realm of the mind and soul, we are not bound by the same constraints of time and space, cause and effect.

Schopenhauer spoke about the transcendental Will, “the subject of the great dream of life,” which creates life. In his worldview, it is from this Will that all causes radiate like longitudinal lines from the poles, existing in a meaningful relationship of simultaneity as they flow in synchronous parallel.

Coming back to daily life, almost everyone has experienced that sense of recollection we call *déjà vu*. For example, you may walk along the street and meet someone new, and feel that you have done the same thing in the same place and have known that person before. Where does this ‘memory’ come from? We regularly have experiences that are not measurable scientifically, because science requires repetition, analysis and inference, cause and effect. Some events are not repeatable, and are not measurable. Beyond measurability, intuitively we know that life is an expression of a deeper order of universal wholeness – an order that Babuji called the Divine Play.

So how to understand this play? One way is to expand our consciousness so that we develop greater awareness of more of the spectrum of consciousness. We are then sensitive to synchronicity from a higher dimension, and we then experience connectivity and synchronicity in the light of vibrational compatibility at the subtle level. Vibrational compatibility is a vast subject. It determines the family a soul joins at the time of conception and the dimension a soul moves to at the time of death. It also determines so many of the choices we make during this life, including with whom we spend our time, what attracts us, what we do career-wise, and so much more. Just as iron filings are drawn to a magnet, the natural laws of vibrational compatibility pull events and people together in ways that are not always measurable by the scientific method. How can you scientifically measure why a soul joins the family in which it is born, for example?

Is vibrational compatibility dependent on cause and effect? What is the cause and what is the effect when a soul is conceived in a family? Do the parents’ vibrational conditions draw the soul, or is it a synchronous event

that is as much dependent on the state of the incoming soul as on the parents? Perhaps Schopenhauer’s image of the transcendental Will is more apt, from which all causes radiate like longitudinal lines from the poles, existing in a relationship of synchronicity as they flow in parallel, all connected to the same source. At any rate, it is worth exploring.

Having worked as a research scientist, I feel we have shortchanged ourselves and our view of knowledge during the last few centuries, by limiting ourselves only to the scientific method. Of course it is a wonderful approach, and very useful, as it allows us to formulate hypotheses and either verify or falsify their validity. We learn to observe, record and infer, continually replicating and refining our observations and understanding in order to learn more about the world. But it is only one approach, based in duality.

In the process, we have ignored the possibility of direct perception, which comes from inner connection and a deeper capacity of consciousness to download knowledge from dimensions beyond duality, where acausal connections are natural. Maybe the time is here when we once more value synchronicity.

Once we move beyond the physical realm into the realm of the mind and soul, we are not bound by the same constraints of time and space, cause and effect.

HEARTFULNESS WELLNESS & YOGA



DR VERONIQUE NICOLAI presents the Yoga programs now offered by internationally certified Heartfulness Yoga teachers. These programs integrate the meditative practices of Heartfulness with traditional Yoga postures, and a deep knowledge of the human system from yogic, ayurvedic and medical science.

<https://heartfulness.org/education/yoga-trainers/>
in.wellness@heartfulness.org



“Can you come every day to do these sessions? It will help us to sit through the day.” This 32-year-old man from Switzerland is part of an Executive MBA program in a five-star hotel in Chennai. Like the rest of this group, he is fit and young, hitting the gym several times a week to stay in the competition that his professional life demands.

Yet he, and the group in our Yoga session that morning, felt the effect of Transmission. He was sharp enough to understand that starting the day in this condition would help him get through the intense corporate training. So at the demand of the group, we came seven days in a row, teaching





them all the tools of Heartfulness. It was our first attempt to introduce Heartfulness in the field through Yoga *Asanas*.

Heartfulness is Raja Yoga for the modern world. The practice starts directly with the seventh step of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, *Dhyana* or meditation. It is a shortcut, the fastest and shortest way to human evolution. The possibility of evolution of consciousness is given in this pure and simple approach. There is nothing superfluous; maybe it seems too simple at first glance and therefore it is not attractive. But if you study deeply the philosophy behind Heartfulness, if you experience it genuinely, you will see that the practice encapsulates Ashtanga Yoga, with all the eight limbs concentrated in their purest form.



The fast pace of our daily life is not conducive for all to sit quietly with eyes closed. *Asana* prepares the person to sit; through body movement the mind is quietened, and *Asana* allows a deep relaxation. Not many are attracted at first glance by meditation but many are interested in doing something good and holistic like Yoga; and meditation is part of a Yoga class. With the help of Yogic Transmission, there is no need for long hours or years of purification of the body and mind through *Asana*, *Pranayama*, and the *Shatkarmas*, as this is taken care of by the practices of Heartfulness.

Since our first attempt to associate 'Yoga + Heartfulness' in a five-star hotel, Heartfulness has developed many wellness programs. With a group of Yoga professionals and Ayurvedic experts, the Heartfulness Wellness and Yoga team offers preventive health

weekends, daily Yoga classes, an introduction to Heartfulness Yoga, and a one-month certification program to become a Yoga teacher with international recognition.

WHAT IS HEARTFULNESS YOGA?

Heartfulness Yoga offers a series of simple *Asanas*, not only for the sake of exercise, but to improve health and posture. At the same time, these *Asanas* help us to calm the mental and sit comfortably for meditation. Heartfulness Yoga allows us to experience the fundamental elements of Heartfulness through movement. We discover our subtle structure and the three bodies, we open the heartspace and feel its immensity, introspect and note our inner

condition, and we witness its transformation through journaling. We start our spiritual journey or *Yatra*, connect to the Source and stay connected while being in action. We quieten the mind, enjoy meditation, and rejuvenate in order to start a balanced and happy day.

This practice also brings people together: as we refer to the heart throughout the class, and as all the hearts are connected, the group naturally and beautifully moves from 'me to we', removing the veils that keep us apart.

For those who want to dive deeper, who are interested in the philosophy of Yoga, and who look for a full immersion, we offer the Heartfulness Yoga Teacher Training Course. This TTC is a transformative one-month program that takes us step by step

through traditional Yoga, its philosophy, the modern schools of Yoga, all the eight limbs of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, and the transformative effect of Transmission in the Heartfulness Way.

Transmission is pure love and works at the deepest level. At the end of the month, a group of certified Hatha Yoga teachers graduate with the possibility to teach all over the world and pass on their experience. They also transform into new beings and witness the changes offered by Heartfulness, when it is practiced intensely for a short time.

The Heartfulness Yoga programs are open to all: people who already practice Heartfulness, new seekers, Yoga professionals and complete beginners. It is a different way to learn and live Yoga.



Interview





*Follow your bliss and
doors will open where there
were no doors before.*

Joseph Campbell



TRADITION, LIBERALISM & LORD SHIVA

In this exclusive interview, AMISH TRIPATHI speaks with ELIZABETH DENLEY about what propelled him to write fiction. A self-professed liberal who at the same time loves the religious traditions of his native India, Amish has brought to life the mythology of Lord Shiva and the Ramayana for young readers, and has developed a pop culture celebrity status in the process.

So there is no point judging others. There is no point mulling over the past, or worrying about the future. Learn from your past, plan for your future, but don't get obsessed by it. The only thing in your control is this moment and your decision in this moment. So life should be about learning to make better choices now, and that's the way to approach these stories.

Q: Welcome Amish.

Thank you.

Q: Through your books it's obvious that you love mythology and the ancient traditions of India. Where did this love come from?

It's my good fortune of birth. It's not just the ancient traditions of India, but ancient traditions across the world. My grandfather was a pandit in Kashi, in Benaras, and he was a teacher as well at the Benaras Hindu University. So I learnt a lot from the family. We grew up learning our stories, our traditions, our philosophies. Both my parents are deeply religious, and one of the good things they poured into us is the respect and love for knowledge and an attitude of questioning everything. Nothing should be taken on blind faith.

So one of the things I learnt early in life from my family was that in Vedic Sanskrit – the language of the ancient Indians – there was no word for 'blasphemy'. Since the concept didn't exist, the word didn't exist. No one was beyond question – no one and nothing. And if you have that kind of attitude and yet you're willing to learn philosophy, willing to explore faith, willing to explore spirituality, you can have a very rich life. It's my good fortune that I learnt this from the family.

We weren't a very well-off family; we had a very humble beginning. But despite the constraints, there were always a lot of books at home. And since we saw our parents reading, it was natural for us to start reading. I read, my wife reads, and my son also reads. Children tend to do what their parents do, not what their parents say. So maybe these were the two things: learning from the family, and lots of reading.

Q: Did you always follow the religious traditions of your parents, or did you challenge this?

I was deeply religious when I was young, but at the age of 15 or 16, when I entered college, I turned into an atheist. I was an atheist for more than a decade – an extreme atheist. I thought that God was wrong, and religion was wrong; that it was silly. Writing my first book, *The Immortals of Meluha*, slowly brought me back to faith.

Q: Can you tell us how that happened?

I think all of us discover the form of the Divine that works for us. For someone like me, who is naturally rebellious and anti-elitist, I guess Lord Shiva was the best god to pull me back to faith, and I say this with no disrespect to any other god or goddess. He is the ultimate god of rebels. He



is a rule-breaker. He exists outside society, and he is a brilliant dancer and musician. He is very attractive for those of us who are rebellious by nature. For me this worked best.

Q: So is that what drew you to write about him in your first trilogy?

It was actually the other way around. Writing about him kind of pulled me back.

Q: Okay, so why did you start with him?

My book began with a thesis of pure philosophy, an explanation of the question ‘what is evil?’ And that was converted into a story later. The idea was to convey the philosophy through the story. And if I am writing a story to convey a philosophy on evil, the best hero is the destroyer of evil, Lord Shiva.

Q: Your first book was published in 2010, and since then you've gone on to become the celebrity pop-culture author of India. It's a big change from your humble beginnings. How has it been?

It's been fantastic! I worked in banking for fourteen years, and I resigned only after my second book. Part of having a humble beginning is you tend to be pragmatic about your life choices, so I resigned when my royalty check became more than my salary. It's been a fantastic ride. I get to do what I love, which is writing, reading, traveling to historical places, and I actually get paid for it!

Q: Why do you think your books have been so popular? Each of them has sold millions of copies. They are about traditional Indian mythology, and most of your readers are young. What's the magic formula, Amish?

When my first book was ready, every publishing house rejected it, saying, “This has no hope of success, because the primary readership today are the youth

So there is no point judging others. There is no point mulling over the past, or worrying about the future. Learn from your past, plan for your future, but don't get obsessed by it. The only thing in your control is this moment and your decision in this moment. So life should be about learning to make better choices now, and that's the way to approach these stories.

and youth aren't really interested in religion. Even if the story is fast-paced, you're writing about a god."

One of the publishers said, "You have these 'gyan sessions' where you are discussing philosophies, and this will not work with the youth." I was advised to write a campus romance instead. So I actually self-published the first book, and it took off, and then many of the publishers who had rejected the book came back to me. It's not that I predicted it and hence wrote it a certain way. I just wrote the book the way it came to me.

So the pendulum swung to the other extreme, where every tradition was attacked, and many people felt unmoored and uprooted. If there are no roots to hold onto, that doesn't feel like a good life either. Today humanity is doing so well materially; we have never had it better. In terms of physical security we've never had it better. Per capita violence is the lowest humanity has ever seen. And yet loneliness and unhappiness have probably never been higher.

Many people want to find an ideal means to be traditional and also liberal: where you can feel a sense of connectedness to the Divine and tradition, yet still respect LGBT rights, respect women's rights, respect the environment etc. I think many of these ancient stories serve that need.

Q: Mythological stories are incredibly dynamic and non-judgmental. Tell us more about that.

In fact that's another intriguing thing about the ancient Indian way. Vedic Sanskrit did not have a word for 'judgment' either. Again, that concept did not exist.

The entire approach to these stories was not to judge them, and it's not that the gods or goddesses judged us, either. The entire perspective was to look at those stories, see the archetypes, learn from them and apply the knowledge in our own lives. The philosophy is very clear: the only thing that is in our control is our own choice within this moment. Our past is not in our control, our future is not in our control, and what other people do is certainly not in our control.

If you take judgment away, the floodgates open up for learning. Judgment actually stops our ability to learn. In the Ramayan, Lord Ram is the hero and

Ravan is the villain. We can learn from Lord Ram, but we can also learn from Ravan. Our task is not to judge him but to learn from him.

Q: The first series was the Shiva trilogy. The second one is the Ramayan. Tell us more.

The Shiva trilogy has three books: *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, and *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. And that was my imagination of what could have been the adventure of a man called Shiva, who lived 4,000 years ago, whose adventure was so grand that he was looked upon as a god. He discovered the Divine within himself.

The Ram Chandra series is an interpretation of the Ramayan, literally 'the travels of Ram'. And I am experimenting with a slightly complex storytelling style, called the multi-linear narrative.

The first book, *Ram – Scion of Ishvaku*, is from the birth of Lord Ram to the kidnapping of Lady Sita. The second book, *Sita – Warrior of Mithila*, is from

Perhaps the way to look at Ravan is that he was a genuinely brilliant man, with an uncontrolled ego. Even if you are as talented as him, if you cannot control your ego, it's not going to end well for you.





the birth of Lady Sita to the kidnapping of Lady Sita. And the third book, *Ravan*, which I am writing right now, which will come out by mid 2019, is from the birth of Ravan to the kidnapping of Lady Sita. The fourth book will be a common book up until the death of Ravan, and the fifth book will be about Lord Ram fighting his actual enemies. Ravan was only an opponent; his actual enemies were in his own land.

It's a mix of different interpretations. You know, the modern Indian version of the Ramayan is actually a 1980s television serial, and if you see the really ancient version, the Valmiki Ramayan, he is not presented as a pure evil demon. He had strengths too. So the first Ramayan, the Valmiki Ramayan, was actually written from that nuanced perspective. He was a devout Lord Shiva worshipper, he was extremely intelligent, and he was a master of the Vedas. There's a stringed instrument called the rudra veena, and it is like the sitar turbo-charged. Even the musical masters can't play it, let alone master it. And it is believed that Ravan invented the rudra veena. Perhaps the way to look at Ravan is that he was a genuinely brilliant man, with an uncontrolled ego. Even if you are as talented as him, if you cannot control your ego, it's not going to end well for you.

Q: You've also written a non-fiction book, *Immortal India*. Tell us about that.

Till *Immortal India*, I'd written fiction books. Step 1 was always some philosophy that I wanted to convey. The story was step 2, like a wrapper around that philosophy. The core philosophy at the heart of the Shiva trilogy is, "What is evil?"

As the first step is normally the philosophy and the second step is the story, there are many readers who go deeper into the philosophy. So I wanted to write a book that just speaks of step 1, the philosophies, in simple bite sized articles. This book has my thoughts and musings on various subjects like spirituality, historical issues, science, and things like that.

Q: What next, Amish?

Right now I'm writing *Ravan*, the third book of the Ram Chandra series. I have various story ideas in mind, enough to keep myself busy for at least 20 to 25 years. I have 9 or 10 book series in mind. I've left clues for all of them in the Shiva trilogy. So even if I release a book 30 years from now, I have left a clue in the Shiva trilogy. I have enough work to do to make sure that I finish all those books before I die. I don't want to carry them to my cremation pyre.

Q: A lot of your readers are young. How do you engage with young people? What role do you think your books play in helping them move forward into modern India?

This is such a wonderful time to be Indian! Nowadays you can dream any dream, and chances are you can pursue it. We're doing well.



This was our traditional way. Can we revive that? Then we will create a society of which our ancestors can be proud. How can we deserve that pride and support the rest of the world in the journey as well?

Today India is a country of youth. Coupled with that are the dramatic changes that have been happening in India since 1991. In fact, many say that our true mental independence as Indians started from 1991, not 1947, because after centuries of failure we started rising again in 1991. And that started the return of the historical self-confidence that defined India for many centuries.

Angus Maddison, the British economist, has shown that for 15 of the last 20 centuries, India was the number one economy in the world. Of the remaining 5, thrice we were the number two economy. And we were extremely productive in science, medicine, navigation, everything. We lost all of that in the last few centuries. Now you see a return of the historic self-confidence, but there's also still the element of insecurity, which is why you find unnecessary aggression at times. And there's also this youthful charge with it. This is a process of massive change.

And in that story, who drank the poison so that it would not hurt others? It was Lord Shiva. That is why he has a blue throat. And that is what I suggest to people who are devotees of Lord Shiva: behave like a god. There is a process of change that's happening right now. A lot of the effects will be positive, and will be good for India, but there are some negatives too. All of us devotees of Lord Shiva should behave like Lord Shiva: drink that poison, take that negativity out. Speak politely, speak nicely, speak positive things. Take the negativity out, so that India moves in the right direction.

Q: So is this your main guidance for young people today? How would you tell them to live their lives?

I would say this is such a wonderful time to be Indian! When I was growing up there weren't so many opportunities. Why did I choose banking as a career? Because there weren't many opportunities. Nowadays you can dream any dream, and chances are you can pursue it. We're doing well.

This was our traditional way. Can we revive that? Then we will create a society of which our ancestors can be proud. How can we deserve that pride and support the rest of the world in the journey as well?

Q: It's a great note to end. Thank you!

Thank you.

**IT CHANGES
EVERYTHING**





*Fasting is the first
principle of medicine;
fast and see the
strength of the spirit
reveal itself.*

Rumi



learning from yoga

ICHAK K. ADIZES shares his thoughts on integrating opposites through Yoga, and how this has helped him in the corporate world.



One can learn from anything and everything. Not just from books, right?

Years ago, Yoga taught me the need to be flexible and in control at the same time. That gave me an insight into understanding lifecycles that I explore in my book, *Managing Corporate Lifecycles*. When an organization is young, it is flexible but does not have much control. Once the organization ages and reaches the later part of the lifecycle, it has developed control but lost flexibility. To be in one's prime, one needs to have both flexibility and control.

While practicing Yoga today, I had a new insight. I learned how one might successfully handle two other incompatible forces: in this case, rigidity and relaxation.

These seem like naturally incompatible states: when you need to be rigid, like when you are keeping your leg tight in Yoga, you automatically 'tighten' your mind – you take a hard breath in and hold it. The opposite is true as well. When you relax your mind and your breathing, you typically also relax your body and lose your rigidity.

But in Yoga, instructors encourage you to tighten your body while working to relax your mind and to tighten your mind while relaxing your body.



I usually fail to relax when I need to be rigid with people working for me. So, I come across as being inflexible. I should be rigid in my request but deliver it in a relaxed manner.

This instruction gave me insight into how we should lead. I usually fail to relax when I need to be rigid with people working for me. So, I come across as being inflexible. I should be rigid in my request but deliver it in a relaxed manner. Or as someone smarter said: “Speak softly but carry a big stick.” In other words, when I need unwavering implementation, I get tense. According to this insight, this is the wrong way to approach implementation.

I should be able to make a firm request and insist others impeccably implement my decision while using a relaxed tone of voice. I can be casual, even friendly, while at the same time being firm in my request.

What a challenge! But, as in Yoga, it can be done by controlling your breathing. Breathe slowly in and slowly out, and do not hold your breath.

There’s always much to learn, but in order to really know, we need never to stop practicing.

THE HEARTFUL LEADER

- part 1 -

Extraordinary outcomes through inspiration.

RAVI VENKATESAN's new series provides practical guidance on how to be a Heartful Leader. In this era where emotional intelligence is valued in leadership, the role of the heart has never been more important in the corporate and business sectors.



There are many leadership models that have evolved over time. People talk about autocratic leaders, transformational leaders, servant leaders, situational leaders, consensus driven leaders ... I can go on and on.

Broadly, I have observed only two types of leaders:

- Those who need authority and control to do anything, and
- Those who are able to get things done through inspiration and influence.

There are several paradigm shifts in leadership that have occurred over the last few decades. Some of the key shifts are:

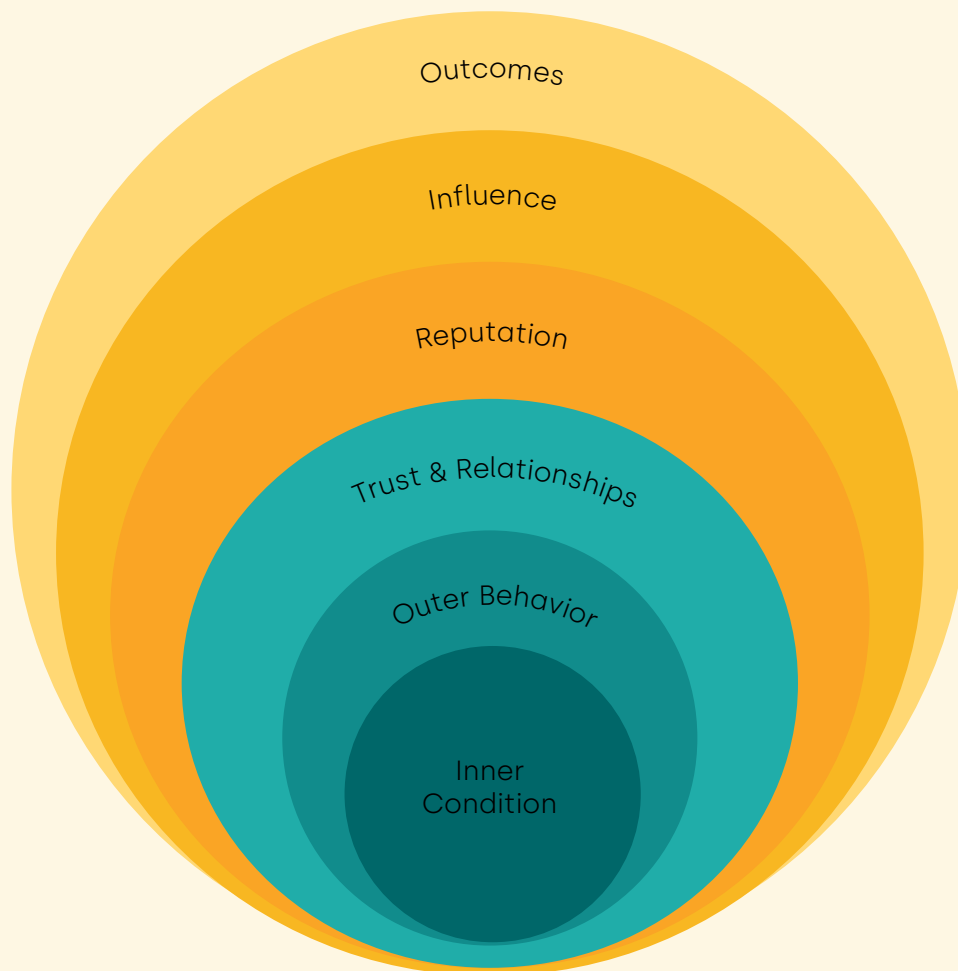
FROM		TO
Command & control		Influence
IQ		EQ
Authority		Collaboration
Hard power	➤➤	Soft power
Competition		Trust & empower
Win-lose		Win-win
Manipulation		Empathy

In summary, contemporary leadership has shifted from an authority-based model to an influence-based model, however leaders still struggle to achieve great results without authority and direct control.

The key to this puzzle is in understanding what creates 'influence' and soft power. This series of articles will outline a framework of leading from the heart so as to solve this puzzle. We will walk through how to manage behaviors, alter perceptions, build great relationships and generate exceptional outcomes through influence.

The ideas and concepts behind Heartful Leadership are grounded in the best of eastern and western leadership philosophies. In practice, however, we will take the radically new approach of managing one's inner condition – the state of heart and mind – and use it to create long term influence and consequently great outcomes.

This figure shows 'The Heartful Leader' framework. Our inner condition results in outer behaviors, the perception of these behaviors results in good or bad relationships, as well as trust or mistrust. Relationships and trust result in a reputation over the medium to long term, which in turn leads to influence and consequently outcomes.





As a self-evaluation exercise take a few minutes, introspect on the following, and write down your observations:

- What outcomes have I generated as a leader in the last year? Do I view them as doing justice to my leadership potential, or do I believe I can achieve a lot more?
- How did I generate these outcomes? In other words, where did I need authority versus where did I lean on influence?
- How much could I have accomplished if I had no control or authority and had to lean only on influence?
- What do I believe is my reputation within the organization or organizations that I am associated with?
- How much trust have I built among the people with whom I am associated?
- How can I describe the relationships I have with my professional and personal network?
- How is my behavior perceived by others?

Over the next several articles, we will explore each part of this leadership framework in detail and provide a toolkit to get really good at using the heart to lead with inspiration and influence.

ENHANCING MEMORY & CREATIVITY

The new programme for Advanced Learning

ALPHA PLUS

*Brighter
Minds* ENRICHING
YOUNG MINDS

WWW.BRIGHTERMINDS.ORG

Choosing LIFE

PART 2





It is the path of revelation and awakening. This revelation on the mental, physical and spiritual levels is essential. Once a person has experienced it, everything is possible.

In part 2 of this interview, **THIERRY CASASNOVAS** continues his advocacy for life. He shares his own journey with **CELINE FRÉSARD**, the stages of his rebirth after being left for dead by doctors, and the consciousness he has derived from this profound experience. He speaks about the role of food in our lives, and how to fill the void.

Q: At the end of part 1, you told us about the turning point, the trigger, a kind of explosive transformation that leads to never seeing the world the same way again. You were talking about revelation.

I am someone who respects God, but I am not religious. Religion appropriates spirituality, by making people believe that there is no spirituality outside it, but if someone tells me that they have encountered life, I answer, “You have the same spiritual experience as I do.” Even if I use Christian terms to express it, we follow the same spiritual path of encounter and wonder towards life. Using a more Asiatic approach, it is the path of revelation and awakening. This revelation on the mental, physical and spiritual levels is essential. Once a person has experienced it, everything is possible.

For example, after months and months in hospital, the only refuge I found was with my parents. I had nowhere else to go. After seeing several doctors march past, who



*And since it's within
us, we have to dive
inside. I want to meet
this life, meet this
presence, because
when I meet it, I have
direct experience.
That's what I am
looking for and that's
what I encourage you
to do. Dive inside.*

could not do anything for me, they understood that I was dying, they took me in. You can imagine their panic seeing their child dying at 33. It was a disaster.

The morning I was supposed to go to the hospital again, I knew I was leaving to die. I was going into palliative care because the doctors didn't want me to die at my parents' home. That's when I experienced this turning point you mentioned.

My father came to my room to tell me that my things were being prepared for my departure and I looked at him and told him, "I'm not going to the hospital. You're going to take care of me and I know I'm going to live." What captivated me at the time was that he didn't even hesitate for a second, but simply replied, "Okay, that's fine."

Later, I asked him what made him accept such a radical choice, when I was apparently dying, and my only

chance of surviving a little longer was the hospital. He replied, "I looked into your eyes and there was a flame in them that I hadn't seen in months."

The flame was present. And the funny thing is that my mother was so panicked and emotional – she's a mother – that she didn't see it, and she called me crazy. So my father held her by the arm and said, "Look, now pack your bags and leave, because I have to take care of him and I can't take care of you at the same time. We'll give you news. Go on a trip, and I'll take care of my son. I need to be one hundred percent with him."

I was in agony, I was physically dying, but the very moment there was this change in me, I was alive again. The future had taken over.

The revelation of life in me has taken months, even years, to make its way, because I am still improving in relation to my state of health and vitality. At the age of 45 I have not yet reached

my optimum. But within a few months without treatment, the tuberculosis that was eating away at my lungs had gone – I no longer had any tubercular lesions, the hepatitis that was eating away at my liver had disappeared, and so had the pancreatitis. I started to gain weight and energy; I started to walk and run. I was no longer at risk of cardiac arrest. I was getting better and better.

It is this round trip between what is happening on the spiritual, mental and physical levels that is so fascinating.

Q: So even totally exhausted people can come back to life?

Yes, but first they must go through this turning point, they must regain confidence in their life processes. Then, even if they are extremely tired, they will live. However, like me with my father in my story, they need someone to support them. We need each other.

The relationship to health and care has been professionalized, medicalized and reserved for a caste of accredited professionals. In what I present here, however, in the path to life, we discover that the care given to the body, which is relatively simple, comes above all from the intention of the other. That is, anyone who intends good for someone else will be the best caregiver they can dream of. My father had no medical expertise.

I had been living in hospital corridors for years. Doctors with ten, twelve

and fifteen years of experience, great specialists, analyzed me in all directions, and passed cameras through all my orifices. I was literally tortured by these examinations. Even with all these techniques, they couldn't do anything to stop me from dying.

My father, without any knowledge, had only one thing, the most powerful tool: love. Not some light New Age niceness and kindness, but the most powerful transformative force. With this love, my father cured me with very simple things. He massaged me, fed me good food, spent time talking to me, offered me presence, and took care of me. Thanks to all this, my father allowed me to live. Without him I would never have made it. Of course there were also friends who prayed and meditated for me, who surrounded me with their presence, their motivation and their support. All this together nourished life in me.

Now, all my work is a plea to let people know that each of us is the best caregiver in the world. We don't need any particular skills, just the desire to care for others.

In the Bible, there is an absolutely fabulous passage. Jesus, followed by a huge crowd, enters a house to heal the sick. A man arrives, carried on a stretcher, who is unable to get near Jesus. His friends climb on the roof, remove the tiles and lower the stretcher with ropes just in front of Jesus. Can you imagine the determination of these people? For me this message is sumptuous. They destroy the roof so that their friend can reach the source

My father, without any knowledge, had only one thing, the most powerful tool: love. Not some light New Age niceness and kindness, but the most powerful transformative force.

of life. They do not neglect anything; they give everything so that their friend can come back to life.

This is really the message: the inner transformation, then the strength of the people around us to help in a practical way. I was at the point where I couldn't even cut my food, where I was totally disabled in a chair. I had to be put to bed, helped to get up, and washed. Obviously, alone I would have died. So, first comes the inner change and next the neighbor.

Q: In your first videos, you said that we all have a God-shaped hollow inside. It brings me back to the question of what we eat and why we eat. Today we no longer really eat to eat; we eat things we don't want without being hungry. This no



*Relationships are
concrete and tangible,
where you touch the
other person, you have
them in front of you,
you look into their
eyes, you hear the
sound of their voice,
you feel the warmth of
their body, and all the
energy they give off.*

longer corresponds at all to a natural need. Can you tell us about our relationship to food?

We talk indiscriminately about food and diet, whereas in fact we should distinguish between them. The food we eat, our diet, provides our body with the nutrients it needs to function properly: fats, carbohydrates, proteins, minerals, vitamins, trace elements, antioxidant factors etc. We therefore need enough quality food in sufficient quantity. We know all too well the problems caused by a lack of nutrition for the body.

But food is much more than that. Researchers have quantified the relationship between food and diet. According to them, our diet does not represent more than 30% of our food. And what is our food? The food we eat is what *we take* from outside that will bring physical nutrients to the body. On the other hand, food as nourishment is everything we receive from the outside, in the true sense of the word, which nourishes our being. The problem is that we bring nourishment back to food, because we only consider ourselves in our bodily form, as a body. The bankruptcy of religion that has led to a bankruptcy of spirituality means that here in Europe we live in a secular society that prohibits all forms of spirituality. And human beings do not only have physical needs.

For me, it is obvious that we are more than a body, so we have other needs. Today, our way of life does not take into account the fundamental and vital needs of the human being, not to mention spiritual needs and our relationships with others, for example.

We constantly talk about relationships on Facebook, but it's making fun of the world. Relationships are not created by typing on a keyboard! Relationships are concrete and tangible, where you touch the other person, you have them in front of you, you look into their eyes, you hear the sound of their voice, you feel the warmth of their body, and all the energy they give off. That's a relationship! A relationship is not just about sending each other a little text message from time to time. Our being is not adequately nourished by that type of exchange. As our vital needs are not met, we desperately seek to meet them, and since the most accessible thing is food, we compensate for all the emptiness in our life by eating.

This means that we end up with obese bodies desperately in search of food. It's like saying, "For my body to work properly, I need to eat apples," and in front of you there's a field full of fruit, but not apples. You then test all the fruit to discover that they are not apples. You go on eating but you never find your apple, you never find exactly what nourishes you and satisfies your hunger. So you become obese eating all the other fruits while still starving.

It is one of the characteristics of our time – physically obese and spiritually

hungry. Inside, we are hollow, we are desperate. For me, despair in our societies is the greatest. We are trying to compensate, but the good news is that we'll never make it. We can eat, eat, eat, and we will continue to remain hungry. Then, one day, in weary desperation, we may say to ourselves, "Okay, I want to find a food source that satisfies me." This is the real spiritual process; searching for true food, the bread of life, the bread that gives life.

And in this process of revering life, of feeling wonder at the beauty of life, I too went in search of life, to find this food and stop being a hungry person who is never full. It is one of the wonders I have discovered.

Q: For you, what is the best way to fill this void?

It's a full-body dive inside. Christian spirituality is often associated with religion, and I can testify from my own experience that one can live a true Christian spirituality without being religious. In everything I read, including the Bible, I see that the truth, life, God ... everything is within us.

And since it's within us, we have to dive inside. I want to meet this life, meet this presence, because when I meet it, I have direct experience. And

the direct experience does not need religious dogma or ceremony; it is pure. That's what I am looking for and that's what I encourage you to do. Dive inside.

To come back to the Bible, which I often quote, I have several friends who have been interested in the Hebrew version, because Hebrew is very refined in terms of subtleties. And when Abraham, the great patriarch of all monotheistic religions, receives God's message, God says to him, "*Lekh lekha*" (pronounce ler lera), which means in Hebrew, "Turn inwards. Go inside yourself." Isn't that what all oriental meditative practices offer?

So why oppose spiritual practices when the religious texts say to go inside yourself? Go to life. And the moment you meet life, that day you are enlightened. Then there is no more religion, no more culture, no more separation. You love your neighbor as yourself; you experience the direct encounter with the other, with the living. This is what I aspire to, because divisions are sources of discord, violence and separation.

To be continued. In the third part of this interview, Thierry Casasnovas speaks about his experience of fasting and the practical aspects of fasting.



B
E
I
N
S
P
I
R
E
D



*There are as many pillows of
illusion as flakes in a snow-storm.
We wake from one dream into
another dream.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson



YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY

PART 2
VIKALPA

Yoga includes the science of all the bodies, that is, the physical body, the subtle bodies and the soul. In other words, it covers the whole field of psychology. Through Yoga we explore consciousness, and what causes change in the field of consciousness. In this series of articles, **DAAJI** explains the fundamentals of yogic psychology, with its foundation in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. He enlightens us on Patanjali's codification of the human mind and the various mental deviations that take us away from balance. He also gives us solutions to create mental well-being through yogic practices. In this second article of the series, he explores the third mental deviation described by Patanjali: *vikalpa* or imagination.

VRITTIS

We continue with the *vruttis*. Just to summarize, the five *vruttis* are the five types of thought patterns or tendencies, the basic energy patterns we create in the field of our consciousness or *chit*. 'Whirlpool' is a literal translation of the word *vrutti*, and the *vruttis* are the whirlpools, waves and ripples that form. These *vruttis* describe how we perceive and interact with the world around us.

The original state of the field of consciousness is stillness, and the soul is happy when we regain that balanced state. In contrast, the interplay of senses, thoughts, feelings and tendencies draw us into the world of outer experience and activity, creating various energetic patterns in the field of consciousness. The soul is also happy with this movement, provided there is purity and lightness, and constant fluidity between underlying stillness and activity in the field. So in Yoga we do two things:

1. Turn the attention inwards to stillness, and
2. Refine the focus and type of outward activity so that our thoughts and activities are conducive to evolution, happiness and balance.

We cannot stay in total stillness all the time or we would be dead, and Yoga is also all about skill in action. So how to bring stillness into activity? I have written about this in an earlier article on 'The Stillness Paradox'

This combination of stillness and activity brings peace and happiness, which is the quality of the soul. When the waves of the *vruttis* settle and we are calm, as happens during meditation, we see our true nature, and then we can externalize this reality in all our activities.

Patanjali describes the *vruttis* as being either colored (*klisha*) or uncolored (*aklisha*); in other words, impure versus pure. They either lead to turbulence or to focused evolution and 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 with only this: how do we use the mind? Mastery of the mind, cessation of the turbulence in the mind, is Yoga.

Pramana – means of right or valid knowledge

Viparyaya – false or wrong knowledge

Vikalpa – fantasy, imagination

Nidra – sleep

Smriti – memory

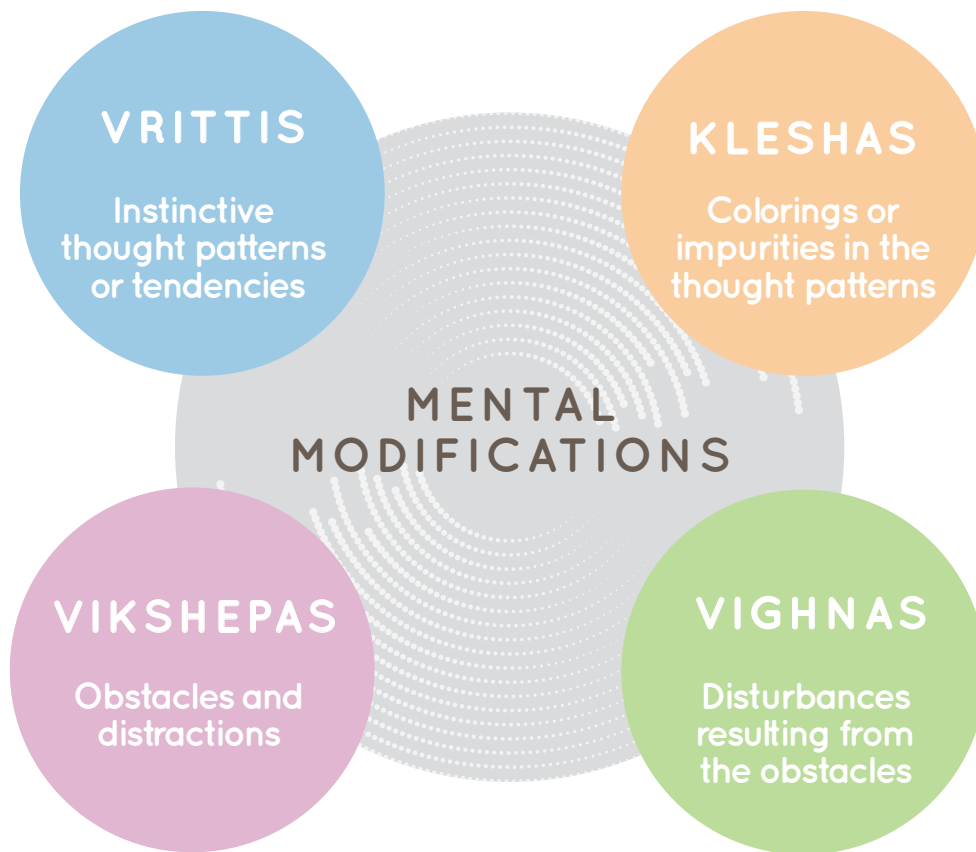
Avidya – ignorance, veiling

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)

Patanjali describes five vrittis:

1.6: *Pramana viparyaya vikalpa nidra smritayah*

The five varieties of thought patterns are:

- right knowledge (*pramana*),
- wrong knowledge (*viparyaya*),
- fantasy or imagination (*vikalpa*),
- deep sleep (*nidra*), and
- memory (*smriti*).

IMAGINATION

Now let's explore the third *vritti*, *vikalpa*, which means 'imagination' or 'fantasy'. What is imagination? It is a very important mental faculty with which we form and create new ideas, images and concepts that cannot always be verified by *pramana*.

Patanjali writes:

1.9: *Shabda jnana anupati vastu shunyah vikalpah*

Fantasy or imagination is a thought pattern that has verbal expression and knowledge, but for which there is no such object or reality in existence.

But *vikalpa* is not the general term used for all types of imagination. There are four Sanskrit words that can loosely be translated as imagination: *vikalpa*, *kalpana*, *pratibha* and *bhavana*. *Vikalpa* is, in a sense, the lowest form of imagination. It describes the apparently random fantasies that continuously surface in the mind like mental static. *Vikalpas* are imaginary stories, thoughts and images that play out in the mind: for example, a fantasy that plays out during a daydream in class at school, or seeing a shadow in the dark and fearing it is a ghost. Most of the ongoing chitchat in your mind belongs in the category of *vikalpa*: "What will happen if I ...?" "What if she doesn't like me?" etc. Such chitchat is composed of all sorts of illusory beliefs and mental constructs. We pre-empt reality with our fantasies and expectations.

There is a wonderful story about *vikalpa*. One night, a young man decided he wanted to cross the river on the outskirts of his town to visit his beloved. There was a storm and the river was dangerous, but he was determined to cross to see her. So he looked around for a boat to carry him and eventually saw a log floating by. He grabbed onto it, and let the log carry him downstream across the river. When he arrived at the home of his beloved, all the lights were off, but he saw a rope hanging down from her balcony. So he climbed the rope and came to her.

She was delighted but surprised to see him, asking, "How were you able to visit me on such a terrible night?"

First of all he thanked her: "Because you left the rope hanging for me, I was able to climb up to your balcony." "But I left no rope hanging," she said.

When they went to the balcony to look, they were shocked to discover it was a snake hanging down.

What is imagination? It is a very important mental faculty with which we form and create new ideas, images and concepts.



The next day, after the storm had passed, he returned home. On reaching the river, he discovered that he had held on to a human corpse to cross the river, not a log. Love had blinded him to the reality of what he was doing and given him the courage to reach his beloved no matter what.

Love can give us one perception of distorted reality, but what happens to a lover who falls out of love because of a series of events? Do they still perceive their beloved in the same way? No. We are preconditioned by our own expectations, and when disillusionment sets in, everything can change.

The other three forms of imagination have a higher, nobler purpose. *Kalpāna* is intentional mental creation. For example, the prayerful *sankalpa* that all people are becoming peace-loving is an example of *kalpāna*. We are creating something through the power of thought, something that does not yet exist in the physical dimension. *Kalpāna* helps us to aspire towards any goal or vision, and reminds us to work to achieve that goal. *Pratibha* is the spontaneous visionary insight that comes from expanding consciousness into higher realms of superconsciousness, and *bhavana* is the ability to call something into existence as a result of yogic contemplation and visioning.



In fact, to imagine is one of the distinguishing human qualities, representing new possibilities, allowing us to create a vision for the future. Through imagination we can be creative and embrace other perspectives, because the mind follows imagination. It is a very powerful projective capacity of the human mind that leads to transformation and evolution.

In fact, to imagine is one of the distinguishing human qualities, representing new possibilities, allowing us to create a vision for the future. Through imagination we can be creative and embrace other perspectives, because the mind follows imagination. It is a very powerful projective capacity of the human mind that leads to transformation and evolution. It is the basis of aspiration and vision, one of the most important aspects of human consciousness. In its highest form it is visionary and inspiring.

This visionary quality of imagination has been described by philosophers of all cultures since Plato, and encapsulated by Einstein in his statement, “Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas

imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.” Yet it is far from the ordinary imaginary noise in our field of consciousness that we know as *vikalpa*.

And yet it is the same human functions that lead to both magnificent visions and delusional fantasy. What allows us to imagine something that does not yet exist? The four mental functions of *chit*, *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahankar* may allow us to think of new concepts, project our existing experience into new dimensions, and use our willpower to bring about change, but these four subtle bodies cannot create something new out of nothing without the *atman*, the combination of thinking (*man*) and movement (*ath*)

that is the soul, the causal body itself. It is this divine aspect of our being that is able to create. So it is the combination of the subtle bodies and the soul that gives us our faculties of imagination and creativity. There is much that could be said about the soul here, but we will come back to that in another article.

In fact, the concept of imagination raises many questions, including:

Can we create something completely new that has never existed before, or do we ‘catch’ something that already exists in the ether that cannot yet be verified by the senses? Perhaps it exists in higher dimensions already. I will leave you to ponder over these questions about imagination in general, but let’s now turn our attention to the lowest type of imagination, *vikalpa*. Why do these random imaginary thoughts come into our minds, and where do they come from?

Vikalpas are the background fantasies in our field of consciousness. They are like constant noise in the system. They exist because there are accumulated complexities and impurities in our consciousness, which are also known as samskaras or impressions.

VIKALPA

Vikalpas are the background fantasies in our field of consciousness. They are like constant noise in the system. They exist because there are accumulated complexities and impurities in our consciousness, which are also known as *samskaras* or impressions. In an attempt to purify consciousness, the mind tries to throw them out, and so they surface as thoughts. The more complex the impressions, the more complex the *vikalpas*. They may bubble up from our subconscious, in the same way that dreams do when we are sleeping. In fact the great psychotherapist, Carl Jung, developed ‘active imagination’ as a meditation technique so that the contents of the subconscious mind could surface as images, narratives or separate entities. He used this technique to serve as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious, and worked with dreams as well as imagination and fantasy. Jung’s aim was to bring about harmony and integration from fragmented and dissociated parts of the human mind.

Jung thought that ‘active imagination’, a way of bringing *vikalpa* into awareness, springs from the desires and fantasies of the unconscious mind, which ultimately wants to become conscious. His experience showed him that once such fantasies surface, they become weaker and less frequent. This technique was one of several that would define Jung’s distinctive contribution to the practice of psychotherapy. This technique not only has the potential to allow communication between the conscious and unconscious aspects of an individual’s personal psyche, but also between the personal and collective unconscious.

Anything that blurs the clarity and purity of the chakras in the region of the heart can lead to distorted consciousness, and thus to *vikalpa*, whether that distortion has come from the subconscious within or from the atmosphere around. *Vikalpa* may, for example, be the result of the accumulated thoughts and feelings of others in a certain place. In either case, it is made up of fragments of rubbish that the mind is trying to throw out in order to purify the field of consciousness.



That is why we have the practice of Cleaning in Heartfulness, to remove all these impressions that accumulate in our system from past experiences, and also the ones we are creating in the present. Cleaning is a much more direct practice than ‘active imagination’, as it bypasses the need for thoughts and emotions to surface into the conscious mind. Cleaning removes the root cause of thoughts and emotions in the subconscious, by directly removing the underlying impressions that have formed. There is no need to analyze, to understand or to experience the effects of the impressions. They are simply removed, like dirt is removed from the body when taking a bath. With Cleaning, gradually the background noise of *vikalpa* reduces, until eventually the field of consciousness is clear and pure. Otherwise we are always perceiving ourselves and the world through a distorted consciousness, and we remain at the mercy of *vikalpa*.

But before we arrive at purity of consciousness, how can we make the best possible use of the fragmentary fantasies that arise in our thoughts, these *vikalpas*? As Jung observed, they show us our subconscious desires and tendencies. By simply witnessing them arise and leave, without judgment, we become aware of so many aspects of our psyche, and how to refine our personalities and tendencies. We can use this awareness to work on ourselves and change our character. This is part of the yogic practice of *swadhyaya* or self-study, which is one of the five *Niyamas*, the second limb of Ashtanga Yoga.

That is why we have the practice of Cleaning in Heartfulness, to remove all these impressions that accumulate in our system from past experiences, and also the ones we are creating in the present.

*"Imagination is the condition for cognitive
participation in a sacramental universe."
—Coleridge*

This is easily done by letting the mind drift, watching it, see what it thinks, and being simply a witness. "Mind is not soul or spirit. It is only matter in a finer form, and we own it and can learn to manipulate it through the nerve energies," in the words of Swami Vivekananda. This is the first step of *Pratyahara*, the fifth limb of Ashtanga Yoga.

Consider the following:

1. You sit to meditate first thing in the morning, and your mind is flooded with fantasies of a sensual nature. What can you do? As soon as you become aware of the distraction, stop meditating and clean point B¹, the satellite point of the heart chakra, for 5 minutes, so as to regulate and calm the tendency. Then you will be able to meditate without being distracted by sensuality.
2. You sit with your family after dinner in the evening, enjoying their company, but very soon your imagination starts to run all over the place thinking of ways to get back at a colleague who blamed you for something you didn't do, leading to his promotion and your sidelining. What can you do? As soon as you become aware of the distraction, meditate on point A², the satellite point of the heart chakra, for 5 minutes, so as to regulate and calm the tendency. Then you will be able to find a productive solution to the problem, accept what has happened, and let go of the resentment.

When consciousness is not pure, our perception remains colored and the faculty of imagination is easily diverted into these complex and unproductive fantasies of *vikalpa*. Imagine, for one moment, that we have a pure consciousness, and we are able instead to project a vision for humanity into this purity, without any distortions. Perhaps we pray that everything is absorbed in Godly remembrance, or that everyone is in osmosis with the Source, or that we are all developing correct thinking and right understanding. How the soul will then shine forth and its faculty of creation and imagination be potentized! We would then be eligible for Samuel Coleridge's statement that "Imagination is the condition for cognitive participation in a sacramental universe."

^{1,2} Ram Chandra, 2014. *Efficacy of Raja Yoga in the Light of Sahaj Marg*. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.

HEARTFULNESS CLEANING

www.heartfulness.org

Sit in a comfortable position with the intention to remove all the impressions accumulated during the day.

Close your eyes and feel relaxed.

Imagine all the complexities and impurities are leaving your entire system.

They are going out the back, from the top of your head to your tailbone.

Feel they are leaving your system as smoke.

Remain alert during the entire process, like a witness to the clouds passing in the sky.

Gently accelerate this process with confidence and determination, applying your will as needed.

If your attention drifts and other thoughts come to mind, gently bring your focus back to the cleaning.

As the impressions are leaving from your back you will start to feel light in your heart.

Continue this process for a few minutes.

When you feel inner lightness, feel a current of purity coming from the Source and entering your system from the front.

This current is flowing throughout your system, carrying away any remaining complexities and impurities.

Make a clear suggestion to yourself: I have now returned to a simpler, purer and more balanced state. Every cell of my body is emanating simplicity, lightness and purity.

When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

This practice can be done in the evening, at the end of your day's work for 20 to 30 minutes. It will be much more effective once you have been introduced to Heartfulness Meditation.



The Rhythm of NATURE

ANDREAS KRAMER looks at natural cycles, and how our practice can be most in tune with those cycles.

"It is a scientific principle upon which the division of the timings for *puja* and *sandhya* is based in accordance with the natural effect of the time."

Babuji

If we look at the movement of the sun during 24 hours, and draw a diagram with the zero-level corresponding to the horizon, we get a curve like a sine wave. This shows a continuously repeated pattern of day and night (see figure1).

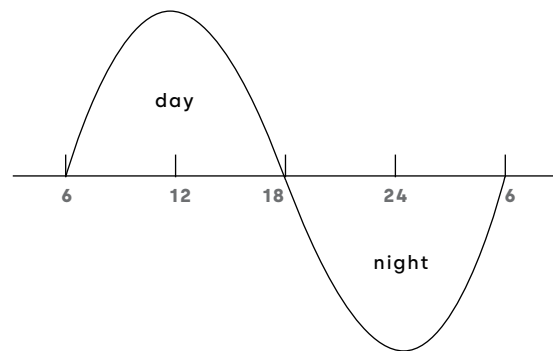


fig. 1

The first twelve hours are full of light, and devoted to activity and work, where as the second twelve hours are more for recreation and sleep. We can say that the first part has an active, outgoing quality, there is light and heat, and the second part has a more passive quality, there is no daylight and the temperature cools down. For the sake of simplicity we say that out of the 24 hours we devote 8 hours of work and ideally the same amount of hours to sleep, with a gap of 4 hours in between, bearing in mind that this is an ideal pattern with the real life more or less diverging from it(see figure 2).

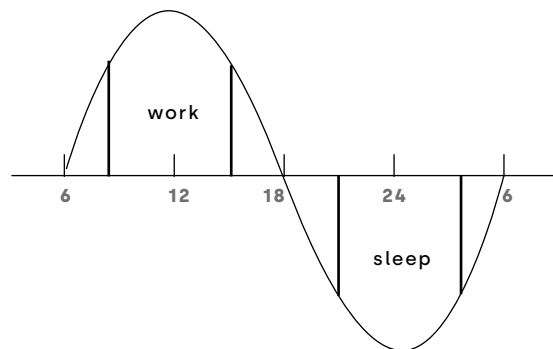


fig. 2

When we observe the position of the different parts of our practice – Meditation, Cleaning and Prayer – we can see that their position is defined in relation to work and sleep. Cleaning should be done when the day's work is over, and the Prayer is done before going to sleep. So these two parts are closely related to work and sleep, the first one at the end of work, the second one at the beginning of sleep (see figure 3).

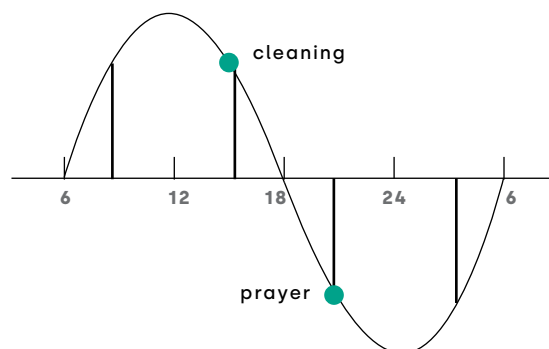


fig. 3

Meditation has also a very significant place in this picture. Babuji says that it should be done before sunrise, that is, when the night is over and the day has not yet begun. In his commentary he explains that the balance between the two forces is helpful for the Meditation, so its place is where the sun crosses the zero line (see figure 4).

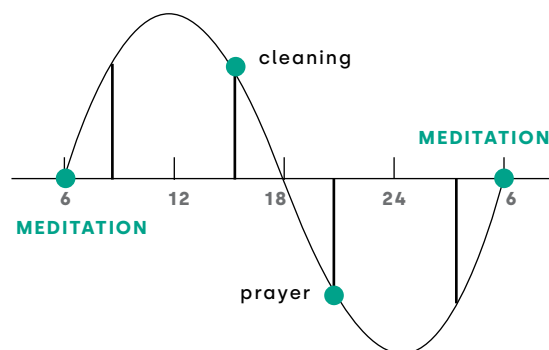


fig.4

As the Meditation is the main part of the practice, let's put it at the center of the picture. Then we can see how the other two parts of the practice are perfectly symmetrical with Meditation in the center (see figure 5).

Seeing it this way, we can understand how the whole scheme is in tune with the rhythm of nature, and how we can use the quality of the time to arrive at a balanced state in Meditation. We actively remove the impressions in Cleaning by using our willpower, whereas in the Prayer we open up our inner self to the Divine in a completely passive attitude.

This shows that the three parts of the practice are completely in tune with the rhythm of nature. And if we make full use of this active quality during Cleaning, and the passive quality in the Prayer, it will help us to be more balanced at the time when we sit for Meditation. Thus we are able to integrate the rhythm of nature into our practice.

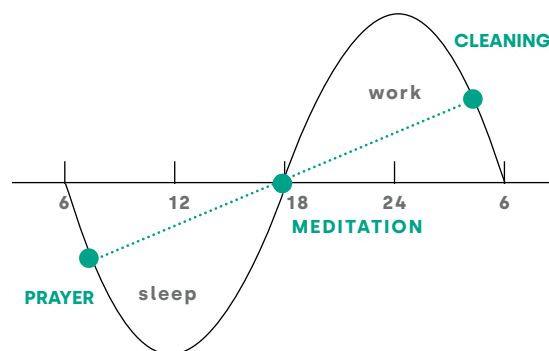


fig. 5



Gift Ecology & Gift Ecosystems

— part 2



NIPUN MEHTA is one of the founders of ServiceSpace, Karma Kitchen, DailyGood, KindSpring and other organizations that successfully work within the Gift Ecology. From a young age, he was inspired by the need to serve others. Early role models like J. Krishnamurti, Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda and Goenka further fuelled that urge so that it has blossomed into a life of joyful, cheerful service. He was the recipient of the Dalai Lama's Unsung Heroes of Compassion Award in 2014, and appointed to President Barack Obama's Council on Poverty and Inequality in 2015. Here Nipun continues to explain the principles underlying the Gift Ecology to **ELIZABETH DENLEY**.

Q: What happens in that dynamic of trust in relationships when people's innate tendencies, fears, surface? And of course they will, because we're all human. We're all carrying baggage from the past – culture, family, whatever – and these things arise. How do we deal with it?

That's why relationships are complicated. Anyone who has been in any relationship will tell you that it's not so simple. It's not like I give you five bucks, you give me the food and that's the end of it. If I'm actually engaging with you in a multidimensional way, that's going to evoke something – it may trigger me in certain ways. It may be much simpler and more convenient for me to not have that relationship and just engage in a transaction. Why would I engage in relationships when it requires so much of me?



Q: This is the critical question, Nipun, because this is at the root of so much that needs to change in our societies globally today. Not just in the West. It's the same in India, and it's the same in China. This is the million-dollar question.

How would you frame the question?

Q: How do we work with relationships? It's not transactional in the sense that people are not doing something for money, and they're not even doing something for recognition a lot of the time. The whole ethos of service, *seva*, is anonymity, humility, the Gandhi values etc. So how do we build this culture of trust without having transactions, without having carrots, if you like?

It takes many inner capacities that we need to cultivate. And if we do cultivate those inner capacities, the reward is that we get a high bandwidth engagement with life. So then we may ask: What actually happens when I'm in a relationship and certain parts of the relationship are difficult? And I have to now deal with those difficult parts to get to the high bandwidth engagement with life. So I need to grow in equanimity, I need to grow in tolerance, and I need to grow in patience.

It's much easier in a consumeristic mindset, where you think, "Hey, I want this, I want it now, and I want to get to the next thing." And if you keep doing it, that consumerism is going to get you to a very cheap engagement with life. So how do you build the virtues that lead to a high engagement with life? And as you get to the high engagement of life, what you understand is that it's never been between you and the other person in a one-to-one way ever. It's just that you have reduced it to that.

One of my friends was in San Quentin prison with people who had committed at least one murder. They were in a circle and they were sharing. At one point my friend got a board and asked, "Can you tell me how long you've been in jail?" He started writing it down and everyone shared: 20 years, 40 years, 12 years, and the whole gamut. Then he added it up and it was 484 years. And then he put another column. He asked, "How long was your moment of rage?" 2 minutes, 7 minutes, 40 minutes, 1 minute, and he added it up and said, "In this circle, for a couple of hours of rage we have spent hundreds of years in jail."

And it ended up clearly that kind of a mirroring is a very powerful thing. During the circle of sharing, one of the guys said, "You know what I think? I think hurt people hurt people. A person is never negative to you in a one-to-one sort of way. It's that just as we pay forward kindness, we also pay forward negativity. We also pay forward selfishness." So he said, "I

So when we look at relationships and the inconvenience of them, it is actually an invitation to grow in virtue, so that we're able to go from that cheap bandwidth to a much deeper engagement in a much more multidimensional way. And if we do that, then in that field so much can grow, and in turn we can build trust in society.

hurt somebody because someone hurt me.” The circle continued, and a little bit later another member of the circle said, “I’d like to add to that. Hurt people hurt people, but I think healed people heal people.”

So who do I have to be when I see somebody harming me? Who do I have to be to hold that whole lineage of conditions and have a big enough heart to say, “I will endure this and rebound it back with compassion.” And the reward for that is not just that the other person might be healed in some way. The reward for that is that you get an incredibly high bandwidth engagement with the present moment.

We saw people like Gandhi do exactly this. Godse put 3 bullets through him, and Gandhi’s response was, “Bless you, bless you, bless you.” And he was not forgiving the negative action, he was saying, “I oppose the action, but you are much more than that action, and I love you.” That larger ‘you’.

So when we look at relationships and the inconvenience of them, it is actually an invitation to grow in virtue, so that we’re able to go from that cheap bandwidth to a much deeper engagement in a much more multidimensional way. And if we do that, then in that field so much can grow, and in turn we can build trust in society.

Q: So will this spread, do you think, to all the Afro-American kids who are in prison, all the Latino boys who are in prison? You know there is a lot of cultural divide, even in a wealthy country like the US. And I know there are people like the Greater Good Science guys who are trying to address those social issues, because it isn’t an equal playing field either. So who is responsible for this?

You and I! We can’t lose our agency through this process. Even with generosity – we tend to view generosity as a luxury sport. We say, “Look, if you accumulate like me and become very successful, then you can give.” But actually it’s not a luxury sport. Those who have the least end up giving the most.

My wife and I were on a walking pilgrimage in 2005. We ate whatever food was offered and slept wherever place was offered, and those who had absolutely nothing would borrow food to feed us. Because we are wired to care, we are wired to give, we are wired to be related, and neuroscience also tells us this. So we know that we want to do this, but we need spaces where we can explore a lot of this. And it’s going to take time. It’s not just going to happen overnight; it’s not just going to be a quick fix.



As you said, we have a lot of inequities. But generosity, compassion, kindness are not reserved for those who have it made. There is no such thing as 'have it made' until you're acting with compassion in any moment, even if it's silent, even if it's with a prayer. I have had homeless people on the streets asking me for money, and by the end they want to give me money. And it's not that I'm asking for money, but it's just that they feel a kinship, they feel a brotherhood. And when you feel that brotherhood, you want to serve that brotherhood.

So how do we tap into that kind of agency and trust the ripple effect? This is not going to happen overnight, because the problem was never created overnight. It took a long time. It's just that we weren't paying attention when it was drip by drip by drip. We were losing, de-capacitating ourselves drip by drip by drip. And now, drip by drip by drip we have to increase it.

So if you ask, "Well, what's the quick fix solution?" there isn't any. And so you ask, "Are you still committed to that? Are you committed to spread love, to do that small act of kindness, to plant that tree under whose shade you will never sit, whose blossoming you may never get to witness?" I'm willing to do that. It makes me come alive. I don't need that immediate feedback loop. So if you and I don't need that, then I think that's the start of the revolution.

*It took a long time.
It's just that we
weren't paying
attention when it was
drip by drip by drip.*

Q: Right. So what are the projects in your revolution at the moment? What's happening and what's going to happen? What's your vision?

So ServiceSpace is an incubator of many different projects. We have some that are online, like DailyGood and KarmaTube. These projects create online communities, spread inspiration. Some are offline, like Awakin Circles and Karma Kitchen. Some are in-between, like KindSpring, where you have smile cards, where you create an online community, where people share stories, but the smile card act is actually in person, in offline space.

So we have been creating this ecology of many different projects. But what binds all of them together is not the projects but the process. And the process that encompasses the whole ecosystem of ServiceSpace is:

To be driven entirely by intrinsic motivations, which means that no one is paid, which means that everyone is a volunteer. And that initially sounds cute, when you're starting and you say, "We're five volunteers," but when you're 500,000, the field of intelligence, that field of purely intrinsically motivated intelligence, is just absolutely immense, because you come up with new stuff, different stuff that you wouldn't have even thought of. So that's one principle.

The second principle is to work with what we have, not to seek. And the way it manifests concretely is that we never fundraise. We just say, "This is what we have," so we work with what we have, which forces us to look at multiple forms of capital. We're no longer only thinking that money equals capital, money equals wealth, or rather money equals the capacity to go out and create projects. We're saying, "Money is a form of capital, but so is time, so is attention, so is technology, so are stories, cultures," you know, you can go down the list.

The third principle is that we focus on small, which means that we never say, "Go out and try to change the world." We never design for that threshold. And when you're small, the onus comes on you being the change. You can't say, "Oh, I'm trying to change this in this person." You say, "Oh, are you being the change?" And if you're being the change, are you growing in equanimity? Are you growing in tolerance? Are you going in patience? Are you growing in compassion, generosity, and kindness? Are you manifesting that in every relationship? And are you then trusting the ripple effect of that, as opposed to trusting the ripple effect of the might of your organization?



So these creative constraints are what encompass the whole ServiceSpace ecosystem. So we have many projects, doing so many things and touching millions of people on a regular basis, but underneath them, the way I parse it is that it's actually about the process underneath, which are these core values. And so you look at that and you say, "How can we keep innovating? What is emerging?"

One thing that has recently emerged is this idea of a laddership circle. We talk about leadership, which is command and control, whereas laddership is about being in the back of the room, being completely aware of all the relationships. And you change an ecosystem not by power, not by control, not by force and coercion, but actually by nudges, predicated on your capacity to know the interrelationships between everybody.

For example, look at the way acupuncture works. If I have a neck ache they may put a little pin on my knee, because the knee is connected to so many other parts and it creates this ripple effect that heals my neck. So it works in the same way, and that's very non-violent.

How do you create a whole context, especially for young people, to hold all this, not as a leader, not as somebody who is mighty and centralized, but as a decentralized ecology that you hold with this kind of a heart? And that's not something that is taught, and we don't explore it. So we've been doing these laddership circles, which have been remarkable. We just had a Nobel Peace Laureate who joined one of these circles. They are peer-learning circles, so one person doesn't teach another person. There are small groups of 6 to 8 folks, with 2 or 3 anchors who are just holding space on the side. And you'd be amazed how much we can learn from each other if get out of that hierarchical mindset.

How do you create a whole context, especially for young people, to hold all this, not as a leader, not as somebody who is mighty and centralized, but as a decentralized ecology that you hold with this kind of a heart?

Q: So it's an enabling model.

It's a growing model. It's not a manufacturing model. It's a gardening model. It's something that's emergent.

And a second project, which isn't released yet, and which I'm excited about, is actually creating an eBay-like space, where you can pay not just with financial capital but also with other forms of capital. So I made this beanie for the love of it, because I know how to knit. Now you may be able to pay and maybe I need to get some money out of it. But actually I may be happy if you go out and do an act of kindness and share the story with me. I may be really happy if you donate money to another NGO and send me the receipt. I may be really happy if you meditate for an hour and send me a reflection. We all know we value these things, but we have never connected people in that sort of a way. And why not?

So I'm very excited about this idea. There was a monk who came out with a CD, and he came to us and we were talking about how he was going to distribute it. We said, "You know, instead of just putting a price tag and doing the regular kind of distribution, why don't you give people the option to also do an act of kindness and send you the story?" And hundreds of people sent stories! Can you imagine being a producer of value, in that sense, and receiving in alternate forms in that way? Sure, I am not denying the power of financial capital. We all need money to pay our rent and pay

our bills and things like that. But at the same time you can't just blindly be focused on it. You can't discount the immensity of other forms of capital that satisfy us, that nourish us, and that actually are regenerative, that nourish the person who gives, that nourish the person who receives. So how do you create a platform to facilitate these kinds of connections in a many-to-many sort of a way? I am excited about that.

Q: That's a real gifting ecosystem.

Yes. And isn't it amazing that we have all these technologies and we're going so fast, and why don't we have this? It's almost like back in the days when NBC, CBS, and other centralized TV stations were there doing the work, but none of them could come up with a YouTube, because they were so entrenched in that worldview.

And so similarly I think this is the time when spiritual people really need to get active, and active people also need to get spiritual. We're in a time when that kind of intelligence needs to come up. So innovation came from YouTube to disintermediate the NBCs of the world, and we saw it happen across the board: CDs turned into iTunes, billboards turned into Google AdWords. But now how do we bring these spiritual qualities into greater circulation, leveraging modern technologies and the possibilities? And I think that's the potential of our times and I think that's the need of our times. If we don't do that we are going

to continue to strip out of what it means to be human.

Q: And if we do do it?

NM: If we do do it, then I think we'll have a higher engagement with life and a lot of virtue will grow in the field of our relationships, of our deep relationships. And I'd rather see that kind of a world.

Thank you.

taste of life





*In every moment
the Universe is
whispering to you.*

Denise Linn



LESSONS FROM THE GARDEN

EARTHWORMS & THE UNSEEN

ALANDA GREENE explores the question, "What am I not seeing?" and celebrates paradox, impossibility and synchronicity through her musings on earthworms.

grew up in a city at a time of large green lawns and cement sidewalks. The connected streets and crescents and curving suburban neighborhoods had an easily navigated network for pedestrians and cyclists and mothers pushing prams to walk long distances without ever having to cross a street. It was wonderful and safe, and we cycled and ran everywhere.

After a rain, however, these sidewalk thoroughfares were not so great for earthworms. With the dampness on the cement, the worms would begin a journey from one dirt haven to another. But many did not make the long distance, in worm terms, before the sidewalk became dry.

It saddened me to find twig-like desiccated pinkish pieces on the cement. When I found one still alive, I picked it up and placed it in the grass or tossed it to safety.

Rain in the garden doesn't lead to overground earthworm traffic. I do not find dried out carcasses. The worms incur different threats. In spring, keen to fill the wide-spread mouths of newborn chicks, robins hang about close to where I turn over soil in preparation for planting. They forgo usual reluctance to come so close in response to the compelling need of newborns, brazenly hopping near my

feet to grab exposed worms. Although worms are not the main food of newly hatched robins, they are still a significant food source. In the two-week period before leaving the nest, a young robin can eat 14 feet of earthworm dinners. Three or four young ones in a nest, nests in various places in the yard – the wisteria, the workshop, the cedars, the hazelnut – means the easy pickings I provide are worth the parental risk to move in close.

I cherish these earthworms, and the robins too, and encourage their presence in the garden. When people comment on the garden's good soil, I give credit to these wiggly workers and all they provide. Even though it takes more work to turn the ground with a garden fork, rather than a mechanical tiller, it seems to encourage more worms, so I choose the fork. Shovels slice too many worms while a fork seems to slide around them.

The straw mulch that covers the garden over winter and lies between beds the rest of the year is a moist source of organic material that the worms eat, nutrients going in one end and out the other as worm castings.

They are a terrific source of soil nutrients, balancing the soil's pH, loosening and mixing the layers. They break

down organic matter to make nutrients available to plants, and create burrows that allow oxygen and water to reach deeper levels of soil, as well as the roots of plants. Charles Darwin referred to them as nature's ploughs.

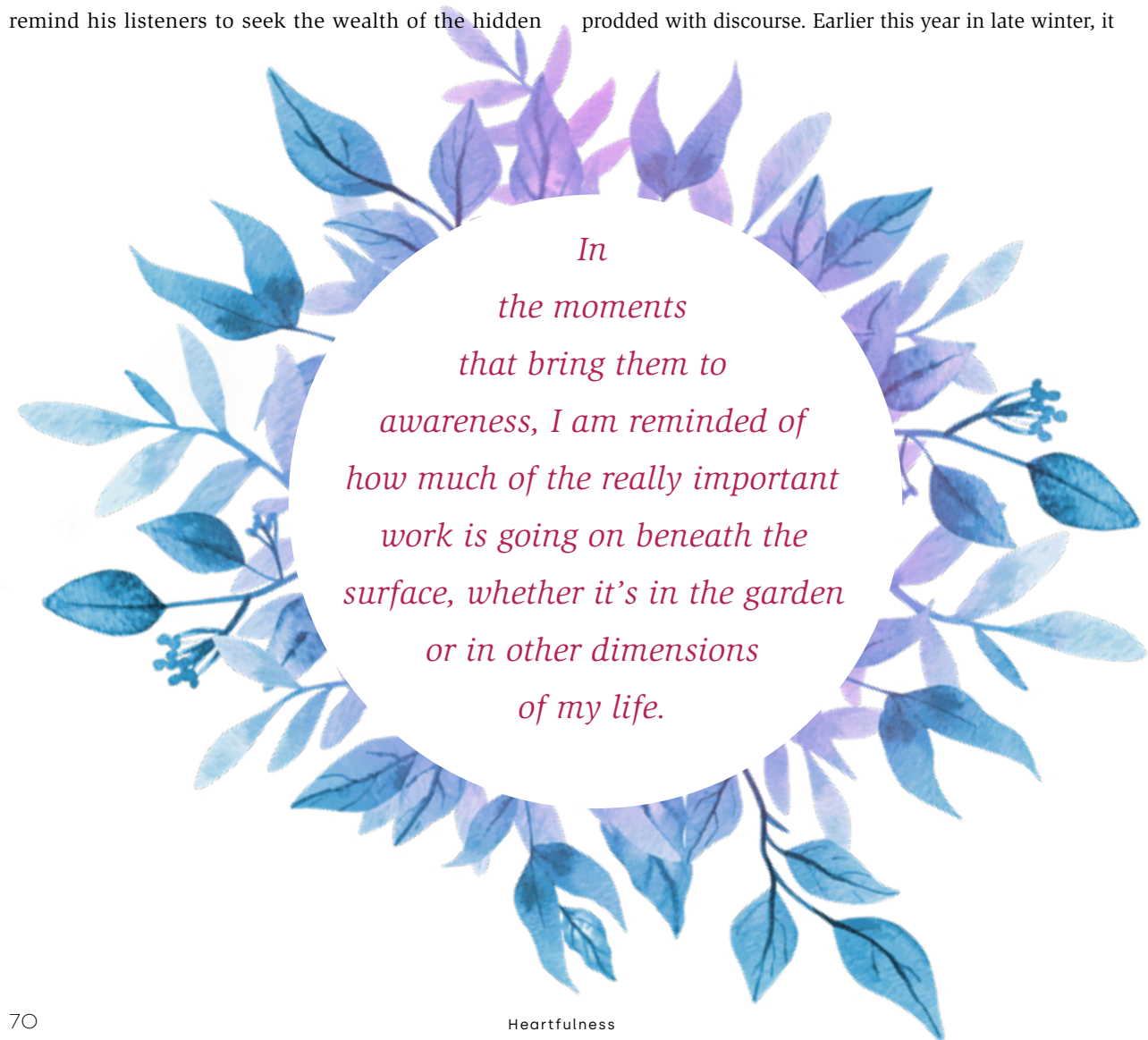
But in the same way that I was hardly aware of these helpful organisms until finding them stranded on the cement, I often forget about them as I work in the garden. They are in the unseen part of the soil, noticed during the inadvertent offerings to robins, remembered when asked about why I don't mechanically till, or when suddenly visible as I turn a pile of compost or dirt.

In Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, this well-known Sufi poet, story-teller and teacher of the 13th century offers words to nudge, exhort, prod, and remind his listeners to seek the wealth of the hidden

treasure. Coming to the seashore and wondering where there are pearls, or even if there are pearls at all, Rumi asks, "How is one to obtain a pearl merely by looking at the sea?"

He encourages those he instructs to let what is hidden in their hearts be brought forward and made visible. "It is like the root of a tree," he says. "Although it is hidden from view, its effects are apparent on the branches." Often he gives a clear reminder to what is implied here: humans need to remember this hidden, unseen realm, and then the signs of it will be obvious. When not acknowledged, the treasure is invisible and forgotten, its existence denied.

Sometimes it seems that other beings of creation understand the unseen better than humans do and don't need to be prodded with discourse. Earlier this year in late winter, it



*In
the moments
that bring them to
awareness, I am reminded of
how much of the really important
work is going on beneath the
surface, whether it's in the garden
or in other dimensions
of my life.*

was still cold, still snowing, but each day the amount of light was increasing as the days grew longer. In the root cellar, however, it remained as cold and as dark as it had been through the previous winter months. Yet when I reached to take potatoes from their box, small nubs of new sprouts dotted them. These potatoes knew. They knew it was time to get ready for growing. But how did they know? What were their clues in that dark, cold, apparently unchanged room? Not anything I could perceive.

Barbara Kingsolver wrote a collection of essays titled *High Tide in Tucson*. In one of them, she tells of a researcher in 1954, F.A. Brown, who brought oysters from their Connecticut seabeds to the basement of a laboratory in Illinois. For a couple of weeks the oysters kept their behavior to the rhythm of the coastal tides they had known, mouths open to siphon in their plankton nourishment, then closed in

their shells. But then the rhythm of this tidal stimulated activity changed. Still acting in unison but not to a recognized tide pattern, the researchers finally calculated that the oysters were responding to high tide in Chicago. It had been millions of years since a sea bed covered this land, but the hidden rhythm of those ancient tides was still perceived by the oysters and they adjusted to it. They made the unseen visible.

Many decades ago, the participants in a weekly class at Yasodhara Ashram were asked to reflect during the coming week on the question: What am I not seeing? At first, I thought it was a strange question, somewhat irritating. How could anyone answer a question like that? If I could see it, then I wasn't 'not seeing'. If I couldn't see it, how could it be known? The question seemed to loop around itself in an impossibility, a paradox of reason. But of course these kinds of questions are not like the homework I had been given at school, to bring back an answer and find out if it was right or wrong. It's the kind of question meant to initiate more questions and reflection, with maybe no hope of an 'answer' but great possibility for expanding thought and perception. Great enough to last a lifetime.

Not long after bringing this question home like a puppy that had followed me and moved into the house as a lifelong friend, I received a postcard in a newsletter. You have to keep your mind on what you cannot see, it read. I laughed aloud at the synchronicity. This card has remained pinned to the bulletin board above my desk. I want the reminder of what is hidden, of what I am not seeing, so I can expand the remembrance. I want to remember the worms and give them their due, along with the other hidden treasures.



Heartfulness Yogasanas

UTTANAPADASANA

SUPINE POSES



STAGE I

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

Breathe in, slowly raising your right leg up keeping your knees straight.

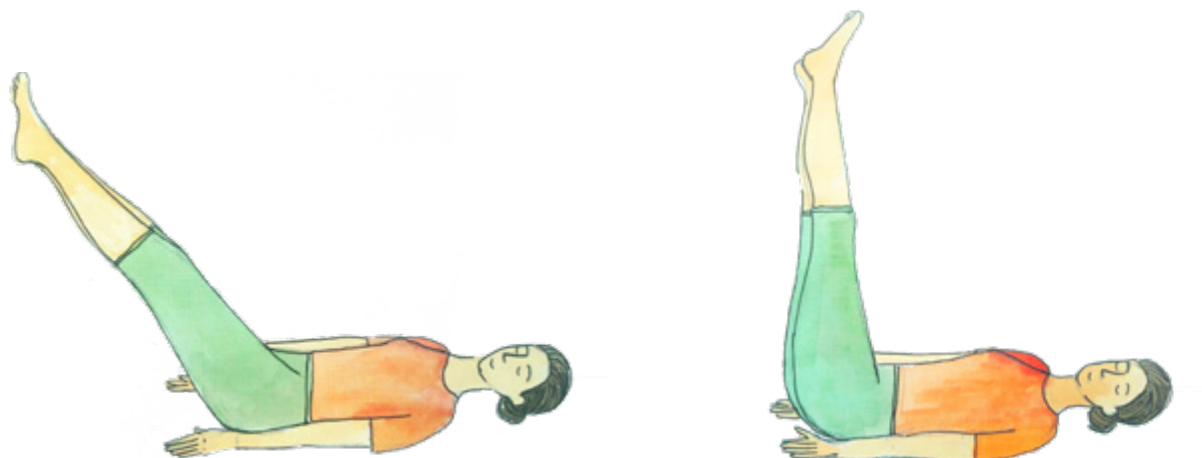
Let your arms remain relaxed and passive. They have no role to play in raising your legs, which is achieved by the contraction of the abdominal muscles.

Hold and stay in the position with gentle, long and deep breaths - in and out six times.

Breathe out, lower your leg.

Relax the whole body.

Repeat the practice with your left leg.



STAGE II

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

Breathe in, slowly raising both legs keeping them together and straight.

Let your arms remain relaxed and passive. They have no role to play in raising your legs, which is achieved by the contraction of the abdominal muscles.

Hold and stay in the position with long and deep breaths - in and out six times.

Breathe out, lower your leg.

Relax the whole body.



BENEFITS

Strengthens the abdominal muscles and massages the internal organs.

Removes constipation, and cures stomach disorders like acidity and indigestion.

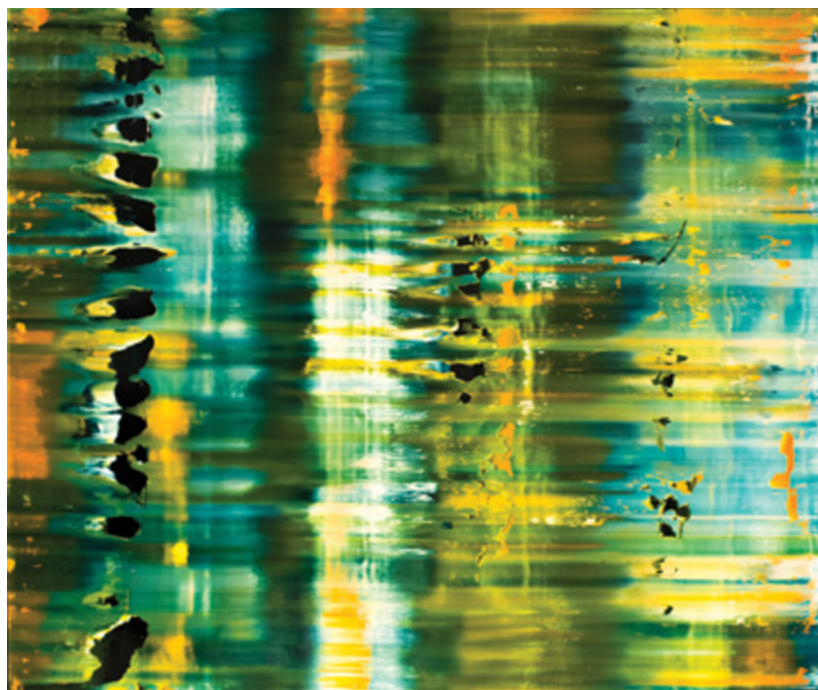
Reduces back pain.

Helps to reduce weight in the abdominal area, thighs and hips.

Synchronicity

An Art Essay

In this series of paintings,
ALEXANDER IVANOV
unveils the invisible
process of
communication between
the subconscious mind
and the Universe.



Alex Ivanov is a contemporary artist and the creator of more than 150 abstract and photorealistic artworks. He has had four years of intensive practice and study of photorealistic and abstract art, and chooses to work mostly with oil paints, watercolor and graphite. His art has received multiple international art awards, including more than 10 in Russia and China, and his work has touched the lives of numerous private collectors in the United States and Russia. He has also participated in 9 art shows since 2015 in different cities around the world. Alex currently resides in the suburbs of Moscow with his wife and daughter.



"I truly believe art has an enormous impact on mankind – it cures our souls and makes us better people; it inspires us to commit noble deeds and prevents humanity from self-destructing."

- Alexander Ivanov



/ Synchronicity' is the name of a series of artworks. Through every line and every color, I unveil the invisible process of communication between the subconscious mind and the Universe. I believe that our subconscious mind communicates with the Universe by sending and receiving information. We can feel this connection while meditating, praying, or even during our daily lives. If we increase our awareness, we can receive very important information from the Universe.

Sometimes it can help us to make a crucial decision in our life or understand that we are going in the right direction, or attract some meaningful event to our life, or it may just inform us that something is likely to happen in the near future. It can be an insight, or a dream, or a series of coincidental occurrences of extraordinary events, that can happen during a day, a couple of days, or even a week, and this was called 'synchronicity' by Carl Jung in the 1920s. Even this series of artworks was created after some meaningful coincidences in my life.

Several years ago, I was thinking about trying to paint some abstract art, which I had never done before. As all my artworks until then were realistic, it wasn't a decision or an intention, it was just the process of thinking that we have from time to time

about things we could or should do in the future. That day I took out a sheet of paper and tried not to think about what I was actually drawing. I just unplugged my consciousness, and gave freedom to imagination. In half an hour the drawing was complete. It was a picture of a bat. Why it was a bat I did not know yet.

The next day, the same thoughts came again. At night, when I opened the window to let in some fresh air, a real bat flew into one of the rooms and alighted on a curtain. Such an incredible event, especially as bats are not very common in that region.

After a couple of days, I went with the family to our summer home for the weekend. It was a typical visit in the middle of summer, when we enjoy warm weather surrounded by nature. In the evening, just after the sunset, we saw the wonderful and unforgettable sight of hundreds of bats, one by one, flying from under the roof of the house to forage for the night. The show went on for several minutes, and then the bats were gone.

After that, I linked these events to my thoughts about creating abstract paintings, and decided to start. I bought oil paints of different colors, some tools, and tried to create, but had no clue how to go about it. Luckily it succeeded from the very beginning. The techniques and color schemes would pop into my head, and I have been able to create many beautiful artworks, which have been exhibited in different countries around the world, winning awards. Could they have been painted without synchronicity? Possibly not.



DESIGNING DESTINY

The Heartfulness Way

What does destiny mean
in the course of our lives?

What is fixed and
how much can change?

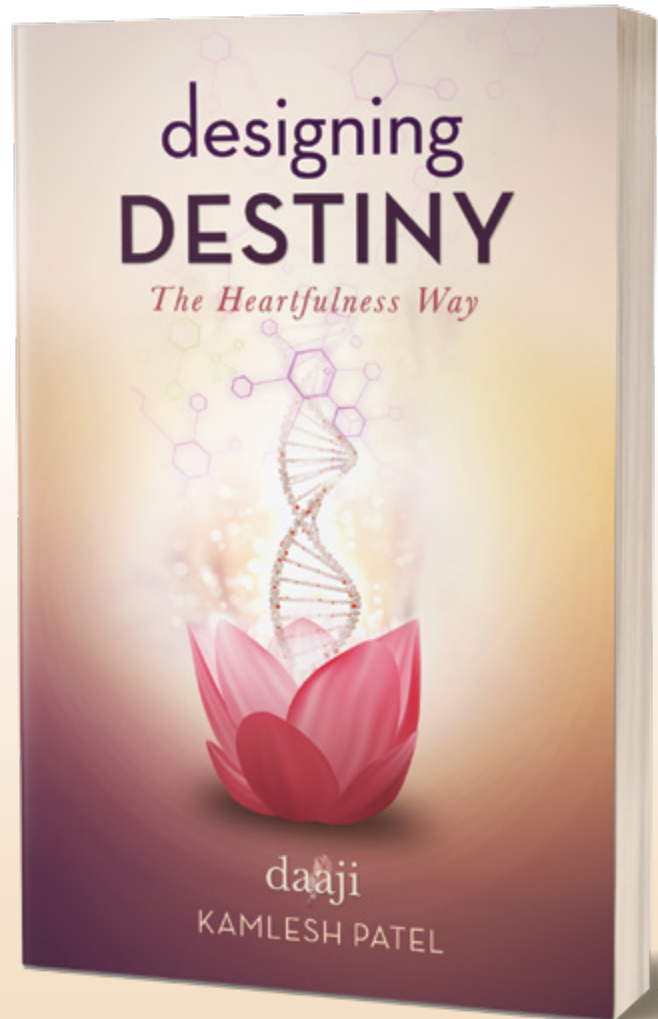
How can we design
our own destiny?

In *Designing Destiny*, the second book in The Heartfulness Way series, Daaji addresses these questions with simple practical wisdom.

He takes us on the next step of the journey – how meditative practices transform us from the inside out, affecting so many aspects of lifestyle, relationships, and overall well-being.

Daaji also shares his fascination with evolution: Which of our various bodies evolve? What is the role of consciousness? How to act in those pivotal moments when life takes a turn and a decision leads us down a certain path? What happens to the soul at the time of birth and death? How do we design our destiny, here and in the afterlife?

Daaji inspires us to believe in ourselves, to solve our challenges, to flourish in the face of difficulties, and to master our emotions. We learn to uncover our true potential and design our destiny.



ORDER YOUR COPY AT

www.designingdestiny.com

AN EXCERPT FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

"The fundamental question about destiny has always been: What is fixed and what can be changed? Are our lives governed by fate or do we have the free will to choose our destiny? ... Life is lived somewhere in between these two extreme views. It is like genetics. There is a fixed genetic pattern defined by the human genome, as well as a flexible epigenetic component. The basic genetic structure is fixed, but our environment, thoughts and emotions all affect the way our genes express themselves, switching them on and off. Like destiny, genetics is both fixed and flexible. Without this, there would be no evolution!

"What we do today determines our future. What we did in the past has already determined our present. This is how we weave our destiny.

"Each one of us exists in the dimensions of time and space, and we are constantly making our mark in those dimensions by forming impressions in our energy field, creating a signature, a personality, defined by a set of cognates – an individual character or blueprint of our future karma. If we could only remove those impressions, wiping the slate clean, then the karmic blueprint would be erased, removing our limitations and expanding the possibilities of our future destiny. The good news is that those impressions can easily be removed, to clear the energy field and transform our personality and karma. In this book, we will discover how this is done, transforming our lives."



daaji

KAMLESH PATEL

Author

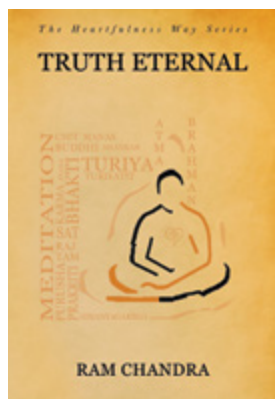
Known widely as Daaji, Kamlesh Patel is an original voice in an ancient tradition. His teachings arise from his personal experience on the path of Heartfulness, while reflecting his deep spirit of enquiry and respect for the world's great spiritual traditions and scientific advancements.

Daaji practiced pharmacy in New York City for over three decades before being named as the successor in a century-old lineage of spiritual masters. Fulfilling the many duties of a modern-day guru, he extends his support to spiritual seekers everywhere.

A self-professed student of spirituality, he devotes much of his time and energy to research in the field of consciousness and spirituality, approaching the subject with scientific methodology – a practical approach that stems from his own experience and mastery in the field.

*"Meditation is a journey
from the complexity of the mind to
the simplicity of the heart."
—Designing Destiny*

Get your copy



IN JANUARY

TRUTH ETERNAL
is a masterpiece of our
time.

Yogic science at its most profound: shedding new light on consciousness, the mind and the soul, on Vedic wisdom and our relationship with the Cosmos.

By one of the great visionary spiritual teachers of the 20th century, Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, known as Lalaji.

—> trutheternal.com



DEGREE IN OM

Heartfulness Yoga
Teacher Training Course

Post Graduate Diploma
in Advanced Yoga.

Learn to teach the eight limbs of Yoga. Merge the traditional art of Yoga with a modern professional approach.

—> www.heartfulness.org/yoga-trainers
in.wellness@heartfulness.org



**MASTERING
BEING**

3 masterclasses

In these online masterclasses, Daaji teaches you the practical benefits of meditation and other yogic practices.

Masterclasses are available online each day after you sign up and accessible throughout the day. Each class runs between 35 and 45 minutes.

—> <http://en.heartfulness.org/masterclass>



ORDERING

Heartfulness Magazine

To order copies online - single, 12 months subscription and 24 months subscription - please go to:

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

Printed copies will be available at selected stores, airports and newsstands, and at Heartfulness Centers and Ashrams.



HEART MARKS THE SPOT

Find a trainer near you!

Explore centers & ashrams to find your groove in group meditation and events.

—> heartspots.heartfulness.org
heartspots@heartfulness.org

HeartsApp

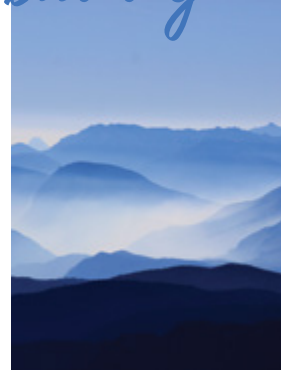


by Heartfulness

Login to your heart.
Meditate.Observe.
Transform.

Download at
—> www.heartsapp.org
info@heartsapp.org

Study
buddy



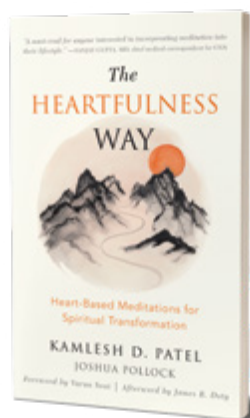
YOU-NIVERSITY

Meditation &
The Evolution of
Consciousness

In this video series, you'll learn tools for living a happy and fulfilling life.

A Heartfulness and
Udemy Video Series.
Register today.
Limited time offer: 50%
discount

—> daaji.org/udemy/



Webinar

for



life

16 FEBRUARY 2019

How to Establish Your City as an International City of Peace? The Heartfulness Way

BOOK NO FURTHER

The Heartfulness Way

In this inspiring text, you will discover a special collection of meditations and an exceedingly rare feature known as Yogic Transmission. Together, they awaken the depths of human potential and initiate a mystical inner journey. In this process, the heart becomes a perennial source of wisdom and guidance to help you navigate life's twists and turns and lead a life more connected to yourself and others.

Available through
—> www.heartfulnessway.com, at major bookstores and on Amazon.

Key takeaways :

- What peace building activities can we contribute to in our own communities?
- What partnerships can we form to create a culture of peace?
- How do we establish our individual city as an international city of peace?
- How do we spread awareness of peacebuilding activities in our community?

Register on

—> <https://webinar.heartfulness.org/pearl-webinar-series/>.

CONSCIOUS LIVING IN STOCK

HFNLlife strives to bring products to make your life simple and convenient.

We do our tiny bit to fulfill your material needs by bringing in a set of curated partners in apparels, accessories, eye-care, home staples, organic foods and more. The affiliation of our partner organizations with Heartfulness Institute helps in financially sustaining the programs which we conduct in various places across the world.

—> <http://hfnlife.com>

CELEBRATE EASY OWNERSHIP

UCO Home Loan

*“To own a home,
I don't need to wait
for more income.”*



INTEREST RATE
@8.70% p.a.*

EMI
Rs. 783 per lac*

Longer repayment period up to 30years

*Conditions apply

www.ucobank.com

Toll-Free 1800 274 0123

यूको बैंक  **UCO BANK**
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) (A Govt. of India Undertaking)

सम्मान आपके विश्वास का

Honours Your Trust

DISCOVER THE JOY
of Heartful
SERVICES & SOLUTIONS



www.htcinc.com



www.caretech.com



www.ciber.com

USA | UK | Germany | UAE | India | Malaysia | Singapore | Indonesia | Australia

Reimagine technology to accelerate your business