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MINDFULNESS

MARCH 2017

Heartfulness

Self | Work | Relationships | Inspiration | Vitality | Nature | Children

THE TERRAIN OF CONSCIOUSNESS

*Daaji on the ups and downs of
ever-expanding consciousness*

HOW TO STUDY AWE?

*Professor Dacher Keltner's findings
on the science of awe and gratitude*

THE FRAGILE BALANCE OF ECOSYSTEMS

*Alanda Greene on snakes
and strawberries*

HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE HEART

*The final part of Dr James Doty's
interview on compassion*



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Heartfulness
Through meditation, rejuvenation

Cleaning to Rejuvenate Yourself

Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes and feel relaxed.

Have the intention that all complexities and impurities you have accumulated during the day are leaving your entire system. They are going out your back, from the top of your head to your tailbone. Imagine that 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 leave from your back you will start to feel light in your heart.

Continue this process for twenty minutes. ...

You will feel lightness, so now connect with the Source. Feel the current descending from the Source and entering your system from the front. It is flowing throughout your system, carrying away any remaining complexities and impurities.

You have now returned to a simpler, purer and more balanced state. Every cell of your body is emanating simplicity, lightness and purity.

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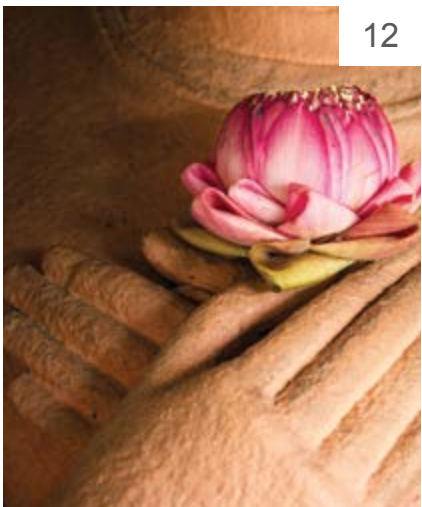
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A 21ST CENTURY APPROACH TO THE *Mind*

Mindfulness has created an awareness of meditation that is almost ubiquitous, especially across the developed world and the corporate environment. For many, Mindfulness is a gateway. It invites us to be present to whatever arises, accepting the ebb and flow of life. By simply being present, observing the breath, our physical sensations and mental activities, we slowly acclimate to the nature of life's variability.

Mindfulness is a fusion of Eastern and Western approaches to the human mind. It is practical, and hence has an international appeal. In this issue we feature interviews with two well-known Mindfulness proponents, both experts in their fields – Dr James Doty, the Director of the Center for Compassion & Altruism Research & Education (CCARE) at Stanford University, and Dr Dacher Keltner, the faculty director of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley.

The basic definition of meditation is to think of one thing continuously. As the mind learns to let other thoughts float by, we are able to focus on one thought, one goal, in meditation – naturally and without forcing the mind. With so many people worldwide learning how to do this, people are waking up to the possibility of self-acceptance and self-awareness and thus the possibility of change.

Every practice has a particular point of focus, leading to differing effects in consciousness. In this issue, Daaji explores the terrain we cross as we journey through various stations of consciousness within the inner universe. Each station takes us deeper and deeper along the spectrum of the subconscious, conscious and superconscious. This journey takes us deep within to the ultimate, absolute potential of all life.

This month we celebrate this universal 21st century approach to the human heart-mind field, from the outermost thinking faculty of the mind to the innermost potency of the heart. We also bring you more from Terran Daily on why so many of our children are being diagnosed with ADHD, autism and other behavioral problems, and how to support them, and from Luke Coutinho and Samara Mahindra on an holistic approach to healing dis-ease. Enjoy!

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James is the author of *Into The Magic Shop: A Neurosurgeon's Quest to Discover the Mysteries of the Brain and the Secrets of the Heart* (Avery, 2016) and is co-founder of the Center for Compassion & Altruism Research & Education (CCARE) at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, USA.



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Dacher Keltner

Dacher is a professor in UC Berkeley's Psychology Department and faculty director of the Greater Good Science Center. His research focuses on the biological and evolutionary origins of compassion, awe, love, beauty, and power, social class and inequality. He is the author of the best-selling *Born to Be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life*, *The Compassionate Instinct*, and most recently *The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence*. He has written for *The New York Times*, *The London Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *SLATE*, and *Utne Reader*, and received numerous national prizes and grants for his research.

He was a consultant on Pixar's film *Inside Out*, has worked with Facebook to make the site more kind, and on projects at Google on altruism and emotion.

He collaborates with the Sierra Club to help veterans and inner city kids outdoors. He is married with two teenage daughters, and loves camping, backpacking, Mexican food, Iggy Pop, African Music, Art Museums, Yoga and friends.

Simonne Halm

Simonne lives in Jutland, Denmark, and is an Alkaline coach, chef and mind-body trainer. She has written *Alkaline Smoothies, Juices, Soups and Desserts* to show everyone just how easy it is to stay healthy, rebuild your body and improve your overall state. Simonne practices Heartfulness.



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THE EVOLUTION OF Mindfulness

ELIZABETH DENLEY shares some ideas on the evolution of Mindfulness over the last 200 years, and where it might be headed.

The Mindfulness Movement is often thought to have its roots in vipassana, Tibetan Buddhism and Zen Buddhism. The word ‘mindfulness’ was probably coined by the Pali language scholar Thomas William Rhys Davids in 1881, when he translated the word *sati* as ‘mindfulness’.

Davids explained that *sati* literally means ‘memory’, but is used with reference to the constantly repeated phrase, *sato sampajāno*, meaning ‘mindful and thoughtful’. He elaborated it as “that activity of mind and constant presence of mind which is one of the duties most frequently inculcated on the good Buddhist.”

But it has not been the eastern practices of Buddhism alone that have shaped Mindfulness in the world today, as is well explained by Jon Kabat-Zinn. In fact, one of the most wonderful aspects of Mindfulness is the integration of western and eastern approaches, various philosophies and practices, all merged into a modern synthesis that speaks to people of all backgrounds and faiths. And this has been developing slowly throughout the world in an incredible way during the last 200 years. It has been a gradual evolution, which is still continuing today.

For example, the Transcendentalists of the 19th century in North America also shaped the evolution of modern-day Mindfulness – Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Henry David Thoreau, Louisa May Alcott and Walt Whitman, among others. They took their inspiration

from European Romanticism, as well as eastern practices and philosophy. In fact, when we examine the history, we see an ever-increasing integration of West and East. Looking further ahead to the 20th century, Thich Nhat Hanh’s Plum Village in the south-west of France is yet another example of the way this integration has molded our modern approach to Mindfulness.

And the latest evolution in this global movement is the continuation to Heartfulness. When you dive deep in meditation, you soon learn that the field of the human subtle body does not separate mind and heart. One of the foremost Yogis of the 19th and 20th century, Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh called the subtle body the ‘heart-mind’. His student and successor, Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur said it in a slightly different way: “The heart is the field of action of the mind.”

A simplistic way to imagine it is that the field of consciousness is like a canvas, stretching from the innerness of the soul, in the heart, all the way to the outermost function of the mind – that of thinking. Traditional Mindfulness generally works with this outer realm of thought and thinking – observing the presence and processes of the mind, although that too has changed, as everything continues to evolve. These days Mindfulness also recognizes the importance of compassion, gratitude, emotional intelligence, wonder and awe, which are very much associated with the heart.

“The heart is the field of
action of the mind.”

The functions of the mind – ego, intellect and thinking – all exist within this spectrum of consciousness, but to varying depths. All of them work together. As we go deeper and deeper into the heart, we move from thinking to feeling, and then deeper still, beyond feeling to being, to becoming and eventually unbecoming. Intellect evolves to wisdom and eventually to higher ignorance or innocence. The ego evolves by refining and identifying with the Infinite, so that it no longer constricts the personality – eventually only the purest, subtlest identity remains.

So every function of the mind evolves and refines as we dive deeper and deeper into the heart, to uncover the causal level of existence. We can then span the spectrum of consciousness, from the outermost region of thoughts to the innermost region of pure infinite existence, with everything in between.

Heartfulness is only a continuation of Mindfulness inwards, an expansion of a mindful practice into deeper and vaster dimensions. And this is largely a result of the effect of yogic transmission, which takes us from the surface level of the thought process into the deeper realms of infinite existence. Transmission opens the inner dimensions of a pure prayerful heart, and that journey is more magical than traveling to another galaxy.

Ultimately, we are all one; and when heart and mind are not separate in the subtle body of a human being, who are we to separate them in our worldview? What if we were to let go of words and differences and come together for humanity? ●



THE CONCEPT OF SURRENDER

BARBARA J. LEVIN O'RIORDAN shares some insights she has learnt from P. Rajagopalachari over the years about the beauty of surrender.

Many people are concerned about the concept of surrender in a spiritual journey. Why? We fear surrender because we consider it to be a somewhat abject state – submission, giving up a sense of self-direction, losing the ability to choose, being enslaved. The alarming example of Jim Jones, who led his followers into group suicide, leaps into people's minds. But real surrender does not involve any of those things at all.

We all have a higher Self. It is hard to say what that is, but many of us feel the presence of something within ourselves that is greater. For some, it is a palpable presence. For others, the higher Self is experienced as conscience – the feeling of uneasiness when we have done something wrong. For others, it may be

described as a 'moral compass'. And for others, it has to do with the profound sensations that arise when we see or hear something beautiful.

It does not matter what you call this thing, but most of us have experienced it in one way or another. It is our 'eternal companion' – something that stays with us all our lives.

When we listen to our higher Self, we usually end up feeling alive, fulfilled and happy. When we ignore it, it does not go away, but simply goes to sleep. It waits for the time when we are willing to listen to it again.

Sometimes, when we ignore the higher Self and it goes to sleep, we feel heavy. We start to have

many competing opinions about what to do. We can become depressed, angry or confused. But, even when we are feeling like that, the higher Self is waiting for us to listen and respond to it.

Spiritual surrender is simply the act of handing over our decisions to this higher part of ourselves. It means having the courage to give increasing priority to its requirements. It starts out as a guest in our hearts, but, at some point, the guest becomes the host. Then our lives, even if unobtrusive, become heroic.

Sometimes, it is more difficult to discern the voice of the higher Self. That is because our own desires interfere with our ability to listen. The voices of our desires compete so loudly that it becomes hard for us to hear the still, small, inner voice.

In addition, conditioning by our families, our religions and our social groups make it hard for us to listen and discern: our dogmas tell us what to believe and do not encourage us to really listen.


A spiritual master is a person who has achieved self-mastery, no longer confused by a myriad of desires, able to discriminate the real voice of the Self from the unreal voices of desires, with the courage to listen to the real and ignore the unreal.

The spiritual master has become a genuine human being, a mirror for us of everything we have forgotten we really are. When we see that mirror, especially when we look again and again and reflect upon what we have seen, the sleeping giant within us awakens.

The great Swami Vivekananda gave us this metaphor: a lion cub was raised by sheep and began to develop sheep-like ways. An older lion came and saw what had happened to the lion cub, which was bleating, eating grass and following blindly. The old lion grabbed the cub by the scruff of its neck and brought it to a pond, where it could behold its image and see that it was not a sheep, but a lion. The cub, seeing itself for the first time, emitted a roar.

A spiritual master's job is to show us that we are lions. So we surrender to that – not to him, or to a life of abject submission, but to the lion within.

Nelson Mandela observed that our fear is not of our lower self, or even of how terrifying the world is, but of how big we really are. When, with the help of a spiritual master, we begin to see what we really are and to love it, we surrender to it gladly, no longer afraid ●

A person wearing a purple and gold patterned Thai garment is seated and weaving on a traditional wooden loom. The loom is filled with many threads, and the person's hands are visible, holding a shuttle. The background is a warm, reddish-brown color.

We do not act rightly because we have virtue or
excellence, but we rather have those
because we have acted rightly.
We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.

ARISTOTLE

IN CONVERSATION WITH
TIFFANY DELL'AQUILA { Q & A }

The Principles of FENCING

TIFFANY TING DELL'AQUILA explains the trajectory of a professional fencer. What are the qualities and attitudes that got her to where she is today?

Q Tell us a bit about the journey you're on, and your goals as a professional fencer.

TD I am the top internationally ranked Taiwanese women's sabre fencer, and I won the silver medal in the 2016 Asian-Oceania qualifier for the Olympic Games, narrowly missing the 2016 Rio Olympics by 4 points.

Emboldened by this result, I have set my sights on qualifying for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan.

Q Can you share what inspired you to take this transition into pursuing an Olympic path?

TD My life is a constant balancing act between my athletic and architectural careers. Although I have been fencing since 2000, I have also been

studying and working toward my architecture license. The income I earn from my architecture career is what funds my athletic endeavors.

Just one year out of graduating from the University of Southern California School of Architecture, I earned my second title as a US National Champion, and was ranked in the top 32 in the country. My coach recommended that I promote my Taiwanese heritage on the international level, as my mom is Taiwanese.

With assistance from the Chinese Taipei (Taiwan) Fencing Association, in 2011 I immediately began competing at World Cups and Grand Prix events. That was the Olympic qualifying year for London 2012, and I experienced a steep learning curve.

Although I did not qualify for London 2012, I promised myself that I would do everything in my power to best prepare for the next Olympic cycle. Where I am now is a direct result of the goals I set for myself at that time, and an example of my unrelenting determination.

Q How has this step in your life helped you learn about yourself?

TD I have learned how to make the best decision that I can, at any given moment.

Fencing is a fast-paced sport that involves split-second decision-making. Before taking any action, I must quickly and carefully assess the situation between myself and my opponent. Even though time is short and the risks are high, I must remain calmly in control of myself, so that I can choose my next move correctly and without hesitation.

My ability to keep a level head and assess the situation at hand has been a revelation, because it means I can exert control over my impulses and emotions. It's a skill that has helped me navigate tricky times, even outside the sport.





Q What have been your tools for facing the more challenging aspects of this process?

TD My most valuable resource has been the deep and thoughtful dialogue with my community: my friends, family and professional associates. I openly admit that I do not have all the answers to my own problems, and I welcome the experiences and advice of others. Though I may not follow that advice, their input allows me to gain a new perspective, which is often what I need to resolve difficult situations.

Self-discipline helps me complete the goals I set for myself. It gives me the motivation and willpower to stick to my rigorous training schedule, and fulfill my responsibilities. It's a quality that keeps me honest with myself, and with others.

Q How can someone apply the principles of fencing in day-to-day life?

TD There are two important principles of fencing that can be applied to daily life. One is self-discipline, and the other is sportsmanship.

Self-discipline helps me complete the goals I set for myself. It gives me the motivation and willpower to stick to my rigorous training schedule, and fulfill my responsibilities. It's a quality that keeps me honest with myself, and with others.

In addition, good sportsmanship cultivates appreciation and respect for one's opponent. Fencers always salute each other before a match begins, and always shake each other's hands afterwards. One should accept victory or defeat with dignity, and any personal insults or disrespectful behavior is a punishable offense. Without an opponent, there is no game!

In daily life, it is also necessary to treat oneself, as well as others, with dignity and respect. This includes those whose opinions or sensibilities may be at odds with our own. Where would we be without these important people?

Q What has been the most valuable take-away so far?

TD What I have come to appreciate the most are the honest and frank conversations with others.

In the past, I used to hold a very individualistic attitude. However, after so many years experiencing failure, growth and success in the ever-nearing prospects of qualifying for the Olympics, I have realized that there is so much to learn from the life experiences and perspectives of others.

Although my path may be a unique one, it is not solely mine. I share it freely with others because I also depend deeply upon others ●



INTERVIEWED BY EMMA IVATURI

EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE



led by
HELLE LAURSEN
CEO of Nordic Compassion

Saturday, March 18th 2017

7:30 PM IST (India), 10:00 AM EDT (USA), 3:00 PM CET (Europe)

Register at <https://goo.gl/06fDMv>

Emotional resilience is our ability to 'bounce back'. To readjust our goals, or to set our sails differently when the wind changes. It's especially the ability to live with an open heart, in times of adversity and difficulties. An open heart is a key element in emotional resilience, as well as in a mother's love.

You will learn:

- the ability to experience emotional pain with an open heart - without being overidentified with the pain
- tips to strengthen your resilience in the midst of everyday turmoil
- how to cultivate acceptance, kindness and compassion

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BETWEEN STIMULUS

and response - PART 4 -

{ Q & A }

IN CONVERSATION WITH
DR JAMES R DOTY

In the earlier parts of this interview, DR DOTY explored the evolutionary advantage of compassion, aspects of human behavior that relate to compassion and collective social issues, and shared some cherished memories of the remarkable woman who gave him a helping hand up when he was a boy. Now, in Part 4, Dr Doty talks about how he was able to develop compassion and its impact in his work as a neurosurgeon.

Q I'd like to hear about being a surgeon. It seems so foreign to me, to regularly have such tremendous responsibility for someone's life. How has Mindfulness affected you as a brain surgeon, in being able to be calm in stressful situations?

JD I'm a neurosurgeon and the nature of my job requires a high level of training and technological sophistication. Interestingly, though, what I tell our students and residents is that while that may be true, the successes that I have with patients are equally touched by caring and compassion. And this has nothing to do with using a scalpel. This has to do with being present for someone and being there for them. In so many situations this is profoundly helpful for individuals because it changes the dynamic.

When you have a sense of calm about yourself and what you're doing, and you don't panic under stress, you are able to do much, much better ... it is the cultivation of positive emotional states that we can do with certain types of mental practices.

When people come to a doctor or neurosurgeon, many times this is the most important thing happening to them or their family and to us it's routine. And to dismiss it as such is really horrible. To be present even though we're doing something routine and standard to us is very, very important because it leads to this sense of calmness and the sense that they're really being cared for. Again it shifts them from engaging their sympathetic nervous system associated with fear and anxiousness to one of calmness, and this actually promotes wound healing and also improves their physiologic state. We know that certain types of stress, such as profound acute stress, can lead to sudden cardiac death. So those types of compassionate interactions are important.

Remember that a neurosurgeon's training is seven years after medical school. In the context of what I do, and this has evolved over time, I try to function with a calmness and a lightness of spirit that allows me, when something bad happens, not to respond in a negative way. You hear of surgeons who throw instruments and blame others. First of all, my first response if anything happens is: until proven otherwise it's my fault. This limits me screaming at people. And I don't do that, of course. When you're calm and you don't engage your fear response when unexpected events occur, your executive control function in your frontal area works at its best and this is associated with clear decision making, creativity and being more productive.

When you have a sense of calm about yourself and what you're doing, and you don't panic under stress, you are able to do much, much better. This is true whether or not you are a neurosurgeon and in all parts of your life. Negative thoughts and negative emotional states don't benefit anybody. And it is the cultivation of positive emotional states that we can do with certain types of mental practices.

Engaging in positive mental states, and the cultivation of compassion with intention, changes everything. When I finished my interaction with Ruth after six weeks my personal circumstance had not changed one iota ... but everything changed. And the reason everything did change was that I went from having negative emotions associated with my situation to simple acceptance of my situation. I had a different type of mental state. My mental state changed to one of happiness, acceptance and gratitude. I was able to forgive those who I felt had hurt or wronged me. I had no anger towards my father and mother, because I understood that they had their own struggles and were dealing with their own pain.

I say that situations have no power. It is us who give them power. I was able to go back to my situation understanding this, having these insights, and when I changed my mental state and took away the anger, despair and hopelessness then the world changed in how it interacted with me.

What has allowed me to have the success I have had is looking at the world with gratitude, practicing forgiveness, being compassionate to myself and others, recognizing the dignity of every person and practicing equanimity and humility. I understand that my purpose is to be of service to others, to embrace others and to give people unconditional love. That allows me to walk in the word and allows the world to embrace me.

Q I'm reminded in what you just said about the statement of Viktor Frankl that is something like: between the stimulus and the response there is a space and it's in that space that we find freedom.

JD I think that is exactly right and Viktor Frankl is one of my heroes. He had this understanding that between stimulus and response

Viktor Frankl had this understanding that between stimulus and response is a pause and it is within this pause that everything occurs. And it is learning how to sit with this pause, and how sitting with that pause, if you have the right intention and you have self-awareness and you have practiced the things that we have spoken about, then your response is completely different.

is a pause and it is within this pause that everything occurs. And it is learning how to sit with this pause, and how sitting with that pause, if you have the right intention and you have self-awareness and you have practiced the things that we have spoken about, then your response is completely different.

And it's the response to things that changes everything. As an example, often times we are approached by people who appear angry or upset about something and our natural inclination is to give that back to them in the same fashion. Yet if we take a moment to pause and think about the reality, often times these negative emotions and behaviors have nothing to do with us. They are a response to a set of events that occurred perhaps before the person met with us; a negative interaction with a spouse, some negative information about something they cared about.

When we are able to pause, this decreases our reactive nature and we don't go into a state of engagement of our sympathetic nervous system. As a result we are able to be much more thoughtful, clear-headed and creative, which leads to a better world. This is really the summation of all that we are talking about, when we talk about war, anger or negative affects on the environment; these are all conditions of the human heart.

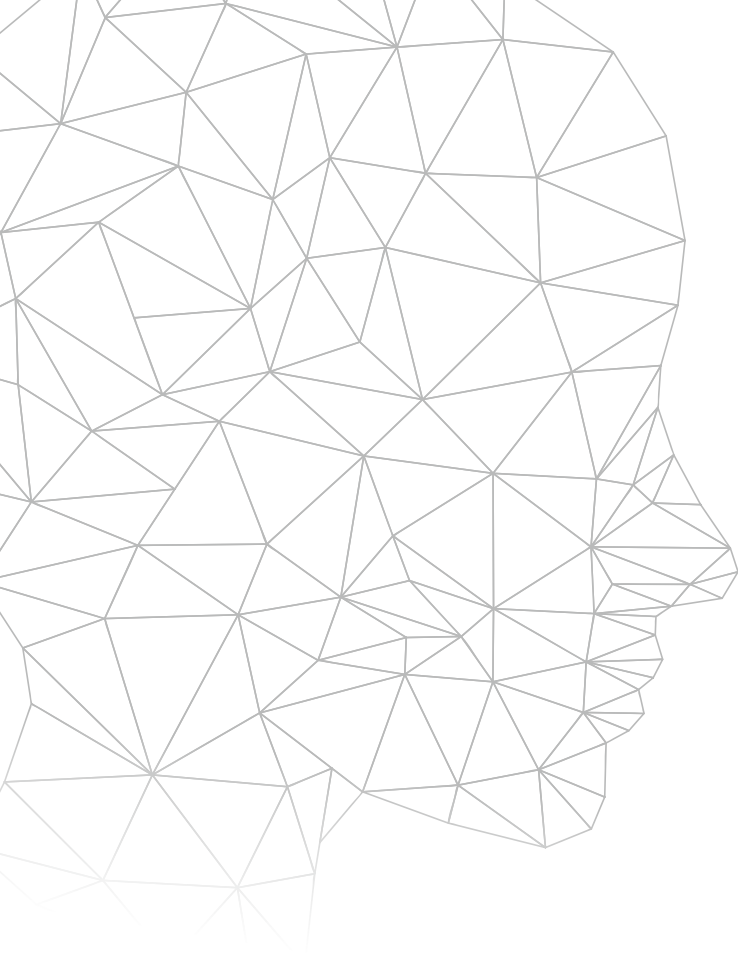
Throughout our lives many of us receive wounds of the heart. For most of us these heal quickly, but for some these wounds of the heart are deep. As a result, it is these wounds of the heart that are responsible for negative behaviors by men. It's only when we focus on healing the wounds of the heart that there is ever going to be peace in the world. All the science and technology are not going to do that. It is when we go inside of ourselves and practice the things we were discussing, acting with an open heart – those are the only things that can heal these wounds ●

INTERVIEWED BY JOHN MALKIN, AUGUST 2016.

Dr Doty is the author of *Into The Magic Shop: A Neurosurgeon's Quest to Discover the Mysteries of the Brain and the Secrets of the Heart* (Avery, 2016) and is co-founder of the Center for Compassion & Altruism Research & Education (CCARE) at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, USA.

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LIVING WITH THE New Children

TERRAN DAILY explores some of the possible reasons for the growing numbers of children who are diagnosed with ADHD and autism. Is the problem really with the children?

Have you noticed how many children now are seen as difficult or having special needs? I certainly have. In my 30+ years as an occupational therapist, I have seen diagnoses of ADHD and autism spiral, and have encountered an increasing number of children – even without these diagnoses – who have exceedingly strong wills, dreamy or fiery temperaments, and definite notions of what they like and don't like, will and will not do. These children have a hard time fitting in with mainstream education and busy working families. I have parented one such child and am now a grandmother to another.

Where are all these children coming from and why? I have heard many theories. Some people say 'the epidemic' is because of all the toxins we take in through our polluted air, water, food, medicines, body care products and cleaners. In 2009, the US Center for Disease Control published a report

stating that over 75 toxic chemicals have been found in peoples' blood and urine.

Another theory is that our children's problems are due to the electromagnetic pollution we experience from high power lines, mobile phones and phone towers, Wi-Fi, microwave ovens and so on. Other people postulate that watching television during the brain's formative first three years predisposes children to ADHD, as the brain becomes accustomed to TV's rapid-fire images and can no longer tolerate the slower pace of ordinary life.

One *Psychology Today* article, 'Why French Kids Don't Have ADHD', suggests that the key to the exponentially increasing incidence of ADHD could be the breakdown of traditional family values and discipline.

I have seen diagnoses of ADHD and autism spiral, and have encountered an increasing number of children – even without these diagnoses – who have exceedingly strong wills, dreamy or fiery temperaments, and definite notions of what they like and don't like, will and will not do. These children have a hard time fitting in with mainstream education and busy working families.

Coming from another angle, English educator Sir Ken Robinson in the most viewed TED talk of all time – *Do Schools Kill Creativity?* – holds that our current schools operate on an outmoded, factory model for education. They are not preparing our children for life in a world that has entered an explosion of information, creativity and new ways of seeing things. Our children are simply bursting out of molds that no longer fit them, and as the molds burst, new ways will have to be found. They are inspiring us towards change.

Other people with an esoteric bent describe a wave of Star Children coming to us from other worlds or other dimensions to pave the way for a new consciousness that is coming for all humankind.



The Star Children are described as falling into three main groups:

INDIGO CHILDREN

Born mainly between 1970-1990, with a few early scouts. These intelligent and talented children are warrior spirits with high integrity, fiery determination and no tolerance for dishonesty or manipulation. They will fight for what they think is right and will simply not comply with authoritarian demands that make no sense to them.

Attempting to coerce these children will simply result in a power struggle. Their role in our evolutionary process is to break down old systems that no longer serve us. These children get bored easily when asked to do something that does not inspire them or capture their interest, so are often labeled as having ADHD.



CRYSTAL CHILDREN

Born mainly between 1990-2010. These are more peace-loving children who are often recognizable by their large, sensitive eyes and their tendency to stare intensely at people for long periods of time, silently taking in information. Crystal children often begin talking considerably later than most children due to their telepathic abilities, so may be misdiagnosed as autistic. They are highly energetic so can be also be misdiagnosed with ADHD. Crystal kids dislike unharmonious or over-stimulating environments, and may have tantrums if forced to remain in such situations. They are artistic, musical and love nature, often with a special interest in rocks and crystals.

RAINBOW CHILDREN

Born after 2000. These are the newest and the least common Star Children. They are openhearted children born to love and serve. They are often gifted with healing abilities and passionate creativity. These children are completely fearless – they give affection equally to every living being. They have very high energy, strong personalities, and can appear impatient because they are not accustomed to this world where manifestation of what people think or need is not instant.

I am sure all these theories are pieces of the puzzle. Which do you resonate with? I personally resonate very well with the idea of Star Children. I remember a calling coming to me at an early age to somehow help in ushering in a new era, and it is inspiring to me to think of a great wave of beings coming into the world for that purpose. Goodness knows we need it!

I'm not sure that Indigo, Crystal and Rainbow children are so clearly differentiated, or that these are the only types of children. But what I do know is that many children are different now, and these new children must be approached with respect, humor, playfulness and presence. They must know that we are with them, willing to help them accomplish goals that make sense to them. They respond to inspiration and loving guidance, but not to arbitrary control – you will have a fight on your hands! ●



FURTHER EXPLORATION.

Exposure to environmental toxins linked to autism incidence rates, Medical News Today website: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/274088.php>.

Health Effects of Electromagnetic Fields, a video with Professor Olle Johansson, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mN1nl9GNpUU>.

Losey, M. 2007. *The Children of Now... EVOLUTION*, Career Press, USA.

Wedge, M. 2012. 'Why French kids don't have ADHD', *Psychology Today*: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/suffer-the-children/201203/why-french-kids-dont-have-adhd>.



Life is movement. The more life there is, the more flexibility there is. The more fluid you are, the more you are alive.

ARNAUD DESJARDINS



THE SCIENCE OF

Awe & Compassion

– PART 1 –

PROFESSOR DACHER KELTNER is passionate about social justice and just as passionate about the experience of awe and wonder in daily life. How does a professor of psychology study awe, wonder and compassion scientifically?

Q Hullo Dacher, let's start with what your role is at UC Berkeley?

DK I am a Professor of Psychology and I run a big lab, I teach, and then I have this other career, which is the Faculty Director of the Greater Good Science Center. For the first 8 to 10 years I was really deeply involved in building up the center: writing, giving talks and workshops, organizing programs, editing the online magazine and getting out in the world and speaking to healthcare providers, school teachers and the like. And now, we have been really lucky to see it grow organically, such that I am largely in the background, speaking to people when they need it, suggesting themes for our offerings, and doing the occasional talk. So it has been a remarkable growth.

Q How has it expanded? You have different streams now, such as education. How has that evolved?

DK We started 15 years ago when the science of the things we were interested in, like gratitude, mindfulness, compassion and empathy, was really just getting off the ground. There was no well-developed literature. So 10 years ago we were involved in building up our content – essays, research briefs, videos, etc. And then, from that platform of content, we first extended it to educators. We hired a couple of education directors and we have a summer institute for educators, I speak to schools, and we consult with educational institutes.

Then we built up a broader worldwide reach with our online 'Science of Happiness' course with Emiliana Simon-Thomas, after which we started to go to the workplace. We held a gratitude conference on work. Emiliana and I do a lot of speaking to organizations, and I think that we will eventually move to healthcare, where we will build the wisdom of the Greater Good Science Center into how a

medical doctor might advise a patient.

So first we got our content together, and it felt like we had a deep immersive experience for people to move through, and then we extended it strategically.

Q Can you share some of your personal journey? Why are you interested in bringing goodness to the world? What fascinates you about it?

DK Well, I had counter-culture parents. My mom was a feminist and literature professor and my dad was an artist, and they taught me to feel wonder about the world, and to look at the arts and think about literature and travel around, and just be wonderstruck by the world. That really led to my scientific career, and the things that I study, like beauty and awe and compassion and power dynamics.



My parents were interested in 60s activism, so I got interested in justice and injustice, and I think that part of what my parents gave me is the sense that ideas can really help the world. So I became interested scientifically in things like awe and compassion as a result of my childhood. And my parents gave me the courage to do things in the world with knowledge or science that lift up the welfare of many.

This came at a time, after 9/11, with economic inequality, criminal injustice, where it felt like the US culture needed a lot of assistance. And this has been true for 15 to 20 years. We need alternative models for the meaning of life, and why we work, and how we should treat our kids, and what we are going to contribute to the world. So that has always been my purpose – to try to get people to think outside the box.

Q My teacher was asking us a question today that I will pass on to you: when it comes to the greater good, generally human beings innately know what goodness is. So why is it so hard to change bad habits? The example that he used was a thief going to prison, with the knowledge that it is not right to steal, but rather than reforming he returns to society a better thief. So knowledge doesn't transform us necessarily, and experience doesn't transform us necessarily. How do we change?

DK I don't necessarily agree with the first assumption that we know what is the right thing to do. I have been struck by this in my studies with compassion and teaching compassion. In our circles, people recognize the value of compassion, and extending ourselves to others, but there are a lot of realms where compassion is discouraged and denigrated. When you go to Wall Street, there is much less interest in compassion as a virtue. So first of all we don't necessarily know.

Humans come equipped with a whole bundle of tendencies, from the compassionate to the adversarial, and what we think is right depends on how we are brought up.

And humans come equipped with a whole bundle of tendencies, from the compassionate to the adversarial, and what we think is right depends on how we are brought up. So that in part sets the stage for answering the next question. If so much of the good stuff is intuitive, and I do believe it is, why is there so much inequality in the United States? Why do we have a criminal justice system that is wildly biased against young African-American men and Latino men?

That begs the question of change. We have always taken the perspective, with respect to change, that first of all there are structural barriers to positive change. So in the United States, the belief that money will bring you happiness is a barrier to real happiness, but it doesn't stand up to scientific tests. The belief that you have to teach your kids to be cut throat doesn't stand up to the test of leading a meaningful life, because kinder kids will fare better.

Then you can think about structural issues, which I am very deeply committed to right now, in this next part of my career. For example, there are clear biases in our criminal justice system that we can change. I am interested in getting outdoors as a basic human right, because we now know from our work on awe that when kids and veterans and others get outdoors they do better. And yet in America, there aren't parks for poor kids, and veterans don't get the chance to go outdoors.

There are a lot of things we can do to overcome the barriers to positive change and increase the structural ways we can change. I still feel like the fight is very worthwhile fighting.

I think that the Mindfulness contemplative movements have in some senses forgotten that we are only as healthy as those who are less fortunate in society, and we are all connected, and it is part of our responsibility to work towards social justice.

To be continued ... ●

INTERVIEWED BY ELIZABETH DENLEY



The Evolution of Consciousness Series

TRAVERSING THE TERRAIN OF consciousness

The journey towards infinite consciousness is vast and full of wonder, even though there are ups and downs. **KAMLESH D. PATEL** gives us some tips on how best to be successful on the journey, with the support of transmission and our own interest.

A simple process of meditation with yogic transmission can help us traverse all levels of consciousness. The terrain along the journey goes up and down, right and left, in all directions. So just as a person who is not used to walking gets tired journeying across such a rugged terrain, a person who is not used to the ups and downs of the superconscious and subconscious states also gets tired and finds it very difficult.

But with the help of transmission, a person can traverse the various states of consciousness with much more ease. Take for example the heart chakra, which is like a galaxy in itself, with many constellations, including five major ones. The way we move from one to another happens in a most wonderful way. We remain awestruck in disbelief at times while witnessing the inner wonders unfold in front of our heart's eye. With the help of transmission we are able to move at lightening speed.

The atmosphere at each point or station varies enormously, just as it would from galaxy to galaxy. And that gives us the temporary experience due to the conditions prevailing at each spiritual station.

This constant change can be frustrating for us as we move on the spiritual journey. After all, we like the feeling of steadiness and constant familiarity. But if we are to evolve, if consciousness is to evolve, this change is a must. The idea of remaining comfortable in a particular state will slow down our evolution.

And as we move on, after years and years of spiritual practice we realize that each successive stage is more and more refined and expansive. Then we truly appreciate the need for a little inconvenience raising its head now and then during our journey. It is precisely at this time, when we feel uncomfortable with the inconvenience, that we need to increase our efforts to cross to the next phase. If we can do that on our own, it strengthens us to cross more and more spiritual states as we proceed on our journey.

Help is always available from a Guide of caliber who supports us as we cross the spiritual stages. And that support becomes more and more necessary as we journey to higher and higher states, just like a Sherpa becomes more necessary the closer the mountain climber is to the peak of Everest. We can only really appreciate the inner beauty of all these stages when they are experienced; it is not possible to know by reading about them in a book or imagining them.

Even states like peace, love, restlessness, contentment, fearlessness and courage exist across wide spectra. They are not absolute states but continually evolving and deepening. For example, we may feel peace soon after starting a spiritual practice, but the peace we feel many years later is of a higher order all together. Only through the inner spiritual journey can we experience all the various levels of contentment, stillness, restlessness and love. And then finally, we move to a different focus altogether – when we are able to appreciate the osmosis between our Maker and ourselves.

As we move forward on the journey, our subtle bodies – mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahankar*) – become more and more refined through spiritual practice coupled with an attitude of continuous improvement, and this leads to the refinement of our consciousness. But what happens if we do not work on our refinement? What if, instead, our ego becomes more and more inflated because we think we have reached some great spiritual height and are better than others? Will our consciousness still be refined and continue to evolve? No, it is not possible. We will instead regress.

An ego that is colored by the filter of “I am great,” or “I have reached the pinnacle,” or even “I am

unworthy and useless,” will become so rigid and contracted that consciousness will devolve into a compacted state. Then the rest tumbles like a domino effect: intellect no longer expands to include intuitive wisdom, and thinking does not evolve into feeling. We will be stuck in a very narrow mental process and worldview.

When the intellect and thought processes are limited by education only to reasoning and rote learning, without the intuition and inspiration of the heart, then again we remain stuck in a narrow worldview. Consciousness cannot expand and evolve.

So even if we are on a spiritual journey, doing regular practice, as long as these subtle bodies are not refining and becoming more and more subtle, we will continue to spin in one place, like mice do in spinning wheels in the cages of pet shops. Or even worse, our consciousness will contract and harden. It will become more and more compacted, like the consciousness of minerals and rocks. And this dullness is known as a *tamasic* consciousness in Yoga.

So how do we avoid these pitfalls?



The first way is to meditate with transmission. It helps us regulate the mind, dive deep into the heart, and move from thinking to feeling, intellect to wisdom.



The second is to remove the habits and behavior patterns that keep us stuck in a rigid worldview through the process of cleaning of the underlying impressions from the past that have caused them.



The third is to create a vacuum in the heart, the prayerful state, so that we connect with the inner Self.



The fourth is to refine and perfect our character. A characterless person has a limited view of existence, and this restricts consciousness. He steals, lies or cheats as he has lost his radar, his center. He is off-center. A person who is off-center cannot easily traverse the terrain of consciousness.

Continuous improvement is necessary. When ego manifests as an arrogant attitude – “I am the best” or “I know” – there is no room for improvement. When intellect does not evolve to wisdom, there is no inspiration, and again consciousness is restricted. When thinking does not deepen to feeling, when desires and thought remain predominant, there can be no evolution of consciousness.

It is easy to observe this evolution in outer behavior. For example, when passion dominates, we are only interested in satisfying our own desires, no matter how noble they may be. When compassion dominates, we sacrifice our own desires for the sake of others – automatically consciousness has expanded to encompass the other. As we receive, we keep giving more and more. There is generosity of heart.

So meditation is for strong-minded people who want to evolve faster than others. The practical tools are all there for refinement – we just have to want it! ●

ABOUT KAMLESH PATEL



Embracing the many roles of a modern-day spiritual Guide, you will find Kamlesh Patel equally at home meditating with a group of followers in the sublime stillness of a Himalayan ashram, teaching thousands of people to meditate at an international conference in Lyon France or Los Angeles California, addressing recruits in a police academy in Delhi and sharing tips on life skills with students at a high school campus in Mumbai.

Known to many as Daaaji, he has that rare and beautiful blend of eastern heart and western mind that allows him to dive deep into the centre of his existence in the heart, and simultaneously have a scientific approach to original research in the field of meditation, spirituality and human evolution.

As the world teacher of Heartfulness and the fourth spiritual Guide in the Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga, Daaaji oversees Heartfulness centers and ashrams in over 130 countries, and guides the 7,000+ certified trainers who are permitted to impart Yogic Transmission under his care.

VARANASI

Purity in Chaos

PHOTO ESSAY BY BHARATH KRISHNA





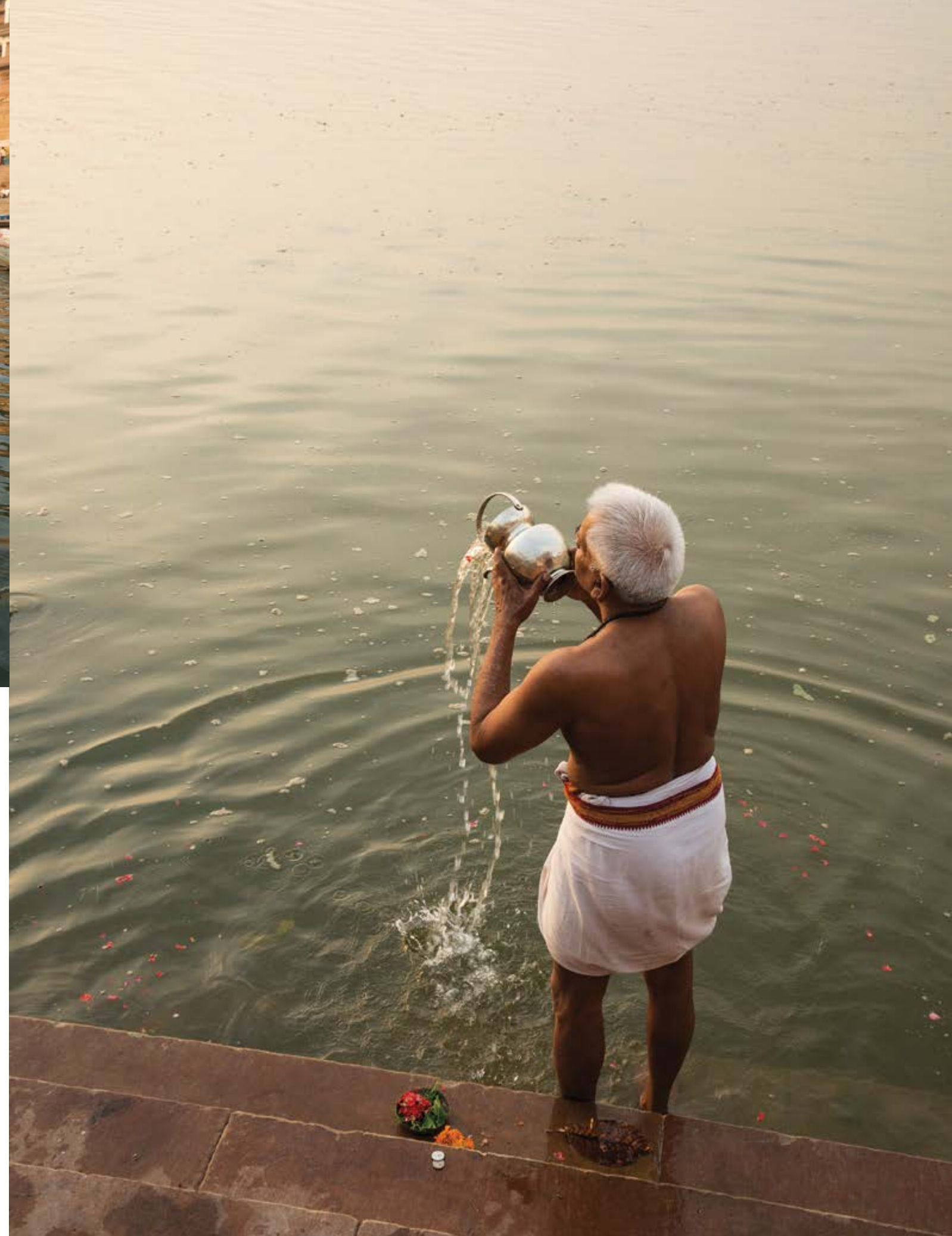
The Ganges runs calmly, a lifeline for so many people in so many ways. Though it is early morning, the atmosphere is chaotic, activity on every stretch of the riverbank.

This is the iconic place where Lord Shiva is said to have put his wife Parvathi to rest. Since that time of lore, devoted Indians have made the journey to send their loved ones to liberation, to the freedom from the countless cycle of birth and rebirth.

They say the flame from that first fire has been preserved. The funeral flames are still lit from that same source, maintained in a small cave from

generation to generation. The intense longing for the safe passage to the life beyond, and the fulfilment of duty, both hang in the air.

As I walk down the stretch of dozens of ghats – small groupings of hotels, temples cottages – every few metres something new is happening. Individuals are taking dips in the river for purification. Further down, boats float out into the midst of the river. Beyond, children splash in their swimming classes, people send out floating diyas for their loved ones, buffalos bathe and the slopping sounds of clothes being washed compete with saffron-robed sadhus murmuring blessings.



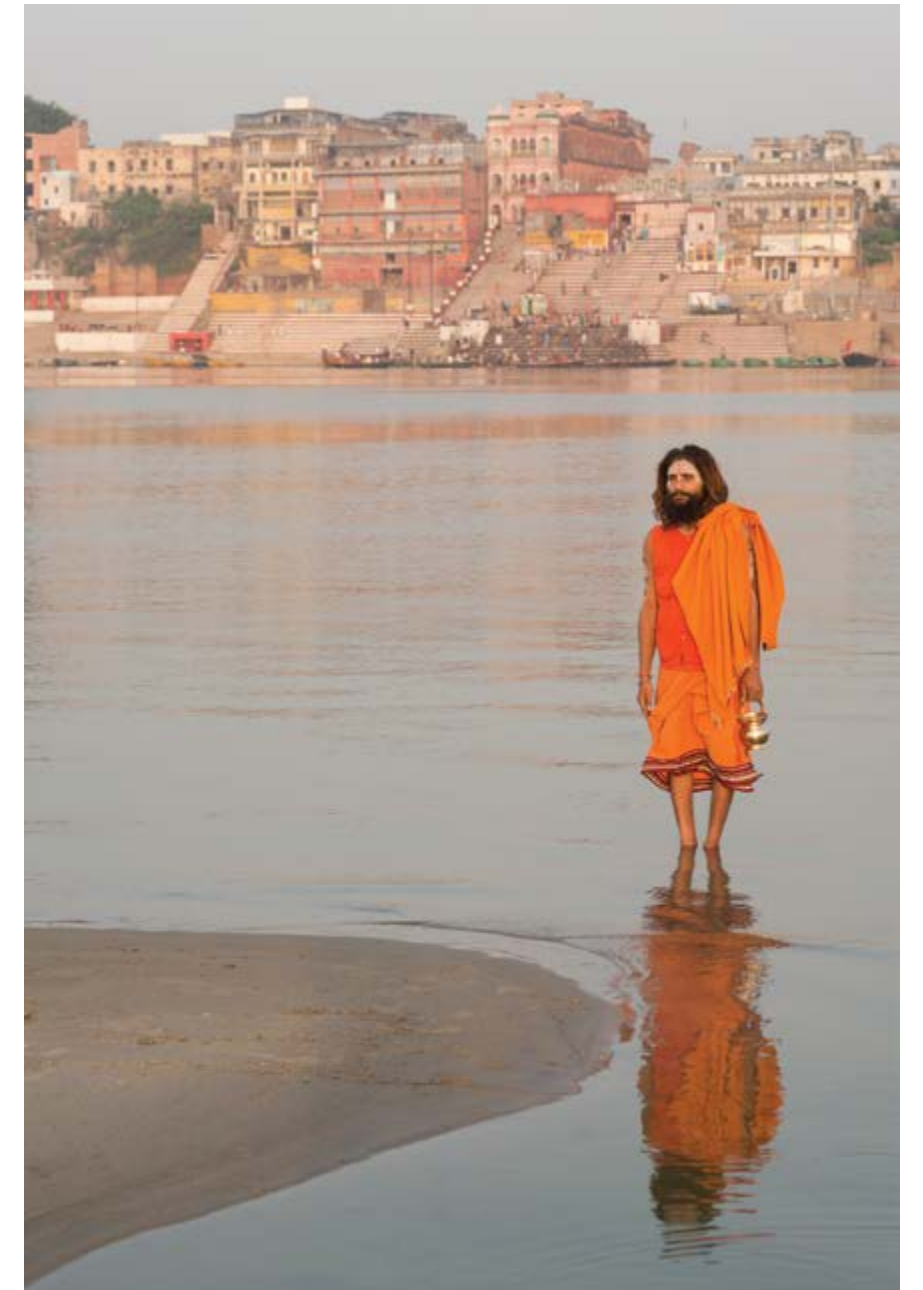


I come across a naga sadhu. Normally they live on the outskirts of society, without clothing, on the extreme. Covered only in a small loincloth and ashes, they come to the city during festivals like the Kumbh Mela. I'm overwhelmed by all the activity. One could get lost in any number of things, absorbed in one of the many worlds on this stretch of the river. Despite the bustle, a sense of simplicity pervades. The holiness is palpable, along with the modern-day corruption that has given religion a bad name.

A man is being rowed out to the middle of the river. There he will say goodbye to his newly born infant. He pays the oarsman.



The river used to be pristine, its purity maintained by a special kind of bacteriophage keeping it uncontaminated. You could bottle river water and decades later it would still be fresh. Because of these unique properties, the Ganges too has always been worshipped. But these days, the poor river also cannot contend with our human defilement, as factories pour their waste into the river's flow upstream, and thousands of visitors leave their rubbish without concern for the sacredness of the river.



Even as the sun goes down, there is more to be done. At sunset every day a fire ritual is performed, the smell of incense thick.

And so it is, another day on this ancient riverbed, as every other day for the entire year. As an outsider, we can find disturbance in Varanasi's ebbs and flows. But here there is a sense of normalcy. Just as the river has purified itself, so too the place seems both full and yet untouched ●



IN CONVERSATION WITH
LUKE COUTINHO AND
SAMARA MAHINDRA

AN INTEGRATIVE FOUNDATION TO HEALING - PART 3 -

In part 3 of this interview, LUKE COUTINHO and SAMARA MAHINDRA continue to speak about the importance of different foods, lifestyle and attitude towards holistic living.

LC Oil is important for developing your hormones, and absorption of vitamins such as A, D, E and K which are fat soluble. You need fat to carry them to your cells. That's how important food is: you can't just say, "I am doing a diet and eating such-and-such foods." You have to look inside the body into how that food is being absorbed.

Look at the biofeedback of the body – many people still have that white coating on the tongue, which means that food is not working the way you think it is for you. It is not about writing out a diet to eat healthy foods; first you want to prepare the body to absorb those healthy foods.

So before eating a healthy meal, you need to clean out the gut and detoxify the liver, to prepare yourself for the next dose of healthy food. Then, when you have that good food, you automatically stop craving the bad food. Your body only craves clean food. An unhealthy body craves unhealthy food. That is why when you do a detoxification program, for the next 4 to 5 days you are completely fine. There is no need to battle with cravings in your mind, using willpower to control them, because your body is not creating that environment.

The moment you get that first dose of sugar and start that bacteria formation, then the cells become anaerobic, your whole physiology changes and then you start craving junk.

Q So sugar is still the big baddy!

LC Absolutely! There is no doubt about that. Then there is the whole issue of saturated fats and the cholesterol myth. People have been moved away from the oils that were actually managing their cholesterol to using oils that produce more heart disease and inflammation. So everything is coming up slowly.

It is not about writing out a diet to eat healthy foods; first you want to prepare the body to absorb those healthy foods. So before eating a healthy meal, you need to clean out the gut and detoxify the liver, to prepare yourself for the next dose of healthy food. Then, when you have that good food, you automatically stop craving the bad food. Your body only craves clean food.

SM I think a lot of people also want to follow the dietary fads that are current. We are always looking outside. For example, there are grains that are no doubt very healthy, like quinoa, but we all come from rich, ancient cultures with different kinds of foods that are good for our system, that we are born into. So we look outside, we want to get the fashionable healthy stuff, without realizing that what is local is what is the best for us. Many things come into play to take us away from that, like the media.

LC This is where meditation and inner balance are so important. Every day we are bombarded with information on billboards, Facebook and other media. You need the inner balance to really say, “Why am I chasing everything from outside, and not looking at what I have in my own culture?” You need inner balance for that. You don’t need awareness. You need inner awareness. You don’t need to pay for a session where someone will tell you, “Do this.” You know it yourself, but you need inner balance to make the decisions. And then, if you are Indian, you select red rice over quinoa.

When I ask people, they say, “Oh but all my friends eat quinoa.” It is a hip thing – you’re not balanced.

Why do you want to be hip when it comes to what you are putting in your system? People in India fly in their ingredients from the US because they can afford it. So what if you can afford it! Use that money for something else. It is not really a personal choice, but a choice made out of unawareness. It is an unbalanced choice, and, again, that is why you need meditation – to help you be balanced in all your decisions.

Society is a virus – we create issues. In my line of work, people need time and they need my attention. They don’t really need and they don’t want your money. The NGOs want your money, to use it in ways that they think are right for you. We work with rural children in villages, who have disease and cancers. They just want to play. They don’t even need a football; they want to play with you. For this, you need that inner balance. Everyone needs it collectively to change the way donations are given and used.

All of us need money to sustain ourselves, but it does not have to be used as a way to send out a wrong message. As a nutritionist, even if I can afford organic food, I am not going to eat organic food alone, because I want my body to be used to everything that is happening around, and I don’t want to send a false message that we all need to eat only organic food to be healthy. No, you should be healthy to tolerate all the toxins that we have around us. Organic food is a small part of the whole game. And when cancer patients go into remission, they still have to deal with air pollutants, and carcinogens in food, water, everywhere, all the time. Make your immune system stronger the right way with what we have right now.

If you look at the way our nutrition is misaligned, we are doing fad diets that are often extreme. Everything has to be done in moderation. In addition, we have our food being sold in synthetic packets, and that also is not aligned with Nature. We are also moving away to more synthetic foods than Nature has given us.



Q So you are both talking about cancer in India. Cancer has always been around. We know that the rates of cancer in the West are becoming epidemic, but what is it like in India?

SM I think that the way we are imitating the West in lifestyle has a big impact. There is a misconception about cancer in India: many people believe it is genetic. It is true that perhaps 5 to 10% of cancers are related to genes, but the rest are lifestyle-related. So if we start living a toxic lifestyle, the rates of cancer are going to increase. That is exactly what is happening – they are rapidly increasing. Our diets, lifestyles, work schedules, etc. are increasing the rates in India.

LC I don’t go by statistics. I believe in science, but I also believe that the evidence from science has delayed healing. For example, if you take turmeric to someone who knows it works, and yet they are told, “We don’t have enough scientific evident to validate its use,” then we may be denying someone the right to healing. So I refuse to go only by science. If I see a treatment is working, I am going to have conviction and it will also work for someone else. At the end of the day I follow one law, and that is the law of Nature. Nature heals. We all know that if we align our parameters with natural biology then we thrive. If we align the way we eat, think, sleep and move with Nature, then anything that is a disease – whether you call it arthritis, cancer or diabetes – tends to start going away.

If you look at the way our nutrition is misaligned, we are doing fad diets that are often extreme. Everything has to be done in moderation. In addition, we have our food being sold in synthetic packets, and that also is not aligned with Nature. We are also moving away to more synthetic foods than Nature has given us.

Look at the way exercise is done. What is exercise? Moving according to your body's natural way ... people come back to simple, basic walking, which is the best exercise when combined with Yoga or some other natural body movement.



Look at the way exercise is done. What is exercise? Moving according to your body's natural way. When you look at Yoga or Pilates, you are using the body's natural flow, but some other fitness regimes are extreme and unnatural for the human body. So mostly they don't work because there are injuries and physiotherapy, and people come back to simple, basic walking, which is the best exercise when combined with Yoga or some other natural body movement.

Many elderly people today have difficulty getting up and down from a sitting position, because they have never practiced basic squatting, which is one of our basic movements. Most exercise regimes today have moved far away from improving such basic movements. Again, it is alignment – your sleep cycles are not aligned with Nature anymore. In the modern world it is perhaps unrealistic to expect people to have that, but we should at least try to get the right kind of pattern, the right amount of sleep, and then our thoughts and stresses are definitely symptoms of misalignment.

Q I agree that being in tune with Nature is the answer to much of this, but how do you do that in the middle of Mumbai, Luke, or for you in Bangalore, Samara? Take a typical IT consultant, who spends, 8, 12 or 16 hours a day on the computer, often working offshore shift work at night for a US company, grabbing food on the go in their canteen at work. How do you work with people with this lifestyle, to be in tune with natural cycles, when their daily life is so far from that?

SM I hear so many people telling me: "I Just don't have the time and I live this fast-paced life, which is understandable. But I feel that if you want to make that change, there is always time if you want to make the effort.

First you start with the food you eat. What are you putting into your system? Then meditation is so important, even if it is only 5 or 10 minutes a day – aligning yourself, getting your frame of mind into the right space, taking the day ahead – those things make a big difference. Start with small things. It is not about going all the way right from day one.

Q So you give people step by step.

SM Yes. It starts with an effort, but there are processes so that you can put this into your life, even in a fast-paced life.

Q So there is still hope, still changes that can be made, even in urban stressful life, right?

SM Absolutely. There is mental discipline that is needed in that past-paced lifestyle. If you do want to live that lifestyle without burning out, these things are imperative. You have to incorporate them into your life.

Q So Luke, what would those things be?

LC Personal responsibility and accountability, number one. You can't always blame the medical community. Patients go to doctors and say, "Doc, I'm sick, fix me," and they don't do anything over and above that. We all know that human beings today have two qualities – we are either seeking pleasure or trying to avoid pain.

So when we are trying to avoid pain, if there is a little pill that will take the pain away, the giver becomes the best doctor, the best nutritionist around. But

it is a quick fix, and we have not gone to the root cause or changed behavior, and that is why disease is progressive. We cannot blame pharmaceuticals or doctors if we have not taken personal responsibility and accountability.

A 30-minute walk is 2% of your day. I don't know anyone who is that busy that they cannot prioritize 2% of the day. If people are working 14, 15 or 16 hours day are they managing their work well? I don't come from a wealthy family, but today I would select a job



Unless you have that inner balance, you can have all the information in the world that already exists, but you won't do what is needed. Inner balance allows you to say, "This life isn't making sense anymore. I need to change right now."

that allows me to look after myself holistically over working crazy hours. And for that you need inner balance.

At the same time I know that the job of a doctor, for example, is intense. It involves being on call, working all hours and you cannot have a great sleep pattern, which is why most doctors are unhealthy themselves. But that is because of their line of work. But still you can take up personal responsibility, and as she said baby steps, one at a time.

If you can't get three meals right, can you get one meal right to start with? If you can't get 30 minutes, can you get 15 minutes of walking? Split it up – 10 minutes in the morning, 10 in the evening. You can do 5 minutes of some activity and you will get your heart rate and lung capacity up. Yoga doesn't have to be a one-hour session. You can do one or two postures on your break and be done in 15 minutes.

Take food: you can peel a carrot, and you can peel a cucumber. For that, you don't need a coach who is going to motivate you. Find your own self-motivation, and that comes from inner balance as a result of meditation.

Unless you have that inner balance, you can have all the information in the world that already exists, but you won't do what is needed. Inner balance allows you to say, "This life isn't making sense anymore. I need to change right now." Then you get the courage to drop things that are based on fear. The wealthiest people in the world are not happy. I work with people who are in the Forbes Top 10 worldwide, and there is one thing that they say: "No amount of wealth can give us our health back or take away the pain that we feel every night in our knees and back."



Your wealth doesn't matter when you have cancer or diabetes. That is the irony of life. So inner balance, inner balance, inner balance. With inner balance you make the right decisions. You want to take personal responsibility. It comes down to discipline at the end of the day.

Q Finally, a personal question: what drives and motivates you in what you do? Samara?


SM People. Interacting. I've had the opportunity to interact with many different kinds of people, and hear their stories and understand that they all have different lives. I had the opportunity to take the road into corporate life, but if what I do now is making a difference, even to one person, that is part of my own healing. People really inspire me.

Q What about you Luke?

LC It's being able to change someone's life as they get their health back. You see that that person has a second chance. That's what drives and motivates me. And I am passionate about it. This has not always been my field – I followed a hippie trail and then I worked with corporates as well, and that is part of my journey, and I realized that being an unhealthy GM is not what I want, I want to fix that problem. Every time I am able to change someone's life, even in a very small way, I feel more joy. I do what I love doing.

Q Thank you both •

INTERVIEWED BY ELIZABETH DENLEY



REDEFINING MY *life*

My name is Divna. Breast cancer survivor. Ayurveda believer and enthusiast. Starting a new life. Here is my story: why I decided to redefine and change my life.

30 years of my professional life I passionately devoted to education. I walked my professional path enthusiastically from the classroom, through ministerial offices, to fieldwork, implementing reforms in the education system. I considered myself privileged for getting a chance to make a significant impact and personal contribution to education.

And then a sudden personal blow. I was diagnosed with breast cancer. A big tumor with a few metastases. I was devastated. Mastectomy and lymph nodes removed. And that was the easy part. Chemotherapy was the real challenge. Couldn't eat,

DIVNA SHIPOVIKJ describes an integrative model for treating cancer that combines allopathic and ayurvedic treatments.

I began my long journey of educating myself about Ayurveda, the philosophy behind it, the herbs, the natural remedies, the *doshas*.

was sick all the time, felt dizzy and very weak, lost hair, and abrupt physical changes of the skin and nails. I felt miserable.

From a fellow patient I heard of Ayurveda for the first time in my life. I thought it was just another unrealistic miracle story. After my fourth chemo I felt so bad that I decided to do something. I went to see an ayurvedic doctor for consultations. He advised me about diet. Gave me a list of foods I should avoid. Prescribed me several ayurvedic herbal supplements. It seemed too easy to be true. I asked about the treatment I was already going through. He told me that I should continue with it, and add the ayurvedic therapy to it. That seemed reasonable. I thought, "I can do these changes to my diet. Herbs cannot harm me, and maybe they can help me heal sooner." So, I decided to give it a try.

With the changes in my diet I felt better in a week – no sickness, got back my appetite, felt stronger. With the herbal supplements I felt the improvement in the third week, just before the next chemotherapy. My blood results were normal again. After the chemotherapy there was no dizziness or weakness. Walked home on my own. That was the first sign that the herbs actually were helping me heal and regain my strength.

Went for another consultation to my ayurvedic doctor. This time I had some questions about the herbs, the composition of the ayurvedic products that he prescribed, about Ayurveda and how to change my lifestyle. I left happy with the answers and advice he gave me.

I continued with prescribed ayurvedic remedies and got much, much better. My oncologist was surprised by the speed of my recovery and with my check up results that all came out normal. I knew that I had made the right choice for my health.

My third visit to my ayurvedic doctor was to discuss the diet and the changes in the lifestyle in more detail. I had questions about the company producing these products and the man behind the company.

I began my long journey of educating myself about Ayurveda, the philosophy behind it, the herbs, the natural remedies, the *doshas*. I was eagerly reading everything available. I met in person the man behind Planet Ayurveda, Dr Vikram Chauhan. Spoke with many patients using ayurvedic remedies. Spoke with ayurvedic practitioners about their experience with herbal remedies.

A few years after I heard of Ayurveda for the first time in my life, I joined the Planet Ayurveda team in its holistic approach to curing and healing people. I share the information about ayurvedic products and their benefits for people suffering from different health concerns.

I am very enthusiastic as I know first hand how effective the Ayurvedic holistic approach to health and wellbeing is ●

Impermanence
is a principle of
harmony. When
we don't struggle
against it, we are
in harmony with
reality.

PEMA CHODRON



ALKALINE

Cauliflower, Tumeric & Fennel Soup

Beluga Lentils & Tofu Mix Topping

Vegan, plant-based, organic, low-glycaemic index and gluten-free



Photos & recipes by Simonne Holm

Alkaline-Institute.com

RECIPE

CAULIFLOWER FENNEL TURMERIC SOUP



Ingredients for the Soup

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 cauliflower | 3-4 cups water |
| 1 large fennel bulb, finely sliced | 1/2 tsp yeast free bouillon |
| 1 white onion sliced | 1 tbsp extra virgin coconut oil (optional) |
| 1-2 pieces of fresh peeled turmeric | Himalayan salt and pepper to taste |
| 1 tsp lemon zest | |
| 1/2 lemon, the juice | |
| 4 cloves garlic, minced | |
| 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper | |

Variation : 2 tsp miso paste instead of yeast free bouillon

Method

Wash all vegetables.

Cut the cauliflower in big cubes, place in a pot and cover it with water.

Cook for about 5-8 minutes when water starts to boil.

Make sure they are still crunchy.

Remove from heat and let it cool down in the pot with the water.

While cooking, prepare fennel, onions and garlic.

Heat oil in a wok or skillet over medium high heat.

Add the thin sliced fennel and garlic and sauté for 3 minutes.

In a blender add the cauliflower, fennel mix and all ingredients.

Use the water of the cauliflower to dilute the soup.

Blend it and taste with Himalayan salt and pepper.

Top with roasted black lentils, fresh coriander and or tofu mix or any fresh green herbs.

...

RECIPE

LENTILS & TOFU MIX TOPPING





Topping

1.5 cups freshly cooked lentils al dente
not soft, 20-30 minutes

Set aside, drain and let them cool down

1 tbsp garam masala

1 tbsp extra virgin coconut oil

Small handful chopped coriander
(cilantro)

Mix the lentils with coriander

1 fresh chili, chopped (option)

Himalayan salt to taste

Set your wok or skillet over high heat
and add coconut oil. Then add garam
masala and the lentils and cook for 2
minutes.

Topping 2 Stir frying tofu with collard greens

3 tbsp extra virgin coconut oil

1 large bundle collard greens, chopped
and large stalks removed

1 block of firm or extra-firm organic tofu
drained & sliced

2 tsp ginger root, chopped

4 garlic cloves, rough chopped

4 tbsp soy-free seasoning sauce / low
sodium soy sauce / Braggs liquid amino

Himalayan salt to taste

Method

Set your wok or skillet over high heat. Add the oil. Add the tofu and spread it into a single layer.

Cook without stirring for about 1 minute, so the bottoms begin to brown, flip to other side.

Add 4 tbsp Braggs liquid amino over top of the tofu, just enough to give it color and flavor.


Place the tofu aside in a plate.

In the same skillet add a little more oil. Add ginger first, then collard greens and last the garlic.

Sauté over medium high heat, stirring until tender 3-4 minutes.

Cube the tofu and mix it into the greens and stir over the heat for 1 minute ●



A young girl with long brown hair is shown in profile, looking upwards. She is holding a large, vibrant yellow sunflower in her right hand, which is raised towards the top of the frame. The background is a bright, hazy sky with soft clouds. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The girl is wearing a patterned top with purple and yellow floral designs.

I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black, curious eyes of a child – our own two eyes. All is a miracle.

THICH NHAT HANH

A stylized, layered graphic of a mountain range in shades of blue and teal. The mountains are depicted with soft, wavy lines, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors transition from a lighter blue at the top to a darker teal at the base.

WHY ARE **MOUNTAINS** STILL SACRED?

DR ADRIAN COOPER

Mountains are among the most challenging environments on Earth. Within both the physical and emotional challenges of mountain landscapes, there are a host of beguiling paradoxes.

Mountains have an overwhelming physical immanence, as well as a powerful transcendence, which is reflected in the literature they inspire. Often, that literature draws from ancient mystical traditions. The epic Sanskrit poem, *Kumārasambhava* by Kālidāsa, tells us that the Himalayan mountains are “a source of endless jewels which snow does nothing to diminish.” The Tang Dynasty poet Li Po also captures this paradox of mountains being both a physical reality as well as a transcendent realm:

“Why, you ask, do I live up in these blue mountains?

I smile and do not reply. Leave me in peace.

Peach blossoms drift on waves of flowing water,

There is another sky, another earth, beyond the world of men.”

Alongside the paradox of immanence and transcendence is a second paradox: that mountains inspire both fear and fascination. Whether it is from avalanches, landslides, earthquakes, volcanoes and other natural terrors, mountains are undeniably landscapes of fear. And yet, who can resist mountain travel, whether it is to walk, ski, climb or explore? The Taoist sage Ko Hung captures this paradox brilliantly in his *P’ao-p’u tzu nei-p’ien* 17.1a:

“All the mountains, whether large or small, are haunted by supernatural beings: Great ones on the great mountains, little ones on the little mountains. And if one does not take appropriate precautionary measures, they will afflict one with sickness, injuries, vexations, terror and anguish. ... Great trees will crash down on him without there being any wind; rocks will fall without warning and strike him dead. Or, yet again, seized with panic, he will throw himself into the depths of a ravine, trying to avoid the attacks of tigers, wolves and poisonous animals. One does not venture into the mountains lightly.”



A third paradox arises where mountains can simultaneously clarify our thinking as well as confound our attempts to understand the landscapes and our responses to them. Toward the end of the eighth century AD, the Tang poet Han-shan captured this paradox:

“Men these days search for a way through the clouds.

But the cloud way is dark and without sign.

The mountains are high and often steep and rocky;

In the broadest valleys the sun seldom shines.

Green crests before you and behind,

White clouds to east and west

Do you know where the cloud way lies?

There it is, in the midst of the Void!”

Ultimately, mountains are full of inspiration that is revealed in many ways. Bible black nights near a summit, bathed in moonlight, might reveal looming silhouettes. Equally, overwhelming dramatic volcanic explosions remind us of our fragile vulnerability against such forces. Each in their way are treasured memories and inspirational in our lives. In all these ways, mountains remain sacred ●

SNAKES & *Strawberries*

ALANDA GREENE experiences the effect a change makes to the dynamics in her garden, and considers how much more aware we need to be of the decisions we make, and their effect on the Earth.



Creatures had been eating the strawberries. Not only nibbling the bright red juicy fruit but also chewing at the roots, causing stress to the plant, killing several of them. Root-chewed plants were scattered through the bed.

I suspected voles since, when I lifted the straw mulch around the bed, I saw telltale holes dug into the soft black earth. Chipmunks were the next suspects, with several regularly bounding between the beds as they nibbled beans, raspberries and young cauliflower. They get away with a lot by being so cute; cuteness might be an evolutionary advantage.

Something had disrupted the balance and my hunch was that the garden snakes had been disturbed. I cringed with the realization that the something might be me.

The snakes have maintained themselves in a steady population in the garden for decades. They dwell mainly along the stone wall where the herbs grow. They eat slugs, voles, mice and probably those adorable chipmunks. But in doing so, they keep the numbers of these garden creatures at a reasonable level. Since the snake population doesn't change much over the years, something is also keeping them in balance.

A couple of years ago, in an effort to contain herb growth, and even more so, the weed growth among the herbs, I moved the plants into large pots. I then took away the top layer of soil and surrounded the pots with sawdust. But in so doing, I unwittingly disturbed the homes and pathways of the snakes. Without the snakes, there are more of those creatures that eat strawberries and destroy the entire plant.

I don't know where the snakes have gone and I miss them. Even though, no matter how prepared I was to meet one of them lying on the warm stone at the day's end, when the air was getting cool, I invariably started in surprise when I encountered one. A quick recovery followed and delight in seeing them. Knowing that snakes are sensitive to vibration, I regularly talked to them aloud and began to sing to them. Where they had once quickly slithered out of sight, into the foliage of the Echinacea or the sage, they began to move away more slowly, then to stop when I hummed or sang.

Often a snake lifted its head, red tongue flicking, as it tried to find more details about what was making the sound. Maybe it was singing along. When I remembered to anticipate a snake in that area of the garden and approach slowly, humming or singing, the snake would continue to rest on the rock wall, soothed by both sun and song.

The disruption of balance happened because I lacked foresight. This gives me insight about the ecological problems on our planet that result from human activity. The aims have not been to cause harm but to bring about improvement.

The snakes are sometimes challenging, not always met with appreciation and song. They like to go to the pond on hot days to swim and cool themselves. They also like to eat the goldfish they find there. Still, I'm feeling badly for upsetting their home and maybe in so doing making them vulnerable to a predator not earlier encountered.

I did not have the intention to disturb the snakes, in spite of their behavior towards the fish. But I failed to consider the consequences of my actions and anticipate the impact of my desire to have easier management of the herb area.

The disruption of balance happened because I lacked foresight. This gives me insight about the ecological problems on our planet that result from human activity. The aims have not been to cause harm but to bring about improvement.

I have heard that the Iroquois Nations, before making decisions and taking action, contemplated what the impact of a decision could be as far ahead as seven generations. To even be able to think how an action could impact so far into the future suggests a considerable awareness of their world, an understanding of relationships and interdependency. A natural garden is a mini-world of interactions and balances.

With my herb garden plans, it would have been thoughtful to imagine more than one level of the garden. I was attending to what grows above ground, what is visible. Bill Devall, Professor of Sociology at Humboldt University, writes: "But nature is not just a collection of scenery ... Nature is a process of interacting events." It is an interaction of the visible and invisible. Too often, only the visible is included. The snakes have dens and tunnels under the surface. In fact, 80% of the plant biomass of the planet is actually underground.

"But nature is not just
a collection of scenery
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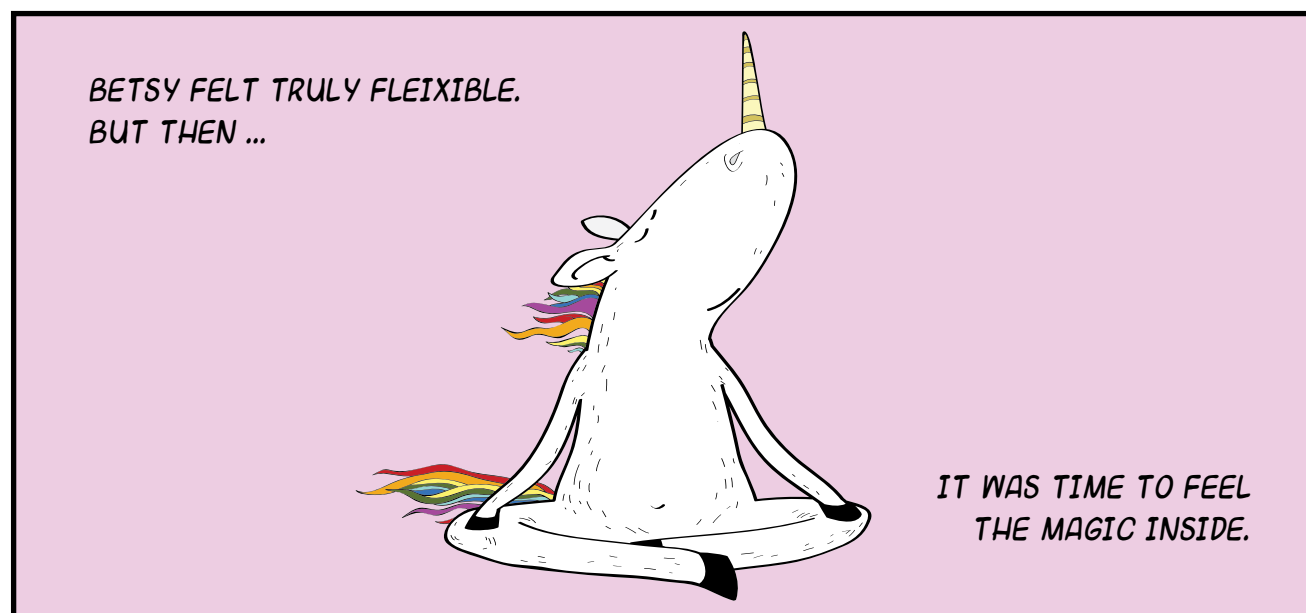
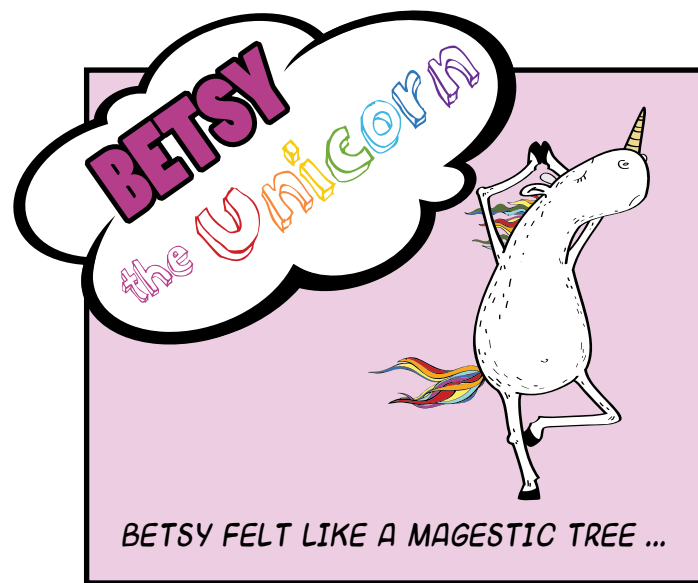
There's not much argument that our world is facing an ecological crisis that is the result of human activity. The crisis was not, however, intended, planned or imagined. People haven't been deliberately going about with a scheme to destroy the earth's environmental sustainability. They haven't been aiming to wipe out legions of songbirds or golden toads or red gazelles. But they have done it. I wasn't aiming to disrupt the snakes. It doesn't mean I'm not responsible.

I see here the value and potential of daily reflection – to look back on the actions of the day and assess their effectiveness, their possible good or harm. This is not done to engage in metaphorical self-flagellation. It is to bring care and consideration into what I do, and develop more subtle awareness as a result. It is to recognize where errors have happened, and where behavior or speech was less than my ideal response. Then, it is to assert the preferred action, see it in my mind's eye, so that the next time a similar situation arises I have a better chance of remembering my ideal and acting in accordance.

Another balance in the garden will emerge. The one I interrupted will not return and I can't undo the results of my lack of thought, my actions based on what I wanted, without giving time to think broader and deeper. I can try to redress the harm through willingness to learn and then put the learning into practice.

The garden is not my own territory; I am part of the system. My efforts are that of a steward for the well-being of all members of the community. Therefore I must consider the impact of actions before acting, like the Iroquois. I must understand relationships, observe what is occurring both visibly and in the unseen, and expand my viewpoint beyond the obvious. I too have to grow with the garden ●





ARTWORK BY STETC



Candles and Fragrance

BREATHING LIGHT AND SOOTHING
SIGHT LIGHTEN THE AIR!

A nice ventilated room is the best way to breathe every morning, refresh your body and mind, and recharge with oxygen. Adequate oxygen is essential for our health. But what would you say to adding some natural scent to your room?

Through our sense of smell, we can change the atmosphere of a room and the mood of its inhabitants. We don't need essential oils and a diffuser for that (although they are also wonderful!), just things from the kitchen.

Here are 5 simple ways to lighten the air and lift your mood:

Material:

Tea light candles

A wide glass or a bowl

Apples and oranges

Cinnamon sticks, coffee beans, vanilla essence, cloves, mint, rosemary and basil

CINNAMON COMFY

Pack a bowl with cinnamon sticks at the bottom, add a tea light candle in the middle, with the cinnamon sticks well arranged around the candle. After a few minutes, the warmth of the burning candle will spread the cosy fragrance of the cinnamon.



LEMON FRESH

Take a big lemon and cut it in two. Scoop the lemon inside with a spoon or a knife keeping the skin in the shape of a bowl. Fill half of the lemon bowl with sea salt and place the pulp of the fruit back on top. To make the air smell even lighter, add herbs like rosemary, mint and basil or add cloves. Leave it around the house, and see the air lift up!

COFFEE LOVERS

This is really simple. Place coffee beans in a large bowl. Place a tea light candle in the middle and add a few drops of vanilla essence to the candle. Light it up and be surrounded by this wonderful and purifying smell of coffee.

APPLE CANDLE

This one is more for the eyes, but we could not help sharing it, as it looks so beautiful. Choose a nice big apple and make sure it sits in a stable way when placed with its stalk upwards. Make a hole in the apple, removing the stalk and some of the pulp, just enough to place a tea light candle in it. Make a few apples like this and place them in the middle of your table. The effect is stunning and you can still eat them afterwards ●

ORANGE AND STARS

Take an orange and cut it in two. Scoop out the pulp from both halves. In the top part, make a small hole at the top, big enough to let the heat go out, so the orange does not burn. Plant cloves at regular intervals on the orange lid. Place a tea light candle in the bottom part, light it up and close the orange with the decorated lid.



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The Three Brothers



It was market day in Marvejols, a small town in the middle of France, when I came across an old peasant who told me this story. It all happened a long time ago in a very small village on the plateau of the Margerides, called Serverette. The story revolves around three young brothers with an unusual fate. The little Canfield brothers, Polo, 8 years old, Jack, 10 years old, and Danny, 12 years old, were orphans. After having lost their father and mother in a car accident, the three orphans were adopted by a small congregation of Catholic sisters called the Daughters of the Heart of Mary.

The sisters ran a small school that welcomed orphans and abandoned children. These sisters lived very poorly. They had very few resources and their daily life was simple and frugal. Food was hard to come by but they ensured that each child got at least a bowl of vegetable broth and some black bread. The atmosphere of the house was cheerful and warm. The sisters laughed a great deal, and passed on their joy of living to the children. The three brothers soon took to this simple life in that place full of love, in the small village.



The atmosphere at the school, which was now the brothers', was joyous, yet there was an underlying sense of doom for the resources of the sisters were limited. They could not keep children after the age of twelve, neither could they feed them nor could they support their basic education. The nearest high school was far away. So, when the oldest brother Danny turned twelve years old, Sister Marie Madeleine, the mother superior, assembled the three brothers to tell them that she could no longer keep Danny at school. She had found a place for him in a school of Dominican friars in Montpellier. Polo, the youngest, threw himself into the arms of his older brother Danny, weeping bitterly. After a few hugs and soft words of consolation, Sister Marie Madeleine spoke again, "I know how hard it is for you my children. May the will of God be fulfilled and may the best happen to you. Your brother will have to leave in three days. I will meet you all tomorrow. Sleep well my dears."



The Dreams of the Three Brothers

All four of them gathered the next day at the same time, at the same place, and Sister Marie Madeleine said to them, "To support you through this difficult event, I thought it would be interesting for you to share your dreams for the future. What do you dream most about? I would like you to think about it and share it amongst ourselves. It will be our secret."

Polo, always quick to answer said, "Oh, I always dream the same dream, I have always wanted to have a dog who followed me everywhere and who would understand me. I dream of running with him."

Jack stammered in his turn, "I dream that the s... sound of my words ... flows like the wa...the water of the river."

Danny hesitated a long time and then said shyly, "It is my dream to travel, to see the world, to fly in the wind, and to find the heart of Mary like you, Sister."

Then Sister Marie Madeleine spoke, "My dream is to see you become good and strong men, capable of loving and helping all those around you." Tears welled up in her eyes as she gathered them in a warm loving hug.





The day of departure arrived. The two younger brothers, Jack and Polo, were unable to even look up; their eyes were staring down at their feet, so as to avoid watching their big brother leave. They looked so miserable that Sister Marie Madeleine consoled them and proposed that they should meet again in six years, when they would celebrate Danny's eighteen birthday together. In case they would lose sight of one another in the years to come, they would pre-arrange a fixed point of reference. She then gave Danny a large, cumbersome package. "Warning! It's fragile," she exclaimed, "Danny, I do not know how to fly and so I can't teach you. But this kite can! I found it in the dusty attic of the old presbytery. It is made of branches and craft paper with drawings that I do not really understand. It is old and but what is incredible is that

when I removed the dust, it looked new! It was as if it was smiling up at me and waiting for you. Go, my son, and let the Lord keep you in his protection."

Danny's meager luggage was put into an old car and Danny was whisked away, cut off from his two younger brothers just like that. They stayed there for a long time watching the old car melt into the horizon. As the car disappeared, the mournful silence and the resulting emptiness of the evening was reflected deep in the two young boys standing there at the edge of the dusty road.



The days passed and the months went by. Snow covered the land and at night the wind hissed songs at night. Winter turned to spring but the spring flowers did not console Polo any more than the numbing winter made him feel dark and miserable. He was missing his brother so much! He would wait anxiously for the postman, and eagerly waited on the street every morning his ears ready to pick up the first sounds of the postman's rusty old bicycle, hoping to receive mail from Danny who had promised him to write to him every month from the city. And when a letter did arrive from Danny joy would burst like fireworks in the beating heart of little Polo. Time stopped then and everything would become a dream.



Then the days would pass again one after the other, like the wooden horses of the old merry-go-round in the Place de Marvejols. This wave of joy would give place to a wave of sadness. Polo sank into his nostalgic dreams. Sister Marie Madeleine saw him sad almost all the time. She did not know how to console him and dry his tears. One day she gave him six coins to buy sweets in the neighbouring town of Marvejols. He left gaily on his bicycle, arrived at the gates of Marvejols at full speed. He saw a merchant put a poster on his shop window and on it was written in large letters “Puppies for Sale”. Polo’s heart began to beat fast with excitement.

He questioned the shopkeeper, “At what price are you selling these puppies?”

The owner of the store replied, “30 coins.”

Polo fingered the six coins in his pocket and said a bit disappointedly, “I don’t have that much. But can I at least look at them?”

The shopkeeper smiled at him and whistled sharply twice.



Almost at once a dog ran into the shop, followed by five charming, fat little puppies. However on closer inspection, Polo saw that the fifth puppy was lagging behind. He was limping and walking with great strain which made him move forward in a zigzag manner. He was panting heavily obviously due to all the effort that he was making. But his eager eyes were as bright with joy as those of the other puppies. Immediately, the little boy asked, “What’s up with this puppy?”

The shopkeeper replied, “You see, when he was born, the vet told me he had a hip malformation. He will limp the rest of his life.”

Polo uttered a cry of enthusiasm and said, “It’s the puppy I want to buy!”

The shopkeeper replied, “No, you don’t have to buy this little dog. If you really want it, I’ll give it to you for free!”

Polo looked visibly upset, looked at the shopkeeper straight in the eye and said, “I do not want you to give it to me; it is worth as much as the other dogs, and I will pay you the right price. If you agree, I will give you my six coins now, and I will give you five coins every month until you have received all thirty coins.”

“The shopkeeper replied, “But would you not prefer to buy this other puppy, who is so beautiful and who can run fast, jumps and plays all the time?”

Then the little Polo reached below, pulled up his loose trousers as high as they could go and showed his left leg.



It was thin, twisted, the muscles almost gone, supported by two long metal rods. In the fatal car accident with his parents, Polo’s leg had broken in such a way that even the best surgeons in the hospital could not repair it.

Polo looked up at the shopkeeper and pointing the lame puppy said, “I cannot run very well myself. Therefore I can understand this little puppy there, and he can better understand me.”

The shopkeeper bit his lower lip and tears poked his eyes. Then he smiled and said, “Son, I hope and pray that each of these puppies will have such an owner as you. Both of you will become real friends. A real friend becomes closer when the rest of the world disappears.”





Polo walked away with the puppy in his arms. When Sister Marie Madeleine saw this newcomer who had restored Polo's smile, she succumbed to the situation. Above the door of the elementary classroom, she wrote:

IN LIFE, IT MATTERS NOT WHO YOU ARE, IF SOMEONE APPRECIATES YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE, ACCEPTS YOU, AND LOVES YOU AS YOU ARE, WITHOUT ANY CONDITIONS.

What happened to the other two brothers, you must be wondering? Find out in the next episode ●

STORY BY PAPIGUY OF MONTPELLIER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JULIETTE ALAY



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