heartfuness advancing in love Freedom DAAJI

Building Authentic Communities STEVE MACADAM & EMILIE MOGENSEN

7 Eternal Truths for Raising Happy Humans **KARISHMA** STRETTON

A Love Letter from Bhutan PAWO CHOYNING DORJI

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The Need for a Generational Connect

Dear readers,

These days, we are hearing a lot from the GEN Zs. They are not content to watch us dragging our feet on the global issues that need immediate solutions. They have started their own movements and projects around the world, and many are asking for intergenerational partnerships to solve our current challenges. So in our August edition we have addressed this topic head on.

Kasha Slavner, Ananya Patel, Manav Dave, and Divya Rao represent the GEN Zs, sharing their projects and perspectives in the arts, social activism, and the climate crisis. Ichak Adizes provides his thoughts on enabling future leaders, Steve Macadam and Emilie Mogensen on building authentic communities, and Karishma Stretton presents her 7 eternal truths for raising happy humans. Oscar nominee, Pawo Choyning Dorji, takes us on a trip to the remotest part of Bhutan, and veteran artist Brigitte Smith's paintings speak to the urgency of our time.

Our wellness experts, Brittany Cesarini, Snehal Deshpande, and Amit Karekar, share tips and stories on topics ranging from burnout and addiction to connecting and unplugging. And Daaji gives us new insight into how India won its freedom, as on August 15 we celebrate 75 years.

We hope that this edition will inspire you to think and to act.

Happy reading! The editors

























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DAAJI

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide. He is an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the fields of spirituality, science, and the evolution of consciousness. He has taken our understanding of human potential to a new level.



PAWO CHOYNING DORJI

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Karishma has an educational background in Medicine and Law. She has worked as a doctor in the Australian public hospital system, and taught medical students at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney. Her expertise in parenting integrates her experience as a medical professional and a parent.



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Kasha is a Gen Z filmmaker, photographer, writer, social entrepreneur, and advocate for climate justice, peace, and gender equality. She founded The Global Sunrise Project and her first documentary, *The Sunrise Storyteller*, was screened at over 60 film festivals and has won over 29 awards.



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Amit founded the Turning Point Rehab in Surat, Gujarat, in 2015. A recovering addict himself, he works with clients to help them recover physically, mentally, and spiritually. Turning Point is a pioneer in world-class holistic programs and amenities.



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DIVYA RAO

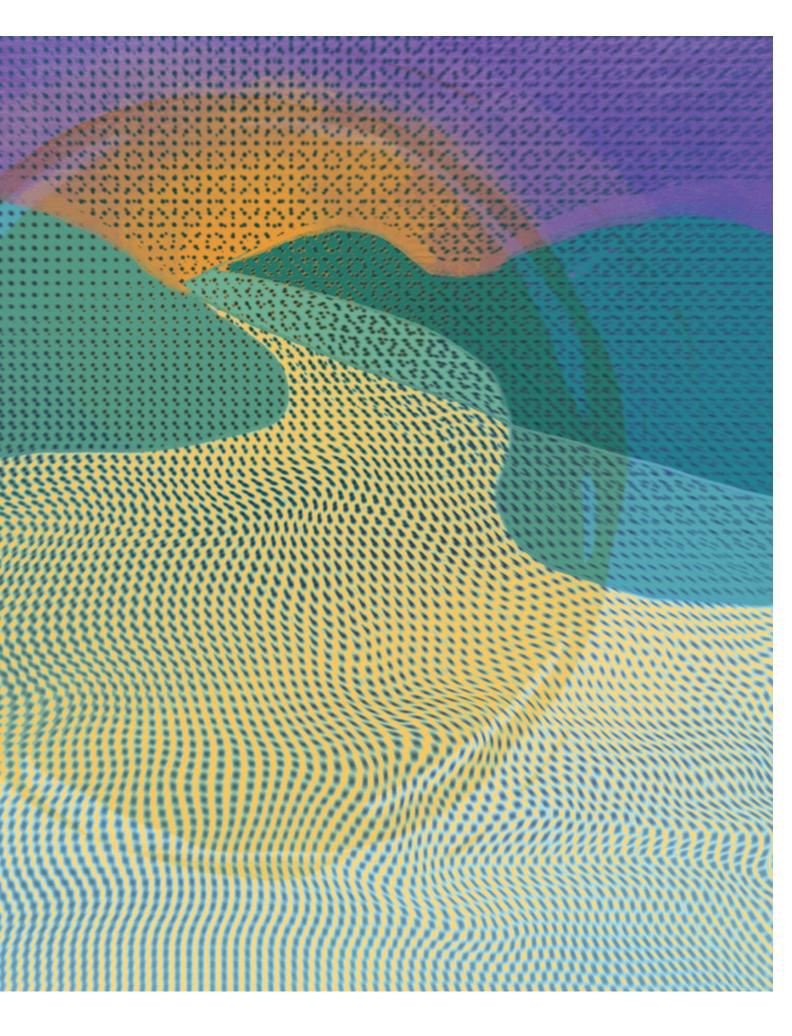
Divya is a 25-year-old medical student based in New York City. After studying business and doing her time in consulting, she is excited to combine her interests in innovation and investing with healthcare. In her free time, Divya loves to travel, play tennis, and hangout with her dog, Mika. Self-Care

When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy.

RUMI

Illustration by ANANYA PATEL





SPREADING wellness

DR. SNEHAL DESHPANDE is a Developmental Therapist and Certified Life Coach from Mumbai. She leads SNEH, an institution dedicated to improving people's quality of life, and actively drives the Heartfulness CME initiative for healthcare professionals across India. Here, she shares some tips on what we can do to keep ourselves healthy.

What does health and wellness mean?

According to the UN, health is a complete state of being – physical, mental, emotional, social, occupational, and spiritual wellbeing. And health is a fundamental right of every human being.

For me, wellness is a state of oneness that you can feel; a feeling of joy whenever you're doing something. My definition of wellness is to give yourself to the task at hand completely, with joy and an awareness of what's happening.

What are the different aspects of oneness?

My career centers around children. Where I live, I will often see a little child playing with a toy, or outside on the grass, or talking with their mother. They are simply one with what they are doing. They are not concerned with anything else in the world. It's so natural.

We are all endowed with that natural state, but we disturb the cycle by our own doings. Wellness is the journey of returning back to that state of naturalness, the state of ease; from doing things because the world expects them of us, to doing them with the heart.

We have gone against nature and built our own little worlds. We have created mini universes within, when we actually have a macro universal complete nature. And it has its own rhythm. Our body cells vibrate at the natural frequency of the vibrations of the universe, but we have moved away from that original vibration or state of existence.

How to choose a lifestyle of oneness?

First, find moments to "unplug" yourself.

Like our mobiles, we run out of battery and need to recharge. We think our batteries are never going to run out and go on abusing ourselves. We must find a way to take care of our body and our inner self – because that battery is within us. We don't need to look for it elsewhere. We can derive so much energy from that.

To keep naturalness alive, it helps to be very soft and subtle from within, so that this energy can show itself in our life. Instead, we are so caught up that we are "holding on" in order not to feel lost.

Second, let go and feel one with nature.

It's fun to let go and see what happens. Letting go is very important. It is something that kids do. They may like a toy, but the moment they see something else they forget about it. They don't hang on to things.

Third, make time for human connection.

Across the globe, loneliness is becoming a big problem. It's because we don't connect honestly. We need to communicate not because of some artificial need to connect, but because there is a need to be together.



We must find a way to take care of our body and our inner self – because that battery is within us.

AVOIDING BURNOUT An Ode to Adrienne Maree Brown

BRITTANY CESARINI is the Director of Communications at Global Health Corps. Brittany holds a degree in Public Policy with a focus on Gender Studies and African Studies from Princeton University. Here, she shares an anecdote on not letting your work push you to burnout, cultivating humility, and making life more about others.

here's so much good advice out there on how to prevent and manage burnout. But the foundation of real change is a change in mindset and narrative. So I encourage young professionals to start with what's most within your control: your beautiful, powerful, flexible mind.

"it helps to say that i'm on the edge of burnout. in the past i flew right by all the telltale signs and right into the flames, almost welcoming the rest that came when I relinquished all ability to live in my life." –adrienne maree brown

When I was starting out after college, I was a prisoner to grind culture, often tempted to run right into the flames of burnout. It felt intoxicating. Look at me! My defining characteristic is my work ethic. I will let it define me at all costs – anguished mind, achy body, unwatered hobbies and relationships be damned.

At the heart of this self-destructive tendency was fear. Without the unshakeable work ethic I've been cultivating since childhood, what do I have to stand on? I'm not that funny. I'm not that smart. I'm not that interesting.

Besides, the world was always on fire. Shouldn't I be right there in the flames or risk complacency? Every headline was a taunt, reminding me I wasn't doing enough. Every Tweet was an invite to do more, do better, and do it yesterday. Every protest was a demand to quit my current job and work on what I "should" be passionate about – gun violence, the criminal injustice system, the war in Iraq, gender-based violence, homelessness, climate change, etc.



Cultivating self-love & humility

Thankfully, through conversations, reflection, reading, therapy, and life experiences, my internal narratives have shifted over the past decade. I'm a little older now, a little softer, and a little wiser. Definitely more tired, but also more anchored and hopeful, even as heartbreaking fires rage around us.

Most importantly, I love myself more. Paradoxically, I think of myself less.

At a cellular level, I know that the entire future of our community, our society, our planet does not rest on my shoulders. I extend grace (okay, and some gentle ribbing) to the version of myself that once acted like it did.

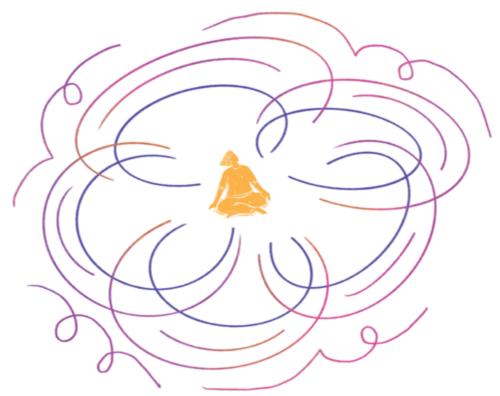
"humility can let our shoulders drop, can make us more adaptive and flexible ... and more accepting of the truth that the outcome is not only a mystery, but so so so much bigger than our work ... [we can] relax in our smallness, our insignificance." –adrienne maree brown I now say no to commitments that mean I won't get enough sleep, fresh air, exercise, and quality time with loved ones. I am practicing relaxing (with varied success from week to week), scheduling it as non-negotiable, and not feeling shameful about needing it.

Community

Once I learned to love myself more, and got a grip on genuine humility, the next step of the journey was to practice being in and about community.

"the more i prioritize caring for myself, caring for my community, and accepting care from my community, the better and brighter spark in the movement flame i can be." –adrienne maree brown

As a human, a white person, an American with educational privilege married to a Black man, mothering a biracial son, I have a responsibility to be awake and engaged. To keep learning and trying. To contribute to a radically different future



Heartfulness

where everyone lives with care and dignity and abundance.

It's not about me; it is about us who envision that future. I show up to my life and my work to make the us bigger and stronger, to make that future more likely. And if I want to contribute to that ambitious long-term project, I have to take care of myself and others along the way.

Paradoxically, this allows me to contribute more, because my definition of contribution is not limited to leadership roles or driving a project forward at work. I donate (money or time, even in small amounts), I participate in mutual aid efforts, I support friends and be supported, I amplify others, I lend my skills and expertise in behindthe-scenes ways without needing credit, a title, or purview on the return on my investment.

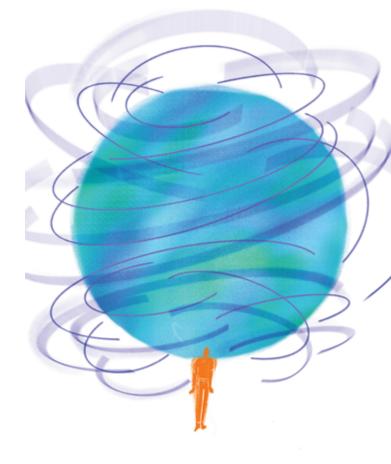
Ultimately, I can grieve what's heartbreaking and choose to rest and release the illusion of control, because I know there are many others out there contributing.

Rejecting binaries & seeking connections

"everything is small. everything is changing me ... everything is an invitation to practice being free and interacting with other free beings." –adrienne maree brown

Looking for and threading connections has helped me step back from the edge of burnout many times. On the whole, the binaries between work and life, between productive and non-productive ways to spend our time, are not real. The sooner we live accordingly, the healthier we'll be.

I work hard at my day job, but these days I also put time, energy, and thoughtfulness into having



fun, spending time with my people, and resting. When I consider every realm of life as a canvas to live out my values and create a better future, I keep burnout at bay.

Raising my three-year-old son to name his feelings, choose his clothes, and consider other opinions has a lot to do with creating a more equitable future. Setting aside my endless to-do list to call a friend, share encouragement, or watch a funny video is a radical choice in the face of exploitative capitalism. Daily exercise and good sleep are a necessary balm and fuel for me to show up as a colleague, friend, mother, wife, sister, daughter, and neighbor. It's all connected.

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL

DEALING DEALING WITH ADDICTION

AMIT KAREKAR'S story is one of deep inner challenge and triumph over darkness. With help from loved ones and professionals, and the determination to live, he turned his own life around and is helping others to do the same at Turning Point Rehab, a safe haven for all souls who have lost themselves to substance abuse.

y story has been a rollercoaster ride. A lot of ups and downs. As a child, I was obedient and soft natured. During my school days, I became rebellious, probably because I always liked to be the center of attention. I was so obsessed with certain things that I couldn't really strike a balance, and as I grew older, I became stubborn. During my college days, I could not tell my parents that I did not want to do an engineering degree, and so I wasted two years of my life instead. They said I shouldn't be wasting time and that I had never known responsibility in life. Taking things for granted and being stubborn took me downhill. I was born with a silver spoon, having everything at my disposal.

I just had to enjoy life, or so I thought. My parents loved me a lot, but I took undue advantage of their feelings. Instead of using my privilege for my benefit, I abused it. That's how it all began.

I had a girlfriend in school, and breaking up with her gave me one big reason to start self-sabotaging. In college, the drugs and alcohol started. First beer, then marijuana, then "brown sugar," the kind of heroin we get in India. And so I became a hardcore "smackie" within a period of six months.

I was completely powerless over that addiction. I didn't realize it and my parents didn't intervene because they thought I would be okay, and obey them one day. They kept waiting for that day, while my addiction went to another level, and I became suicidal. 18 months down the line I was completely messed up. They took me to a psychiatrist and I took medication. I did a drug detox, but it didn't work. I relapsed and was taken to rehab when I was 18. I did a program for around 35 days, but me being me, I picked up all the notorious guys from there, got their contacts and planned what I would do after getting out: more drugs. That was how I was.

I had a long journey of rehabs and relapses, seven to eight rehabs, and every time it was the same thing: I went to rehab, got clean, did the program well, and all the counselors were very impressed with me. I liked to be in their good books. And I was good at sports. I would never receive any punishment and everything was pretty smooth. So fear of rehab was not something that worked in my case. This went on for around 20 years.

Finally I got married, and one fine day my wife told me, "You know, this is not working out. Let's just stay apart for six months and I'll see what you do. Take your time to decide whether you want to carry on with our life or you want to live your way."

I packed up everything and thought, "Wow, this is amazing. I'm gonna be free from today. No responsibilities. Super. God works."

I met a friend and told him, "Just set me up in some ashram where I can stay. I just want to disconnect from everything."

Escapism was everything for me.

I wanted to escape from each and every situation in life. I did not want to face it; I did not want to fight it; I only knew "flight" and that's what I did. But for some reason, my friend didn't comply. He said, "You've gone nuts. I'll set you up in a rehab facility. Go there and do some service work, help them out, and you'll be able to figure something out. Do it for 20 days."



That's how my journey of recovery began.

Service is one of the final steps to recovery. You are supposed to motivate others that recovery is possible, and give hope and strength to the people who are suffering with addiction.

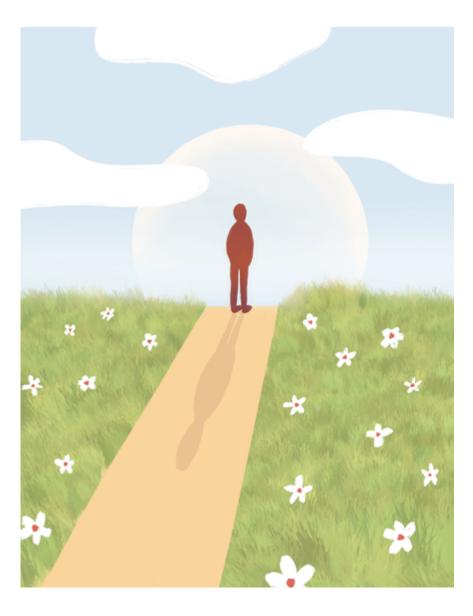
They accepted me in a rehab center in Mumbai, and I started taking sessions, but I was just faking it. There's a slogan, "Fake it till you make it," and it's been true in my case. I started helping people to realize what was wrong, why they should turn their lives around, and how to learn the concepts of balance, etc.

And then I was shifted to Surat to start a center there. The adventurous me said, "This is it! You've got to go there. Whatever you will do in the future doesn't matter at this point in time. This is the best you have in front of you – just go for it." Honestly, I didn't have anything else in front of me, and my parents and wife had also given up hope.

So I packed my bags, moved to Surat, and stayed at the rehab house to set things up. People said the house was haunted, but that's what kept me there – I was all in for the adventure. I hung around for some time and then we got a client. And so my journey began with that connection with another person, who arrived fresh to recovery. He compelled me to stay, and I stayed for around 8 months.

I was working for True Care in Surat. My father figured out that this is what I did best, so he encouraged me to start up a center. That's how Turning Point was created.

My wife came back to me, and has supported me a lot. She's the backbone of the center. She's always been the backbone in every We have a slogan in our program, "If you want to keep what you have, the only way is by giving it away to others."



walk of my life, and if not for her I would not have become a responsible man. I look at it this way.

In a nutshell, I had everything at my disposal, but I took things for granted. I had never understood my responsibilities, and I was never left alone. Even if I was busted by the cops, my father would bail me out. I didn't have anything to worry about. These things allowed me to hold on to bad company, and I did not know where to strike the balance.

I was enjoying life and ruining it at the same time. I thought I was

having fun, that I was happy, but I was not.

The events of 8 years back changed everything for me. Taking responsibility for myself and my life was a turning point. When my parents and my wife backed out, that's when I realized, "I'm on my own. I have to sort it out. I have to get it together." Now I'm going well. It's fun. Doing the same thing that got me back to life 8 years ago keeps me going. We have a slogan in our program, "If you want to keep what you have, the only way is by giving it away to others."

Illustrations by LAKSHMI GADDAM



There is nothing so powerful as love and thought – no institution, no government, no "ism," no scripture, no weapon. I hold that these, love and thought, are the only sources of power. It is my firm conviction that a spark of true knowledge can burn down all the problems in the world.

VINOBA BHAVE

The Role of a Great Rishi and a Saint in the Freedom of India

August 15, 2022, is the 75th anniversary of India's Independence from British rule. While India's freedom fighters are honored every year for the roles they played in bringing this about, here **DAAJI** shares with us a lesser known history of things happening behind the scenes; the role of a great rishi and a modern-day spiritual master in the events that unfolded from December 1946 onward.

he history of the independence of India from the British is filled with valor, courage, and the brotherhood of freedom fighters, who were willing to sacrifice their lives and worked tirelessly to bring about freedom from oppression. None is more revered around the world than Mahatma Gandhiji, who is still fondly known today as the father of modern India.

But what was going on behind the scenes to support these intrepid freedom fighters? There are many hints in the diaries of Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, known to us as Babuji, the great Indian saint and spiritual Master who lived from 1899 to 1983. His record points to the roles of the great Rishi Agastya, Swami Vivekananda, and Babuji himself.

In these diaries, we first learn of the pending upheaval in December 1946, when Swami Vivekananda intercommunicates with Babuji from a higher world and gives him instructions about the work he must do to support the social and political changes that are to come. This may seem farfetched, but it is no different from many other stories we cherish about the sages of yore helping humanity in their struggles. It is part and parcel of the spiritual land that is India.

In fact, it was the Rishi Agastya and Babuji together who did the work to finally overthrow British rule in August 1947, and it was Babuji who kept Gandhiji alive during his fast in January 1948, and who protected Nehru's life in April 1948.

In August 1947, Swami Vivekananda intercommunicated with Babuji, "Political change is necessary in India. Sage Agastya is already working. He will communicate the result to you."

On 13 January 1948, Swami Vivekananda's message to Babuji was, "Gandhiji is on a fast. What for? To bring the condition of



"Do the duty assigned to you. Stick to your work without worrying for any happenings whatsoever. Really speaking, you are playing the true part of Nature in the field of politics. No change can be made unless one or another great soul, coming for the purpose, is attached to it. That is the law. applicable not only to India but to the whole world."

India to balance. He is doing his business, and you should do yours. Let us see who succeeds."

On 30 January 1948, Babuji received an order for group meditation to be conducted for the peace of Gandhiji's soul after his assassination. The soul of Gandhiji was present at the time.

Then, on 31 January 1948, Babuji was assigned the duty to work for India as a whole. Swami Vivekananda told Babuji over the coming days, "Do the duty assigned to you. Stick to your work without worrying for any happenings whatsoever. Really speaking, you are playing the true part of Nature in the field of politics. No change can be made unless one or another great soul, coming for the purpose, is attached to it. That is the law, applicable not only to India but to the whole world."

A few days later, Swamiji paid tribute to the part Gandhiji played, "Dear ones, are you shocked at the death of Gandhiji? Naturally you should be. He was a great man, a politician, whom the world will remember for the work. However, you need now control and end your grief. Nobody can stop what is to happen. That is the law of Nature. India will not see such a great person in the field of politics in future. He was good at heart and had a noble ethos. He has played his part very well.

"Gandhiji had the public force with him, and you have the divine force at your command.

"Gandhiji and everyone may work for the improvement of the lot of the downtrodden, and also love them, but we need never forget the principles laid down by the age-worn wisdom and enunciated by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita."

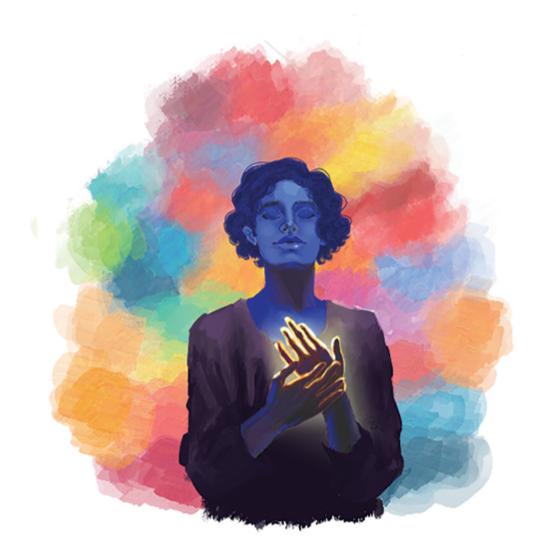
These records help us to understand that world events are not always within our hands.

Until we create harmony and unity within our nation, we are a far cry from freedom, even politically. We still have a long way to go, and it starts with each and every one of us. We may believe that we are in control of politics and the destiny of nations, but the great Rishis of yore are still an active force, working with Nature to bring about balance.

Closer to home, there are other things to ponder. While India may have won political freedom in 1947, does it mean that her citizens are free? What about inner freedom? That still eludes most of us. And the same can be said for other countries and cultures that have been freed from colonial oppression.

In the colonial era, it was easy to identify the enemy as the British. Today, the enemy may look like us, dress like us, and speak like us. Until we create harmony and unity within our nation, we are a far cry from freedom, even politically. We still have a long way to go, and it starts with each and every one of us.

Illustrations by PRAMITI RAMCHANDRA





WHY THE NEXT GENERATION WILL TAKE VS WHERE WE NEED TO BE

MANAV DAVE is looking toward a hopeful future, thanks to the inspiration and action of the Gen Zs, and despite the challenges they face. ake a second to think about this current moment in time. There is a lot to process. In the past two years alone, the Covid pandemic has managed to expose the cracks in our social, economic, and political systems, and has left us wondering whether there is anywhere left to go from here.

But the situation has also led to uncovering some very unlikely heroes. While the powers that be are combatting our problems with old and ineffective solutions, a new generation of heroes has emerged to create the world we deserve. Whether it is through harnessing the potential of the Internet and social media, or changing the frameworks and definitions of equity and equality, one thing is for sure: the next generation is ready to make change, and is not afraid to shake things up along the way.

From the youngest woman of color to serve in the American Congress, to the youngest person to win a Nobel Peace Prize, this past decade has been full of firsts. Another important first to acknowledge is the Internet. From the first email sent in 1971, to Facebook in 2004, Instagram in 2010, and most recently, TikTok in 2016, this generation has been raised on the Internet and has managed to harness its potential to communicate effectively, and create and organize mass movements for change.

One of the first examples of technology bringing people together was Facebook during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak. Since then, the use of social media to mobilize change has become more effective, with Greta Thunberg using Facebook to encourage Fridays for Future climate strikes, and the rapid escalation and coming together during the Black Lives Matter movement. This generation uses the powers of technology to their advantage.

Gen Z, the group of people born from around 1995 to 2010, is said to have the highest diversity in terms of race, class, and gender identity. Combined with increased access to digital platforms, this has led to a generation that is changing the way we look at tolerance, equality, and equity. Some of the social issues that matter most to Gen Zs are equitable access to healthcare, racial equity, and climate change, showing a shift from a self-serving mindset to a humanitarian one.

This is not to say that this generation is without demons. The Internet comes with its own set of dangers, and Gen Zs are sometimes inhibited in their ability to form real-world connections and sustain the impact created by mass mobilization. Behavior trends like cancel culture

One thing is for sure: the next generation is ready to make change, and is not afraid to shake things up along the way.

INSPIRATION

and social media frenzy often make it difficult to understand the dimensionality of an issue and find a proper solution. If Gen Zs are truly going to bring change, they will need to channel their enthusiasm and passion, and also develop the maturity and depth of understanding required to create a long-standing, sustainable, and equitable impact.

From Greta Thunberg to Amanda Gorman to Malala Yousafzai, they are making strides in every area – environmental activism, art, racial equality, and education for all. They are ready to use what they have and know to bring a magnitude of change that has never been seen before. More importantly, they are hopeful, and are not taking no for an answer.

To sum it all up, as Greta Thunberg said, "We can no longer let the people in power decide what is politically possible. We can no longer let the people in power decide what hope is. Hope is not passive. Hope is telling the truth. Hope is action." And above all, what the next generation promises is hope for a better future.





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WORKPLACE

A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.

LAO TZU





EMILIE MOGENSEN attended STEVE MACADAM's module as part of The Inner MBA, and she is deeply inspired by his way of building authentic communities. Steve is an MBA from Harvard, a Baker Scholar, and currently an independent director for Louisiana-Pacific Corporation and Valvoline Inc.

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Building Authentic Communities

lthough I have been on a sincere spiritual path for 29 years, I tend to be very impatient. When I feel inspired or see a need for change, I often find myself wanting to execute before thinking. This tendency led to extreme boredom at school, and it has stayed with me throughout life. At the same time, I believe it is what makes me move forward as an entrepreneur and in life. I am a "street achiever," often rather fearless, with a strong drive. It serves me well most of the time, especially when my actions come from within, based on wisdom, or from knowledge inspired by great thinkers and entrepreneurs. I share this to emphasize how much I appreciated Steve Macadam's module at *The Inner*

MBA immersion program. If I had to choose one module as the most useful take-away, it would be Steve's on how to build authentic communities. I feel the future call for these authentic communities and synchronicities whispering to me, "This is true," and hope to share why.

Steve has a very practical approach, and his messages resonate with the go-getter entrepreneur in me. His model has worked successfully at EnPro, where he was the CEO. I am not the right person to go into the corporate story of EnPro, a publicly-traded US company with 8,000 employees; what makes my heart sing is to investigate the essence of human beings – in this case, Steve Macadam. Steve shares that building authentic communities is often based on the visions held by very passionate visionaries. They can be organizations, businesses, schools, or grassroots movements. It seems to be essential that someone holds the vision firmly in order for the communities to expand.

Steve's model of building authentic communities is simple and based on 4 phases:

Phase 1, the pseudo community

Phase 2, the chaos community

Phase 3, the emptying phase

Phase 4, the authentic community

WORKPLACE

Before diving into this, let's explore what is a community and what does it mean when something or someone is authentic.

"Community" refers to a group of people with shared interests, whether those interests are based on culture, spirituality, values, customs, or identity. Communities may share a geographical space, like a village or a church hall, or they may connect virtually, such as an online social network.

Characteristics of a community include friendship, support, growth, shared attitudes, interests and goals. Some communities form naturally, such as those in specific geographical locations, while others form consciously with a shared purpose and goal.

For example, a Heartfulness community is a gathering of people who wish to practice Heartfulness in a convenient and supportive space: a space where people can be themselves, meet with others, share experiences, and gain support and understanding. Essentially, a Heartfulness community provides the space for people to meditate together, share stories, and find love and support.

To be "authentic" means to be genuine and real. It's about alignment between what happens inside and what is expressed outside. Authenticity helps us feel safe. We are more aware of what is going on, instead of having to second guess and use various strategies to get what we need.

I feel this is one of the most needed traits for humanity. It's worth exploring how we can become better at being authentic together, at work, in spiritual communities, and elsewhere. In fact, I feel it is one of the missing links in our eagerness to co-create a more compassionate world.



To be "authentic" means to be genuine and real. It's about alignment between what happens inside and what is expressed outside. We can speak our own truth from a place of sovereignty and dignity, while holding space for others, especially when we don't agree with them.

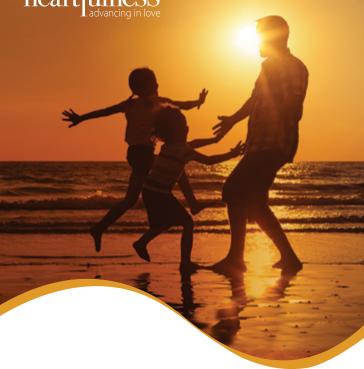
The most powerful message from my conversation with Steve is that there can be no authentic community without conflict.

As someone engaged in a spiritual community, this can be difficult to embrace. I think many spiritual seekers tend to be pleasers by nature – we thrive in peace, and that is honorable!

But can we try to dive deeper, and cultivate communities that fill us with even deeper connection and meaning? Talking to Steve helped me to learn that we can speak our own truth from a place of sovereignty and dignity, while holding space for others, especially when we don't agree with them.

Next month, I will explore the four phases of the model Steve used at EnPro with remarkable results. EnPro is a multiple bottom lines company, placing equal value on people, planet, and profit, where the CEO reads fairytales to the workers, and everyone is allowed to express their inner truths. It comes from a very authentic place in my heart to share how Steve has inspired me to build and expand authentic communities. I hope it will inspire you too.

heart fulness



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ENABLING Future Leaders

DR. ICHAK ADIZES is an expert in change management for organizations. Here he shares some thoughts on leadership, and how we can best enable our future leaders.

hat is a good leader? A good leader creates "symbergy": symbiosis and synergy. How? Promotes mutual trust and respect. A good leader is a person who commands and grants respect and trust. If you're not trusted, if you're not respected, you're not a good leader. Do people trust you? Do people respect you? Do you build trust and respect? That is what leadership is in the modern world. Bring the heart, bring the consciousness of love. That's a good leader.

The youth are the future of mankind. What young people are doing tells you what the future is going to be. Like, you can tell the future political system or economic system by watching students: what are they demonstrating about? These are the future leaders. Everything starts at the university. So, tell me what you do with kids and I will tell you what the future is going to look like.

I've been lecturing all over the world in universities. We are training people wrongly. We're teaching them to know. Whatever you teach them, within a few years it is going to be obsolete anyway. The trick is not to teach people to know, but to teach them how to learn. Lifelong learning. I would like to change all certificates that people give at universities. Don't say "Graduated," because graduated means they're finished, God forbid. Instead say, "Permitted to continue learning." To go to the next stage of learning. Lifelong learning, working together, with mutual trust and respect, is what is needed in the next generations. And meditation is a very important component of it.



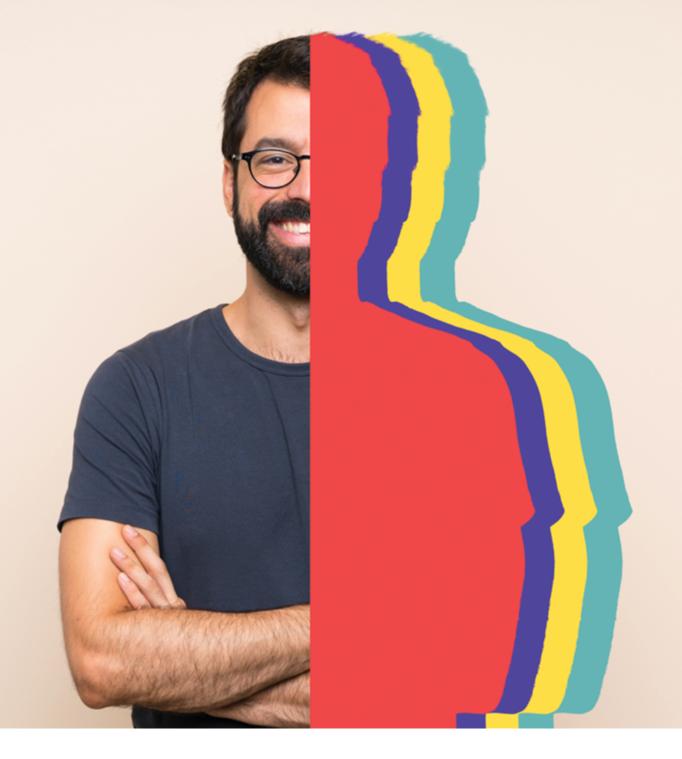
Continuous learning, continuous learning, continuous learning. That's number one.

Number two, teach them to learn together, to respect each other, with no bullying at school. American education is a disaster in my mind, because the kids go from one class to another, depending on subject. The classes don't develop social integration. In Europe, students go with the same class throughout their whole education, so they develop classroom integration. In America, everything is disintegrated. You have one class with one set of kids, and another class with other kids, and yet another class with a different set of kids.

Assignments can be given to teams. Then we teach people how to work together. That's why sports are so important. Lifelong learning, working together, with mutual trust and respect, is what is needed in the next generations. And meditation is a very important component of it.

Just thinking and feeling, Dr. Ichak Kalderon Adizes

Excerpts from https://www. ichakadizes.com/post/what-is-thefuture-of-management-presentedto-heartfulness-mission-the-day-forpeace.



KNOW THYSELF: Take a Personality Test!

DIVYA RAO shares her experience taking personality tests and how the present generation's approach to establishing relationships might help us solve problems in the future.

i, my name is Rachel, I'm an Entrepreneur (ESTP), and my Zodiac sign is Virgo."

My summer program at medical school is focused on advocating for children's health in the face of global warming. It started this week with a round of introductions, with each of us stating our names and two of our favorite personality indicators.

The elderly pulmonologist who was leading our session looked slightly bemused, especially when the other physicians happily contributed their Zodiac signs and Myers–Briggs types. He laughed, stating that when he was a medical student the introductions were definitely very different. Indeed, a lot of the people in the session were skeptical about how personality tests could be important to our advocacy. The facilitator said that understanding ourselves, and each other, would lead to more impactful teamwork and, as a result, advocacy.

One of my favorite (and most useful) classes at Business School was "Communication and Group Dynamics." Professor Gartenburg would start every week by inviting us to take a personality test, often causing the group to sigh loudly and roll their eyes. At first, I too was skeptical: "How was learning my Enneagram or my NEO score going to help me tackle the colossal final project I had creeping up on me. Wasn't my time better spent in studying for my upcoming organic chemistry test instead?"

It certainly didn't help that for my group project there was a hodgepodge of ten random students, most of whom I had never seen before. I resigned myself to just keeping my head down, doing my project as quickly as I could, and getting out of there.

As our team progressed throughout the semester, we noticed that our tests were eerily coming true. Those who were idealists became frustrated when we would sit for hours in a basement looking at the practical details of implementing our study. The introverts were horrified when they were made to present in front of the Eternity Management Department.

As we began to recognize the dismay of team members, instead of pointing fingers at each other or throwing accusations of not being a team player, we turned them into our assets. We were able to allocate responsibilities based on

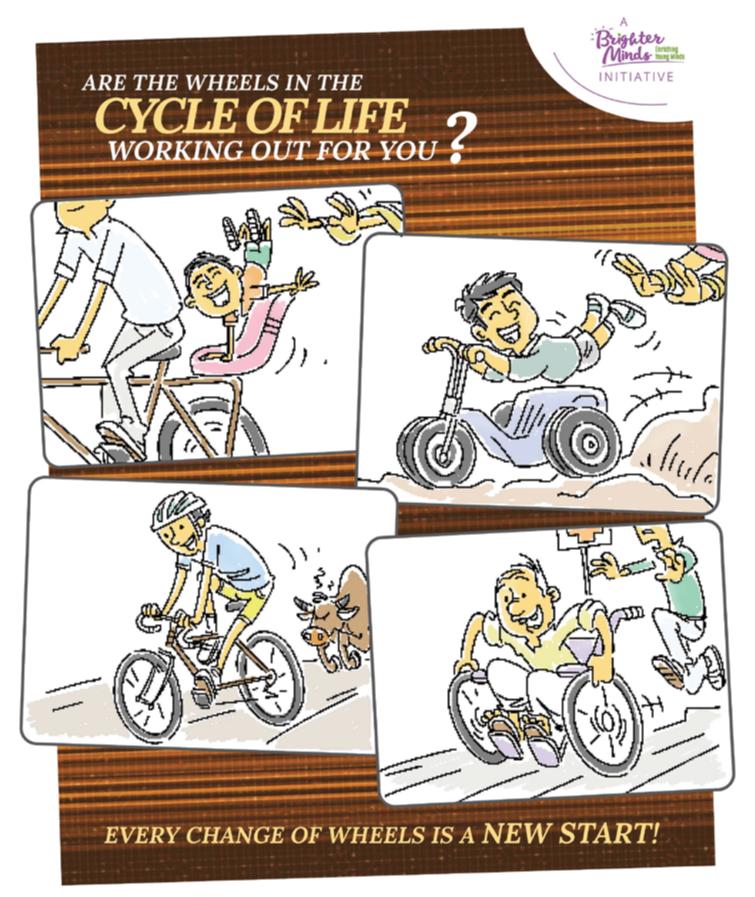


who would actually enjoy the task, for example, putting people on the presentation platform who loved talking to a crowd, having those who loved planning in charge of creating our outreach schedule, and ensuring that everyone felt supported in their roles.

The most incredible part of the class was not the fact that we were invited to present our findings to the board of the museum we were working with, but the fact that we became best friends. Despite our group being very diverse, we came out knowing each other better than we knew some of our friends.

Now, one of the most powerful aspects of the personality tests is that sometimes we disagreed wholeheartedly with our results. We were, however, able to reflect on ourselves while we took the tests (even after), to see what we loved, what we hated, and what made us tick. It gave us the tools to truly understand ourselves and each other. Even though some people may laugh at the obsession we have with personality tests, journaling, or self-reflection, it is these very attributes that set us apart from previous generations.

We may not have all the answers, but I truly believe our generation's empathy, ability to self-reflect, and softness for one another and ourselves, is what will allow us to tackle all the hurdles in front of us. So here's to working together for our future. From your favorite ESFP, Enneagram 3, Pisces.





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We learn about love in childhood.

BELL HOOKS

Photography by KAROLINA GRABOWSKA







 DR. KARISHMA STRETTON is a doctor and medical educator who has focused her attention on parenting. Here she speaks with ELIZABETH
 DENLEY about her new book, and the timeless wisdom that will help us to raise happy and well-adjusted children.

Q: Hi, Karishma, welcome to Heartfulness Magazine.

Hello, Elizabeth. It's lovely to be talking to you. Thanks for your time.

Q: We're here to talk about your book, *Parenting Homo Sapiens: The Seven Eternal Truths for Raising Happy Humans.* A great title and a hot topic, so first tell us about yourself, and why you're interested in this.

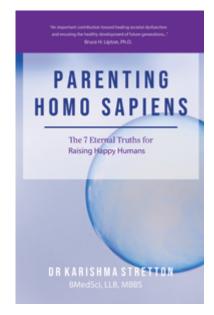
I'm a wife and mother of two daughters, and we live in Sydney, Australia. After graduating with a medical degree, I worked at Nepean Hospital, and then moved to education at the University of Notre Dame, where I taught medical students. Right now, I spend most of my time with my children, and am very involved with their education.

Q: Tell us about your book, Karishma. The inspiration came after the birth of my eldest daughter. I was a young working mother. There was so much information available on parenting, and I was determined to distill the essence of it all.

At that time I worked long hours as a doctor at Nepean Hospital, with very few holidays. The environment required me to suppress the fact that I was also a mother, and commit my full attention to the job. I'm sure many women relate to a highpressured work environment. Denying my role as a mother at work was very confronting. It made me question what I was doing, and what effect this would have on my children, my husband, my family, and myself.

Are there common threads to effective parenting methods?

I began to read, and was not convinced that there needed to be so many, sometimes contradictory, ways of raising



children. I wanted to find the common threads that bound all types of effective parenting.

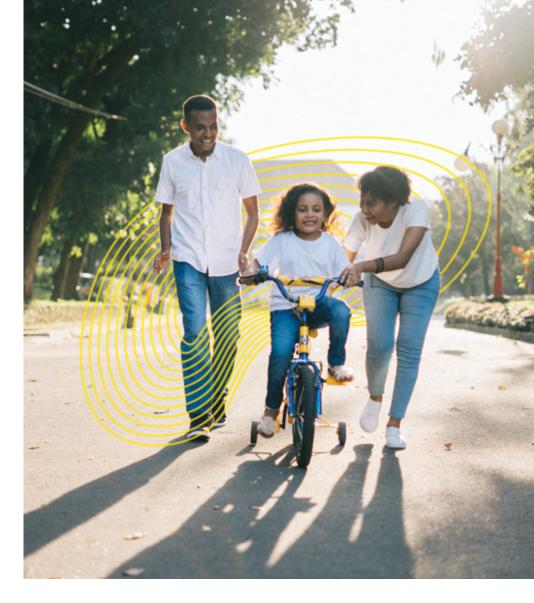
As I read, the common themes emerged, and I wrote this book so that those parents who don't have time to read all the literature could have a reference on their parenting journey. I was mainly interested in what enables us to raise happy, healthy, well-adjusted human

RELATIONSHIPS

We may not be here to see the impact of our parenting, but when we raise well-adjusted, kind, loving, intelligent, compassionate human beings, we bring meaningful, long-lasting change to this world.

beings. If children have those qualities, then happiness and enjoyment will result later in life.

Finally, I felt so much gratitude to the authors and mothers who had written blog pieces on parenting, and produced parenting and birthing videos, because that information was pivotal for me on my journey. I hope that my learning will also resonate with parents. I want to pay forward the amazing and inspirational help I received.



Developing Confidence as a Parent

Q: Why isn't good parenting an innate function? Why do we need to learn?

It seems like a simple question, but it really is the crux of the matter. J.W. Whitehead said, "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see." We may not be here to see the impact of our parenting, but when we raise well-adjusted, kind, loving, intelligent, compassionate human beings, we bring meaningful, long-lasting change to this world.

The fact is, our children are going to take over the reins and steer humanity in the not-sodistant future. I read recently that our greatest contribution to the universe may not be something we do, but someone we raise. It was this epiphany that highlighted to me the importance of parenting.

Q: You also say that this is not new, and it's universal. You

talk about the 7 eternal truths for raising happy humans, not separate truths for raising them in Sydney or Colombo. What are these eternal truths?

I use the term "eternal truths" to describe principles that have been tried and tested over time and have remained true. They are independent of rapid societal changes. Even though we are powering ahead technologically and socially, biologically we are the same as we were hundreds of thousands of years ago. If we can determine what these eternal truths are, we can fulfill them despite the rapid pace at which our society is traveling. What do our babies need biologically, and what do we need as parents?

A baby Homo sapiens today is genetically programmed with the same expectations as a baby born 300,000 years ago. The same is true for women undergoing the transformation from woman to mother.

After reading and processing decades worth of parenting knowledge, I began to discover some magnificent golden threads. Consistently and confidently applying these threads creates a bedrock for a satisfying and fulfilling parenting experience of raising our children with confidence.

Speaking from experience, it's the confidence that a lot of us lack. We often feel we are not parenting correctly, or that we are depriving our children of what they need to develop thoroughly. The good news is that if we apply these eternal truths, then we'll give our children exactly what they need, so they are assured of a fulfilling childhood.



I use the term "eternal truths" to describe principles that have been tried and tested over time and have remained true. They are independent of rapid societal changes.



The 7 Eternal Truths

You must be wondering what these eternal truths are. I'll give you three examples. You'll find the others in my book.

Truth 1: Human babies and children have fundamental biological expectations.

Truth 2: What we inscribe in the child's mind will echo throughout their lifetime.

Truth 3: Parents are epigenetic engineers – engineering the future.

They're the main concepts we will cover here.

Biological Expectations

Q: Talk to us about the fundamental biological expectations. What are they? How important are they, especially during the early years? Biological expectations are the biological needs we are genetically designed to experience during childhood. The environment into which a baby was born 300,000 years ago may differ from the environment into which a baby is born today, but the biological expectations remain the same, just as our DNA is the same. These biological expectations provide a framework for children to grow, thrive, and meet their innate potential. They go beyond the survival needs of clean water, nutrition, shelter, basic human connection, etc.

What are these biological expectations? We can look at them within the context of Jean Liedloff's *The Continuum Concept*, a book that many parents will know. She speaks about the most fundamental expectations being:

- 1. The baby is placed on the mother after birth, skin-to-skin.
- 2. Carrying the baby is extremely important, particularly in the first year of life. The mother is often most involved with this.
- 3. The baby's needs are responded to. This sounds basic, but it is not necessarily what happens. It is genetically programmed in the baby.

- 4. The baby sleeps in close proximity to the mother, ideally in a safe co-sleeping environment. There is a lot of information now on how to co-sleep safely with children.
- 5. The baby is breastfed or bottle-fed on demand, as a biological expectation.

These expectations are vital for the development of physically and psychologically sound children. If we fulfill these biological expectations, happiness will naturally become a normal condition of their existence. The more research I do, the more I feel that this is a basic truth.

Bonding and Attachment

Q: You also talk about bonding and attachment: when biological expectations are fulfilled, it automatically leads to bonding and attachment, which determines the way we form relationships as children and as adults. Can you talk about how that attachment develops?

Attachment is the formation of a connection dependent on the closeness of two human beings. We're well aware that attachment is vital for the survival of baby mammals and birds, but it is most important for baby humans, because they are the most helpless of any babies on the planet. For human babies, no attachment means no life. It is as simple as that.

It creates the sensory and emotional environment that shapes the way we experience relationships lifelong. Breaking this bond at the beginning of a baby's life can be devastating, and it may set up potential cycles of suboptimal relationships. Human babies are genetically programmed to seek out attachment. You may be aware of the rooting reflex, where after birth the baby instantly seeks out the nipple of the mother. Also, babies align their breathing and heart rate to that of the parent they're sleeping next to. These behaviors enhance attachment between parent and child.

There are a few key points that are vital for understanding attachment. First, you cannot over-attach with your child. Attachment does not create a child who is more needy or insecure; the opposite is true. The child who has attached well when they're young will display independence and maturity when they're older.

In the book, *Hold On to Your Kids*, Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Maté state that dependence and

RELATIONSHIPS



attachment foster independence and genuine separation later in life, contrary to what many parents believe and practice. In fact, in society today, there almost seems to be a pathological desire to make children mature beyond their years, as though this is another form of achievement. But in doing that the opposite is achieved. So, the time spent in attaching with your children when they are young will result in healthy independence when they're older.

Second, you need to be present to attach to your child. This seems obvious, but a lot of children spend a high percentage of the working day away from their parents. This is in no way judging parents whose financial or social situation requires them both to work, but attachment does require physical presence. If you're not with your children, it is vital to ask: "Who is forming attachments with my children?" Children are hardwired to attach, and they will attach to those in their closest vicinity. How well do I know their values, beliefs, and mindsets? Am I comfortable with that person being a major influence in my child's life during this extremely sensitive period of their development?

We cannot ignore the realities that many families face, and that's why it's vital that we provide support to parents to spend time with their children. When we see a lack of attachment between parents and children there is a loss of social structure and a breakdown of culture. Attachment is a hugely important subject when it comes to raising our children.

To be continued.



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The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.

ROBERT CHARLES SWAN



Q: Ananya, tell us about yourself and what you're doing.

I am a graphic designer and illustrator. I've also co-founded a climate action group in Vadodara, India, called the Vadaavaran Collective. We started as a youthled climate action collective in 2020, in the middle of the pandemic, as a lot of us were back home with some time on our hands. We signed up to the Gigatonne Challenge run by Complexity University. This global community supports and trains people around the world to tackle complex global challenges, including climate change.

The Gigatonne Challenge helps teams around the world build capacity to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. You start with a small target and increase your target as your team grows and becomes stronger. The goal is for different teams everywhere to contribute to the global movement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create green jobs, and build resilient communities.

Q: What sort of projects are you working on?

We started with composting for sustainable waste management. There aren't any waste segregation policies in Vadodara, so a lot of waste goes into landfill, which can be a health hazard. As young people who didn't have much experience in the climate space, but who shared a deep concern and who wanted to impact our community, we started with food waste to start building the muscle for tackling this complex challenge.

We began working with small residential communities, helping them set up composting systems locally. And that has evolved. Initially we were collecting waste in our personal vehicles, composting, blogging, designing bins with a logo, etc. Then gradually we were at the third level of the Gigatonne Challenge, trying to abate 10 tonnes of carbon or greenhouse gas emissions per month, for three months, and we received some funding to do this. We approached a couple of lowincome communities, low-cost housing residents in Vadodara, and a self-help group of women with a certain level of literacy and education. They were trained by the government to carry out public health awareness, AIDS awareness, and other campaigns at the community level. They had a considerable impact and influence in their community, so we asked if they would be willing to learn how to compost and manage waste. We would train them, we would employ them, and we would help them set up a livelihoodgenerating model so they could carry this forward. That's where things started to make sense for our group: something that might work for the future, something we could replicate.

Q: You've talked about a lot of decisions. Who made those decisions? And how did you make them?

We were conscious of having a structure and organization where everyone had a voice. There was a core team of five or six of us, and It was important for each team member to have a role and a responsibility, and everyone had an equally important role.

a wider volunteer and community network. We communicated our proposals within the network, and asked, "Would you like to have an active role in making this happen and taking these decisions?" Those who did joined the team.

The team of five or six of us steered it forward, while people in the wider network were happy to lend their time and go with our decisions. In our team meetings, we heard from each person, what leads they had pursued, what insights they had, and what next steps we could take. And then the team discussed the best use of our time, resources, and energy.

It was important for each team member to have a role and a responsibility, and everyone had an equally important role. If anyone needed support, we offered it. Or, if anyone felt overwhelmed by their tasks, help was there to prioritize.

Q: So you worked together as a team without one person leading.

Yes. The Gigatonne Challenge has a certain structure of targets, reporting, and documentation to record the data and tell the story accurately. Some team members were good at working with data, while some were good with the community, talking to people and connecting with them. We tried to find a balance between both those things, and tried to keep the essence of what we were doing at the heart of it, while keeping an eye on our framework and what we needed to do.

Q: How did the composting project go?

I think it was successful. The women produced a lot of compost, which they then started to sell as an additional source of income. We took them to the Maker Fest, which happens in Vadodara once a year. We tried to draw out these little opportunities over the course of the year, and get these women to talk about their story. They were given a bit of training from the government and from other organizations to sustain their business, make business decisions, and become financially more stable.

They faced a lot of community challenges, and a lot of compost was destroyed in the process. But through all that, these women kept going. They kept collecting waste, they kept talking to people. The lady who led the group was a good spokesperson. We tried to highlight her voice where we could.

We were then approached by other self-help groups around the city, wanting to do something similar, because they saw it was bringing value to this particular group.

I'm about to start a project with a bit more structure – six groups in six different localities. We've got another round of funding from the Gigatonne Challenge and we have designed an action-learning program where we gather the women, along with our volunteers who will be working with them, and our mentors who give a few hours a week to help these groups design their systems.

It is an equal education space, and a really lovely environment to have these conversations. We have designed a three-month training program on waste collection, composting, maintaining compost, basic planting, and gardening. Our hope is that we can guide these women to work in their localities – where can they find sources of waste, where can they set up composters, etc.? Our volunteers and mentors will help them make



WASTE To WEALTH HUB

ENVIRONMENT

sense of the information, put it into a system, and support them to set up livelihood generation hubs around Vadodara. We call them "Waste to Wealth" hubs.

Q: And you're also working with Africans. Tell us about that.

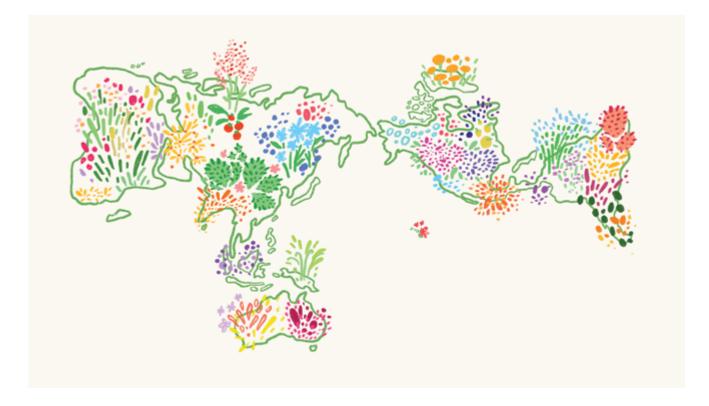
In Vadodara, I gradually took on more of a leadership role, coordinating the different arms of the team. I found it very fulfilling, and was able to use a lot of my skillsets and interests in different ways. So I was asked by the Gigatonne Challenge at Complexity University to start supporting teams in other parts of the world, and was then introduced to a team in Bungoma County, Kenya.

It is a youth visionary network that has been operational since 2018. They wanted a way for their work to have an action-oriented tangible impact, which is why they signed up to the Gigatonne Challenge. They are farmers in their 20s and 30s, who are very passionate about improving farming processes, livelihoods, and the quality of crop production in their area. I've been working with them for the past 12 weeks and they have successfully moved from level 1 of the Gigatonne Challenge to level 3.

Q: What does that mean?

The level refers to targets. A level 1 team has just been introduced to the challenge. They are getting a sense of how to take an actionoriented approach toward climate crisis. The team is put through a two-week program where they are guided by experienced faculty and coaches. I was a coach for this team. And their goal for the





two weeks was to set up a system that abated one tonne of carbon or greenhouse gas emissions within the two weeks. It had to be measured in accordance with the climate science.

Many teams choose food waste because it's accessible and doesn't require too much infrastructure, expertise, or money to set up. This team also chose food waste because composting fertilizers is valuable for their farms.

When you finish level one, you move to level two, setting up a system that abates ten times the carbon or greenhouse gas emissions per month. Just to give you a reference, one tonne of carbon or greenhouse gas emissions is around 700 to 1200 kilograms of food waste.

In Kenya, the team found big market centers where farmers and other vendors sold their produce every day. There was a huge source of waste that was being dumped or taken to landfill, so they would collect it by handcart, bring it to their farms, and create compost.

Q: So, after 12 weeks, what happens next?

At this stage we're trying to have a much more structured and intentional way of leading teams through. Vadodara was one of the first teams to take up the Gigatonne Challenge, and when we started everyone was still figuring it out. It's quite a new approach, completely based on action, in accordance with the science, and how we divide the work among everyone in the world.

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL

1.5 Degrees of PEACE

KASHA SEQUOIA SLAVNER discusses her journey as a filmmaker and activist, her new documentary, 1.5 Degrees of Peace, highlighting the interconnectedness between peace, and climate justice, and the value of the intergenerational connect. She is interviewed by PURNIMA RAMAKRISHNAN in the GLOW webinar series.

Q: Hi Kasha, thanks for joining us today.

Thank you so much. It's an honor to be here.

Q: You're a Gen Z filmmaker. photographer, writer, and social entrepreneur, who is a passionate advocate for climate justice, peace, and gender equality. You founded The Global Sunrise Project at 15. You are a frequent UN Youth Delegate, have won the Diana Award and the Kim Phúc Award for Youth Peace leadership, and are one of the voices of SDG16+. You are also the 2021 Global Youth Climate Network Ambassador. Your first feature documentary, The Sunrise Storuteller, was screened at over 60 film festivals and has won over 29 awards.

How did you come to do all of these amazing things?

I have been a social justice advocate since I was little, working in my local community. I grew up with a single mom who was highly passionate about gender equality, feminist issues, and the environment, so I absorbed a lot of her consciousness and care for the world. When I was 14, we joined an organization called The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace that had been working in the disarmament movement since the 1960s. We participated in a delegation to a United Nations conference on gender equality called The Commission on the Status of Women. That was my first trip outside Canada, my first time meeting people from all around the world, and my first time hearing stories from people at the grassroots level about their own communities.

Growing up, I had heard about other countries through a lens of sensationalism and stereotypes. I had seen the poverty, the war, the things that are highly polarized, but I hadn't seen or heard the stories of triumph over adversity, of people doing great things despite the little resources they had. So, when I heard those stories for the first time, I was inspired to do something, to make a difference.

I thought about what I had to offer as a 14-year-old. I didn't really know who I was, but I knew I wanted to inspire other people to make a difference in their communities. I decided to use my passion for visual storytelling. I was a hobby photographer at the time, with no professional experience, but I wanted to travel and share stories, so that other people could feel empowered to take action in their communities.

That's how *The Sunrise Storyteller* came to be. I was going to travel, take photos, and write a blog, but it soon developed into a film project, even though I had no prior experience of film-making. I thought, "I need to help these stories come to life, give people a platform to share their stories." I

ENVIRONMENT



took a year out of school to pursue this.

Art as an enabler

Q: Kasha, tell us how art can be an enabler for social change and social impact.

Art is a very special tool. People become statistics when we talk about them only from a fact-based perspective. Connecting with people's experiences, and how they are impacted by issues, is a really profound way to move them into action and connect them with our shared humanity. For example, climate change is a highly emotional issue. It impacts us at the level of survival. You can show those feelings. You can empower people with knowledge but also move them with stories. Whichever artform you use, whether it is music, visual art, mixed media, photography, or anything else, it has a power to really impact people.

It also helps us reframe our narratives. What narratives do you want to tell about the world? What narratives do you want to create going forward? What vision do you have? Art can show the reality of the world, and it can also help you dream up a new world.

Intergenerational partnerships

Q: You use the phrase, "intergenerational partnerships." There are GEN Zs, Millennials, and GEN Ys. There is wisdom to be harnessed from the older generations, and dynamism to be harnessed from the younger generations. How can we harness the power of the intergenerational connect? Intergenerational partnerships are very special for me because I grew up as an only child in the company of my mom and her circles of social justice advocates. I was always listening to the conversations of my elders. Intergenerational partnerships are key to creating effective social justice movements, because we have shared responsibility to be caretakers of the Earth, its people, and all living beings.

In the past couple of years, youth activists have really taken to the forefront, so we hear others saying, "Okay, we are leaving it to you, we trust you with this." While it's a nice sentiment, it's almost disempowering because it feels like, "This is the world we have inherited, and we are responsible for it." Young people are not in positions of power in corporations or governments. We have taken on the responsibility of starting our own organizations, but we do need the privilege that elders have to uplift our messages, to hear our voices, and to train us to come to decision-making tables informed and ready to advocate for our needs.

Many times, you'll see that we are invited for the purpose of advocacy and we are given a youth voice, but we are not allowed to say what we really feel, or we are not prepared to negotiate, or we don't have the knowledge to write policies, so we are brought in, then excluded.



Intergenerational partnerships are key to creating effective social justice movements, because we have shared responsibility to be caretakers of the Earth, its people, and all living beings.

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Tokenism happens. Youth are brought to the table so that everyone has a clear conscience, they have done a good thing, but it is unconscionable that it stops there. We have to turn the inspiration and resilience we see from youth activism and bring about concrete action. That requires the help of intergenerational partnerships. We have a limited time for action, we need effective action, and we don't have time to be spinning our wheels.

Intersectionality

Q: What do you think about the intersectionality between climate, peace, and the other SDGs? How do you see them all working together?

No issue is separate from the others. Everything is interconnected. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. It's clear to me that climate justice affects peace. When people don't have their basic needs met, there are violent reactions, there is hoarding, there is competition for resources, and interpersonal conflict. There is also the issue of nuclear disarmament. The whole process of creating and storing nuclear weapons destroys environments, often where indigenous communities live, where the mining happens. We are also seeing more refugees due to climate change, so again

interpersonal conflicts. These are really critical intersection points that affect women and girls disproportionately.

When you start looking at the intersectionality of two issues, you see how they link to all the others – those listed as SDGs and those not listed as SDGs.

Activism

Q: I can feel the passion and activism in your voice. What does the word "activism" mean to you? Activism has an element of dynamism – I don't want to use the word violence. How can you be proactive and dynamic, and see the fruition of your aspirations, without using violence?

The way we use language is indicative of our culture and a reflection of society. Sometimes we use violent language to describe everyday things, but activism is not one of those things. To me, activism is caring in action. It has "act" in it, and that means standing up for justice, standing up for the liberation of all people. If we don't, we perpetuate violence against others.

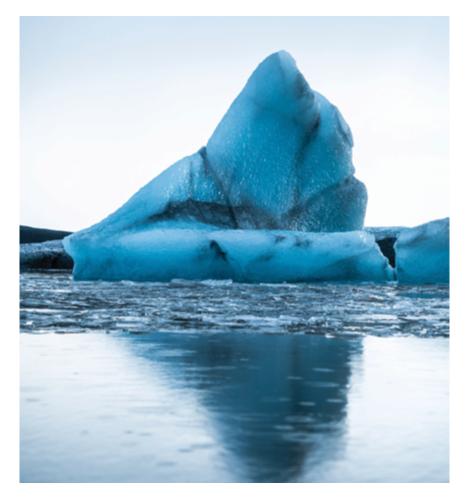
To me, activism is proactive. It's not always campaigning and lobbying, it's not always taking a leadership role. Sometimes it's participating in a movement. Sometimes it's expressing care for Activism is proactive. It's not always campaigning and lobbying, it's not always taking a leadership role. Sometimes it's participating in a movement.

the world through art, through workshops, or working with youth directly. It's so clear in my heart that it is caring for other people, and taking on our collective responsibility to care for the planet.

1.5 Degrees of Peace

Q: Kasha, tell us about your latest movie, *1.5 Degrees of Peace.*

Through 1.5 Degrees of Peace, I hope to make the connection between peace and climate justice very clear, highlighting those on the ground in the forefront of both movements.



We have a shared responsibility to care for the planet, and also to care for ourselves in the process.

We need to bring those two movements together to bring effective action. Both issues are staring us down from the future, but they are also happening now. Sometimes, we may not see the effects, but people in other places see the effects. We need to confront the challenges and find creative solutions for action, for positive change. I hope to do justice to the scale of the issues and also show opportunities for action. That is my goal for 1.5 Degrees of Peace. Q: What do you think of the role of heart-based meditation in fulfilling the SDGs, predominantly peace? And can peaceful individuals help to achieve the SDGs?

It's very important to cultivate a peaceful harmonious humanity. To cultivate peace, we need an element of peace within. We need harmony within ourselves. I meditate and do physical practices that help me to be more mindful. I try my best, I am not perfect, but I continue to work at it. I think it's critical for a peaceful world.

Q: Kasha, are there any closing thoughts you would like to share with us?

Please remember that you have the potential to make a positive impact in the world. Also, reflect on what issues you care about most. Your contribution is necessary. We have a shared responsibility to care for the planet, and also to care for ourselves in the process. I invite you to reflect on that.

Thank you so much, Kasha.

To watch the full interview, go to https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=DQGIwhl4PwY. Creativity can solve almost any problem. The creative act, the defeat of habit by originality, overcomes everything.

GEORGE LOIS





a love letter from BHUJTAN

 PAWO CHOYNING DORJI is a Bhutanese filmmaker and photographer. His film, Lunana: A Yak in the Classroom (2019), was nominated for
 Best International Feature Film at the 94th Academy Awards, and had its world premiere at the BFI London Film Festival. Pawo speaks with
 PURNIMA RAMAKRISHNAN about the making of Lunana, the teachings of Buddha that inspired major parts of the film, and his hopes and wishes for young people today.

Q: Thank you so much for	Himachal Pradesh. And after	in West
joining me.	all that, I returned to Bhutan.	like Aus
		America
Thank you for having me,	Bhutan is very guarded about	going tł
Purnima.	exposure to the outside world,	Thousa
	so a lot of Bhutanese wonder	happine
Q: How did the idea of Lunana	what the rest of the world is	
come about?	like. When I returned, I went	I thoug
	through the same journey as the	are seek
I grew up outside Bhutan, as	protagonist of the film. He is	glitterin
my father was a diplomat. I	reintroduced to his culture and	civilizat
was born in India, and lived	falls in love with it. There is a	story wl

in Europe, the Middle East, and America. After finishing college, I returned to India and joined a Buddhist monastery in

One inspiration was the younger population seeking life

lot of my own story in the film.

in Western developed countries like Australia, Canada, and America. In Bhutan, we are going through that right now. Thousands leave, seeking happiness.

I thought, "If our people are seeking life in the urban glittering lights of Western civilization, I will create a story where the protagonist goes to the opposite end of the spectrum. Let me take this protagonist to the remotest, most desolate place in Bhutan."



That happens to be Lunana. In our language, Lunana means "the dark valley," because it is so far.

So the theme was: could we really discover in the shadows and darkness what we are longing for and so desperately seeking in the light? We could have cheated on the location, making the movie in a village with electricity and road connection, but I didn't want to do that. I wanted us all to go through the experience and live in the darkness. I felt that it would then translate into the film. It is almost a docu-feature.

Q: *Lunana* is a spark of inspiration. I can't associate the word "darkness" with it.

In many ancient traditions, a teacher is given importance next only to God. You don't really know God, but you know the teacher who can take you where you need to go. You chose to portray the protagonist as a teacher, rather than a doctor, a social worker, or any other noble profession. That aspect has a deep significance. Can you tell me why you made that choice?

There are two reasons. One is exactly as you say. Bhutan's culture, tradition, and spirituality are based on Buddhism. And the teacherstudent relationship is very important. We have this name "Dalai Lama" meaning "root teacher." The root teacher takes the most important position in our life. So, I made the protagonist a teacher as he



holds the most important role in Bhutanese culture and society, yet he is not happy and he wants to leave.

The second reason is that I am trying to bring reality into my films. Reality is my inspiration. In the Bhutan of today, there are two common things. One is that most young people are leaving for Australia. The second is that most of the people who are quitting their jobs are teachers.

I had many different aspirations. One was to tell the story of Bhutan, and another was to highlight and preserve our disappearing traditions. Yet another was to reach out to the teachers who are quitting their jobs every year. I told my friends that if I can save one teacher from giving up their profession, it would mean more than any award the film received.

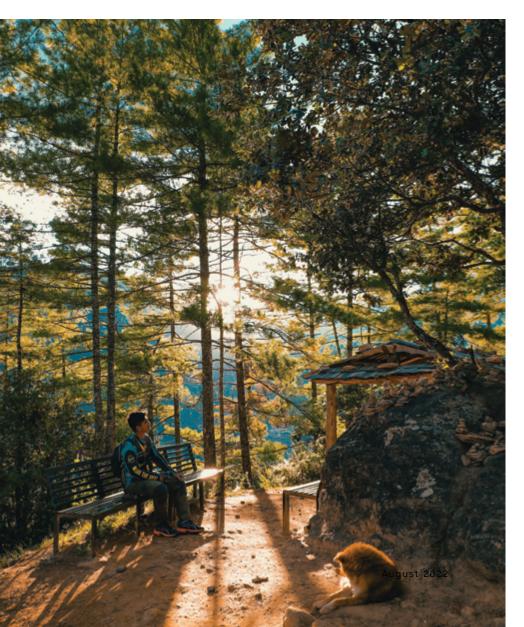
Q: That is a very noble idea. There is another interesting thing I observed in your film. Today we live in an age of excess. We produce more food than we can eat and we dump the excess food. We fight wars for trivial matters and aspire for space habitation, and yet you show in your movie that there are extremely joyful people living amongst us who do not have shoes or electricity, and who do not know how to use a toothbrush.

While the gap is vast, and I cannot even fathom how it could be bridged, you very sublimely, subtly, and creatively bring this "social activism" to the forefront. My heart is deeply touched. Did

you consciously think of these things, or did it just emerge?

I am a lover of Bhutan. I made this film as a love letter from Bhutan to the rest of the world. I wanted to showcase and celebrate our culture and our traditions. I grew up outside Bhutan in a very materialistic world, where, as you said, there is a lot of excess. Where many people are not happy. Bhutan advertises itself as a happy country, and there is some truth in that. Unfortunately, we are losing touch with that because we too are falling into the race to modernize, the race to become worldly. Bhutan's traditions are rooted in Buddha's teachings. Buddha always talked about wishing all beings to be happy.

But what is true happiness? In this movie, I wanted to touch upon what happiness is for the people of Lunana. It is really two things. One is contentment. Contentment



is a person saying, "I have enough." He is much wealthier than any rich person. A rich person is never content, always longing for more and more, so they are never happy. In Lunana, the people have very little, yet they are content. Their lives are full. They are not rich but they are wealthy people.

Buddha also taught that we must accept impermanence. Much happiness comes from that acceptance because everything is always changing. When we are attached to those things that are changing, then we will not be happy.

So I really wanted to put across these two teachings of contentment and acceptance.

Much happiness comes from acceptance because everything is always changing. When we are attached to those things that are changing, then we will not be happy.



Q: The stark difference that you brought out between wealth and richness is a very poignant message.

Spoiler alert: for those of you who have not yet watched the movie and wish to do so, please stop here, otherwise, continue reading.

The protagonist leaves Bhutan for Australia toward the end of the movie. I was waiting with bated breath to see what he would do. I thought he would have a change of heart and stay back in Lunana to educate the poor children. But he left. I was surprised, yet I felt relieved that it was realistic, not like a Hollywood movie where the impossible happens. The ending made me weep. So, why did you choose for Ugyen to leave Bhutan?

Because my movies reflect reality! In a real story, Ugyen would leave. He has passion and ambition.

The second reason is the magic of storytelling, of cinema. If he had stayed in Lunana, the story would have ended there. He stayed for the kids. He stayed for his yak. He stayed for the girl, Saldon. That would be the end of it. But by Ugyen going to Australia, and singing the song he learned in Lunana in the club in Australia, the story continues. When the movie ends you wonder, "What did Ugyen do? He sang that song. Does it mean he will go back to Lunana?" With that thought, each viewer creates their own ending. Then it becomes a much more personal journey.

Lord Buddha said that the art of storytelling is the creation of illusion to connect us to reality. And that is also cinema. We create illusory stories and illusory emotions and imaginary storylines to connect us to reality. My hope is that the audience can relate to their own journeys in life.

Q: That is eye opening, Pawo. Lunana will always be close to my heart. It talks about the choices we make, our accountability, and the repercussions of our decisions. I hope and wish that all young people will watch this movie.

I would like to ask if you have any message for young people today.

I hope you will watch *Lunana*. It is a small film that my team and I made in the world's remotest classroom, dependent completely on solar power. We made it with no money, and it went from the world's remotest classroom to the Academy Awards. At the Academy Awards, I did not represent Bhutan, or myself, or this film. I represented every struggling filmmaker, storytellers who at times do not have the confidence to believe they can make it. If a film like ours can make it, if you put your heart into it, if you have the passion, there is the possibility to make it. That is how amazing this world is.

Second, I am from Bhutan and I am a Buddhist. I want to share something about my culture and my spirituality. Buddha said that among all the animal footprints, the elephant's footprint is the most majestic, powerful, and inspiring. Likewise, the Buddha said that among all the thoughts we might have, the thought of impermanence is the most majestic and inspiring.

My advice to young people is to reflect on impermanence, accept impermanence and change, and use them as tools for your career. Why I am saying this is because the world we live in has taught us to be competitive and worldly; thoughts like impermanence are rare. They are looked down upon and considered useless and a waste of time. But it is impermanence that makes everything possible. Everything is constantly changing. Impermanence doesn't mean the end. Impermanence means change. Impermanence means that if you do not have something, perhaps you will have it. Impermanence means that a little film powered by solar batteries and yak dung from the mountains of the Himalayas can make it to the Academy Awards.

So, my advice to young people is to reflect on impermanence, accept impermanence and change, and use them as tools for your career.

Q: Thank you, Pawo, for your wisdom.

Thank you.

AN ART ESSAY

The Urgency of Our Time

BRIGITTE SMITH speaks about the social responsibility of artists, and creativity's role in inspiring new thought processes.



CREATIVITY



Mother Earth

n the urgency of our time, we are forced to be aware of the need of renewal of the spirit within, and the hopeful healing of the planet we live on and have so very much neglected. As artists, we have the inner urge to become aware of the spirit of the time we live in. We are moved to use our work to develop greater awareness and a sense of responsibility in the viewer.

Only Together can we Save the Planet

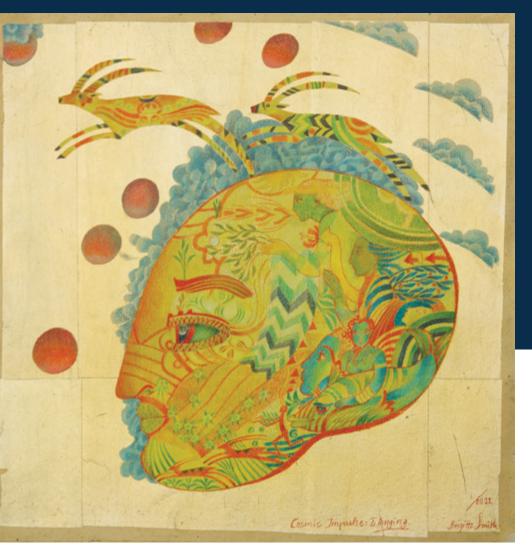


It has always been the duty of art to inspire new thought processes.

The more we all connect to our inner Self, to our higher Self, the more we are guided to do the work we are here for. Every soul has a purpose in its incarnation. Since we have been given this urge to put forth into form and thought and action, we can connect with our spirit to find out what it might be.

If we find our true purpose, it creates a great feeling of joy and gratitude and responsibility to be true. I think the ability to create is in all of us, once we uncover our purpose.

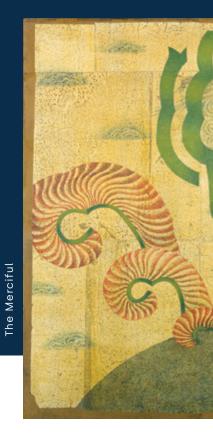
CREATIVITY



Cosmic Impulse

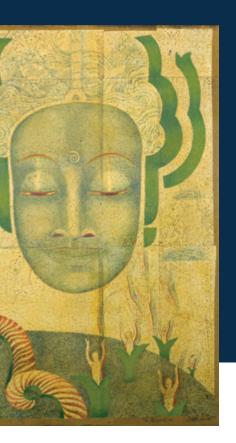
An artist transforms thought into form, may it be dance, music, painting, or sculpture. The artist's responsibility is to be truthful to their calling, and try to clean their channel, for the product to emerge clean and connected to their inner truth.

Cleaning of Heart, Mind and Action

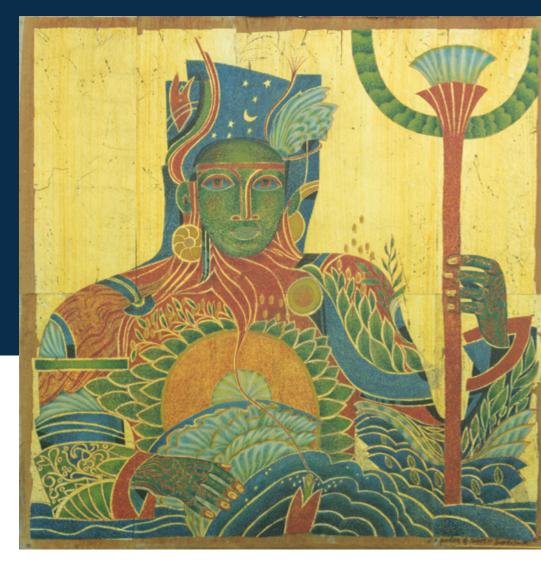




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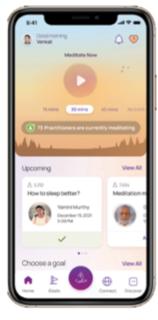
Guardians of Nature

An artist transforms thought into form, may it be dance, music, painting, or sculpture. The artist's responsibility is to be truthful to their calling, and try to clean their channel, for the product to emerge clean and connected to their inner truth.

I am now in my eighties, and my learning on the path has been many years. I can witness this process within myself and in my pictures. In great joy I have noticed that I have become more and more a channel for my soul to speak and put that into form.

Illustrations by BRIGITTE SMITH

August 2022



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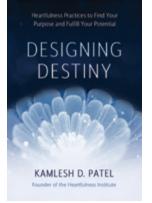
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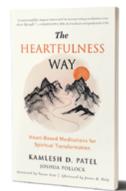
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