

September 2019

# heartfulness

purity weaves destiny

BOB  
BOISTURE  
Spirit of  
Humanity Forum,  
Iceland 2019

DAAJI  
Mastering  
over-indulgence

CONSCIOUSNESS  
IN MANAGEMENT  
An international  
forum at IIM  
Bangalore,  
August 2019



*Sleep*

[www.heartfulnessmagazine.com](http://www.heartfulnessmagazine.com)





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# *Now It's Time to Say Goodnight Good Night Sleep Tight —The Beatles*

Dear readers,

In this edition our writers share their insights into the importance of sleep in our day-to-day life: What is the science of sleep? Why is it needed? When is the ideal time to sleep? What is its effect on our overall health? Experts like Dr. Damon Ashworth, Dr. Natwar Sharma and Jamie Nothstine explore these issues.

International Day of Peace is on 21 September, and to celebrate we have an exclusive interview with Bob Boisture, President and CEO of the Fetzer Institute, recorded at the Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland at the end of May, along with the concluding part of the interview with Dr. Saki Santorelli on insights from the heart. Daaji explores two more aspects of yogic psychology – sensuality and false perception. We hear from the recent conference on "Elevating Consciousness Through Meditation for Global Harmony" held at the beginning of August in Bangalore, and Thaneeya McArdle brings us a colorful art essay of orderly chaos.

We wish you all a peaceful life, filled with plenty of restful sleep!

The editors.

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Also known as Daaji, he is the current Heartfulness Guide. He offers a practical, experiential approach to the evolution of consciousness that is simple, easy to follow, and available to people of all ages and walks of life. Daaji is also a prolific speaker and writer, and his two books, *The Heartfulness Way* and *Designing Destiny*, are both #1 bestsellers.



**Thaneeya McArdle**

Thaneeya creates colorful art ranging from abstract to photorealism, with a special focus on vibrantly detailed art. Her work hangs in private collections around the world, and is also found on T-shirts, puzzles, jewelry, and in coloring books, which have sold over 3.5 million copies worldwide and been translated into several languages. Thaneeya also enjoys travel, photography, reading, and learning new things.



**Bob Boisture**

Bob has been president of the Fetzer Institute since 2013. Under his leadership, its current mission statement is “helping build the spiritual foundation for a loving world.” Prior to that, Bob spent his career working with nonprofit organizations on strategy development, advocacy, program development, governance, and legal compliance. While practicing law in Washington, DC, he represented a broad range of foundations and public charities. He has helped to design and lead major national advocacy campaigns involving environmental and health issues and the right of nonprofit organizations to participate in the legislative process.



**Saki Santorelli**

Saki is an educator, author and clinician. He retired as Executive Director of the UMass Medical School Center for Mindfulness in Medicine,

Health Care and Society. A professor of medicine, he was the very first intern at Dr Jon Kabat Zinn’s Stress Reduction Clinic, from where Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) originated. His entire career has been dedicated to the integration of mindfulness into public health and well-being, propelled by his recognition of and trust in the innate goodness of human beings.



**Damon Ashworth**

Damon is a clinical psychologist who currently volunteers as a mental health specialist with the Vanuatu Government in Port Vila, Vanuatu, under the Australian Volunteers Program. His sleep research was the first to show that four sessions of CBT-I can significantly improve depression and insomnia severity in people who had previously failed to remit through antidepressant treatment. He is passionate about psychology.



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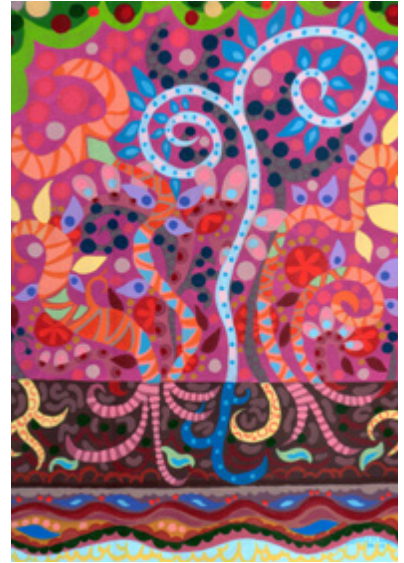


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# focus

S L E E P

*Sleep may actually be an elegant design solution to some of the brain's most basic needs, a unique way that the brain meets the high demands and the narrow margins that set it apart from all the other organs of the body.*

JEFF ILLIF

# THE SCIENCE OF Sleep

DR NATWAR SHARMA shares some thoughts on our current sleep crisis, and why it is a good idea to get a good night's sleep.





Sleep is defined as an altered state of consciousness wherein the sensory and motor systems are relatively inhibited.

Why do we need sleep?

Sleep recharges us, refreshes us. What happens in the body during sleep is very important: the nervous, immune and endocrine systems are repaired and recharged, which is very vital for the body and the mind to function normally.

How many of us today wake up fresh, chirping like a bird, in the morning?

Second, how many of us get sleep the moment we hit the bed?

I asked these questions to about 300 people, informally, and almost 90% of them answered that they were not able to do either of these. What is the reason?

Most of us living in cities have a lot of mental activity, but our physical activity is almost zero. Especially with all these gadgets available, there is no need to travel and we can sit at one place and work. At the same time, the mind is hyper-stimulated. There is so much to do today, so much to catch up on: movies, TV, social media. And how much time is consumed on WhatsApp!

Now when we look at the animal world, we see how beautifully they're aligned with nature. By sunset they fall asleep, and with the first rays of the sun you can hear the birds chirping. As human beings what has gone wrong with us?

We too have a circadian clock, which helps us to wake up and sleep. The hormone melatonin

is responsible for this, and light basically inhibits the secretion of this hormone. We are exposed to a lot of artificial light today. Even after sunset, there is light all around. Also, most of us don't follow sleep hygiene: we are awake – on our mobile phones, watching TV or just surfing. Imagine the amount of light entering our eyes, not allowing the melatonin hormone to be secreted and function properly.

What happens as a result of all this? Gradually stress builds up. We use our mobile phone throughout the day, recharge it at night, and the next day it is ready to be used again. The same is the case with our body: it needs to be recharged. In many cases, even if our body is not completely recharged, we can push ourselves because there are additional mechanisms. It is like having a back-up battery in your mobile phone. But in order to make that happen, there is a lot of extra load on the body's mechanisms and that's when stress builds up.

What is needed in today's scenario is to create a balance in our lives. On the one hand we need to have some physical activity in order to tire our body, while on the other we need to reduce mental stimulation especially after sunset. It is not possible to avoid stress in today's world; stress has become part of life. But how can we manage stress?

Apart from indulging in physical activities, we may practice techniques like relaxation and meditation. They help the mind to calm down and induce much better sleep.

Sleep is a very important aspect of our lives, which we ignore. Please think over this. I wish you all a good night's sleep!

# *Sleep and Good Mental Health*

**DR DAMON ASHWORTH** is a clinical psychologist and sleep researcher. Here he describes the benefits of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for overcoming insomnia, and also offers many solutions to help with sleep problems.



Sleep difficulties are a feature of nearly every mental health problem, including depression, anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, bipolar disorder, and psychosis or schizophrenia. Take depression for example. Up to 90% of individuals with depression have sleep difficulties, and two out of every three have significant enough sleep problems to also have a diagnosis of insomnia.

Worse still, insomnia does not tend to go away on its own without appropriate treatment. This is because once people start to sleep poorly, they tend to develop ways of thinking and behaving around sleep that make their problems worse over the long run.

Fortunately, there is a treatment out there that can improve your sleep. It's called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), which directly targets these unhelpful thoughts and behaviors around sleep. Many studies show CBT-I is an effective treatment, similar to sleeping pills at improving sleep in the short-term, and much more effective than sleeping pills at improving sleep in the long-term.

Research shows that CBT-I consistently reduces the time taken to get to sleep, decreases the amount of time spent awake during the night, and improves sleep quality and efficiency, with improvements persisting after the treatment finishes. This is unlike sleeping pills, where sleep difficulties typically come back once people with insomnia stop taking them.

Sleeping pills are also not recommended for use beyond 4 weeks at a time, because they stop working after a while and people need to take bigger doses over time to get the same effects. Often doctors prescribe them because they think they will work faster for patients, but even one session of CBT-I has been shown to make a significant difference to one's sleep at night!

## *CBT for Insomnia consists of four main components:*

### 1. Psycho-education

Helpful information around sleep, including homeostatic pressure, circadian rhythms, hyper-arousal and sleep hygiene recommendations. Sleep hygiene means having a comfortable bedroom environment, minimizing light exposure before bed, exercising during the day, minimizing caffeine and alcohol, and doing things to wind down or manage worries before bed.

### 2. Sleep scheduling

Helpful information on when to go to bed at night, when to wake in the morning, and the ideal amount of time for sleep. Stimulus control and sleep restriction are the two main interventions included in sleep scheduling, and both are scientifically supported for improving sleep quality and sleep efficiency if done properly.

### 3. Relaxation techniques

Because hyper-arousal plays a huge role in insomnia, it is important to help people develop strategies to quiet the mind and calm the body during the day, both before bed and in bed. Relaxation techniques may include imagery training, meditation, biofeedback training, deep and slow breathing and progressive muscle relaxation.

## 4 . Cognitive therapy

Skills to challenge unhelpful or unrealistic beliefs about sleep. A lot of individuals with insomnia attribute all of their tiredness, mood difficulties or poor performance at work to their sleep difficulties, and this puts too much pressure on them to get a good night's sleep. It is therefore important to get them to see the other factors that may contribute to how they feel during the day, present them with data that challenges their fears, and help them to develop realistic expectations about their sleep.

### BEST SLEEP INTERVENTIONS OVERALL

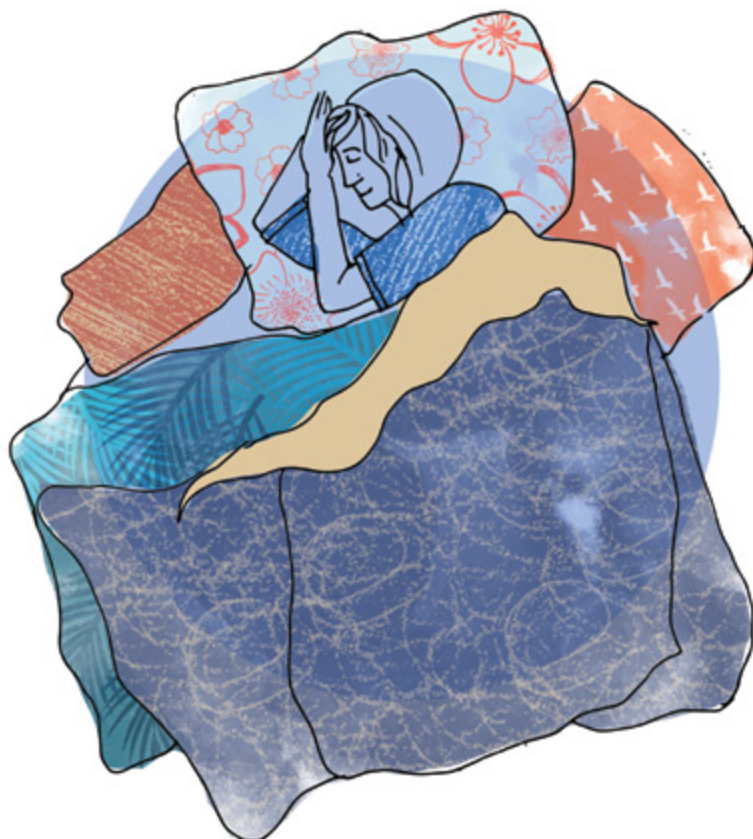
In 2017, I ran 26 two-week experiments on my sleep to determine which interventions were most helpful. Here are all the sleep interventions I tested, ranked from best to worst based on their overall score out of 100:

#### High Distinction

- |                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Stimulus control                | 85/100 |
| 2. Winding down before sleep       | 85/100 |
| 3. Sleep restriction               | 81/100 |
| 4. Relaxation strategies pre-sleep | 81/100 |

#### Distinction

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. Meditation                                       | 77/100 |
| 2. No alcohol                                       | 75/100 |
| 3. Wearing blue-light blocking glasses before sleep | 75/100 |
| 4. Listening to music in the evening                | 73/100 |
| 5. Yoga/Pilates                                     | 72/100 |
| 6. Constructive worry or writing down plans         | 71/100 |



#### Credit

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. Avoiding TV before bed                       | 69/100 |
| 2. Melatonin                                    | 68/100 |
| 3. Aromatherapy                                 | 68/100 |
| 4. Sauna or hot bath in the evening             | 68/100 |
| 5. Morning sunlight                             | 65/100 |
| 6. Reading or listening to audiobooks pre-sleep | 63/100 |
| 7. Exercise during the day                      | 61/100 |

#### Pass

- |                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. No caffeine               | 58/100 |
| 2. Food that helps sleep     | 57/100 |
| 3. Controlling temperature   | 57/100 |
| 4. Massage in the afternoon  | 57/100 |
| 5. Comfort of sleep surface  | 56/100 |
| 6. Sleeping alone            | 53/100 |
| 7. Creativity in the evening | 52/100 |



## SLEEP RECOMMENDATIONS (Stepanski & Wyatt, 2003):

### 1 Decrease time in bed

Sleep efficiency is a better predictor of satisfaction with sleep and daytime mood than total sleep time. So if you only get 7 hours of sleep per night, spend 7.5 hours of time in bed. This will allow for better sleep over time.

### 2 Regular bedtime and waking time

Reducing variability in your sleep can make a huge difference in how long it takes you to get to sleep, how restful a sleep you have, and how refreshed you feel in the morning. Have a set bedtime, and whenever you feel sleepy around this time, go to bed. Then set an alarm so that you can wake up at the same time each day. If you want to sleep in on weekends, allow yourself no more than one hour later than you usually wake up. Following this, regardless of how much sleep you get, helps to strengthen your circadian rhythms and build up your homeostatic pressure to ensure better sleep over time.

### 3 Exercise

Vigorous exercise prior to bedtime is actually unhelpful for sleep, but expending more energy during the day is likely to lead to better quality of sleep at night. The earlier in the day it is done, the greater the effect it will have.

### 4 Less caffeine and alcohol

Minimize these substances where possible, especially within 4 hours of bedtime as they both have significant effects on sleep quality. Alcohol can reduce worries and result in getting to sleep quicker, but results in poorer sleep quality in the second half of the night. Alcohol can also lead to more snoring due to the loosening of the throat muscles. Caffeine boosts cortisol levels, a.k.a. stress, and results in less deep sleep and more awakenings.

### 5 Do not try to sleep

It is something that has to come naturally. The harder you try to get to sleep, the less likely it will happen, as trying activates the autonomic nervous system, which also increases how stressed you feel. The more you allow yourself to relax, the more likely sleep is.

### 6 Do not keep looking at your phone or alarm clock during the night

If your alarm is set, then there is no need to know the time in bed. This will only increase performance anxiety if you look and see that you have not slept for very long. Put it in a drawer, cover it with a shirt, or face it the other way.

### 7 Keep naps short

Napping during the day reduces your pressure for sleep by the time you go to bed at night. If you have to nap, keep it less than 30 minutes so that you don't go into a deep sleep, and do it before 4 p.m. so that sleep pressure can build up again by the time you go to bed that night.

## 8 Engage in relaxing activities before bed

Just like waking up, going to sleep is a transitional process. Don't expect that your mind will shut off immediately as soon as you get into bed. Whatever it is, do something relaxing as a pre-bed routine. Read a book, listen to some music, have a hot bath, practice Yoga, mindfulness or relaxation techniques. Then maintain that relaxed state in bed and allow sleep to come.

## 9 Use the bedroom only for sleep and sex

This means no reading, eating, Internet surfing, game playing, phones, TV, planning, worrying etc. in bed. Bed = sleep.

## 10 Make a worry list before bed

To prevent your mind from racing in bed, reflect on the day about 2 hours before you want to sleep, write down any worries, concerns or problems you may have, create a to-do-list, or plan for the day ahead. Then if thoughts come up in bed, remind yourself that you have already sorted them out or that they can wait until tomorrow.

## 11 Leave the bed if awake

Sometimes, no matter what you try, you may find yourself awake in bed. If you do not fall to sleep within what feels like 20 minutes, get up, go to another room and do something relaxing until you are sleepy before returning to bed. Over time this will recondition the bed with sleepiness rather than frustration, and allow you to fall asleep quickly. Give it a try for a week. It may be the most difficult recommendation to follow initially, but it produces long-lasting results quickly.



For more details on these interventions and strategies, go to [www.sleepdetective.com.au](http://www.sleepdetective.com.au).



# THE *Brighter Minds* Enriching Young Minds

ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

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COGNITIVE  
ELEMENTS

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Comprehension  
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ABILITIES

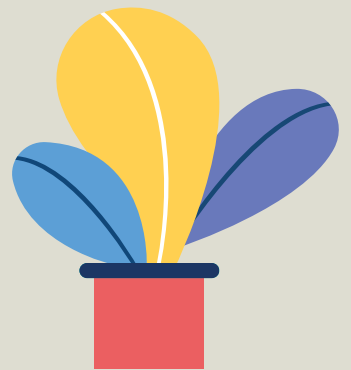
ENHANCED  
OVERALL  
PERFORMANCE  
& EFFICIENCY OF  
THE BRAIN

FINE-TUNED  
SENSE OF  
OBSERVATION  
& INTUITION

*Forgiveness is  
not always easy.  
At times, it feels more painful  
than the wound we suffered,  
to forgive the one that inflicted it.  
And yet, there is no peace  
without forgiveness.*

MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

THOUGHT  
IN ACTION







# *Your Brain On Night Shift*

**JAMIE NOTHSTINE** is an emergency room nurse, a certified Primal Health Coach, with a Bachelor Degree in Kinesiology and Bachelor Degree of Nursing. She also has a passion for fitness and nutrition. Here Jamie shares her personal tips for working night shifts as a health professional, and still getting regular rejuvenating sleep.



*If you work the graveyard shift, do any of the following sound like you?*

Brain fog

Tired

Cranky

Always hungry

Often sick

Overweight

Headaches

Depression

Anxiety

After working the night shift for nearly 11 years, I definitely checked most of those boxes, and as an RN in the emergency room you do not want any of them. You need to be alert, on your feet and ready for an emergency at a drop of a hat. You have lives in your hands!

As years went by I noticed how my mood and health was changing. I had to figure out why. I kept telling myself, "I'm not me anymore." Yes, the stress of the ER can definitely change a person, but this was something more.

I would notice that my sleep was not optimal, and the worse it was the worse I felt. Even my days off were spent lying on the couch like a slug. I didn't want to go to social gatherings, visit family, or do anything but sleep and eat.

The more I researched, the more I learned the three big words that were making me feel the way I was, and those 3 words are "Disrupted Circadian Cycle."



## *The health cost of working nights*

Research shows that disrupted sleep cycles contribute to

### *Why is our circadian sleep cycle so important?*

Getting adequate sleep is essential to weight loss, peak performance (physically and mentally) and longevity.

For billions of years, the evolution of nearly all life forms on Earth has been driven by the rising and setting of the sun. This circadian rhythm governs our sleeping and eating patterns, as well as the precise timing of important hormone secretions, brainwave patterns, and cellular repair and regeneration, based on a 24-hour cycle. So when we disrupt that by working the night shift, we disrupt some of the very processes we depend upon to stay healthy, happy, productive, and focused.

1. Obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease
2. Decreased immune function
3. Impaired brain function, decreased reaction time, impaired memory and emotional control. Early cognitive decline and Alzheimer's
4. Cancer

“Okay, okay, but I have to work nights, so what should I do?”

Here are some tips to optimize your sleep to decrease your risk of the above consequences.

Certainly the best option is to avoid working nights but that's not realistic for everyone and certain professions. So if you must work nights, you're better off consistently working the night shift, opposed to working days and nights on a rotating schedule.





**Tip #1: Get yourself into a 24-hour cycle.** How to do that? Manipulate your light exposure.

Red wavelengths = increased melatonin = sleepy time.

Low temperature light that falls in the red-orange-yellow spectrum, such as candlelight or fire light, does not affect melatonin production.

Blue wavelengths = decreased melatonin = awake and alert.

The sun, TV, computer screens, cell phones, digital clocks with blue numbers, e-readers and energy-efficient LED and fluorescent light bulbs all contribute blue light.

## *When you finish work in the morning*



**Tip #2: Don't blast your eyeballs** with more bright artificial lights by looking at your phone, watching TV or getting on the computer. If you must,

install the "night mode" on your smart devices or download a free software program called f.lux to automatically adjust your screen light. Set a timer to only allow a small amount of time on your electronics then switch to a book to read.



**Tip #3: Put on your blue-blocking glasses** before you walk outside in the sun. These are glasses

with yellow lenses that filter out blue light. Or you can wear sunglasses with yellow lenses that wrap around the sides of your eyes like goggles. Or just get some goggles.



**Tip #4: Avoid LED lights** as much as possible.

Doing these things will help the production of melatonin.

## *Your bedroom*

Think of your bedroom as a cave; it should be quiet, cool, and dark.



**Tip #5: Make your bedroom pitch black**

1. Install blackout drapes
2. Close your bedroom door if light comes through it; if light seeps in underneath your door, put a towel along the base
3. Get rid of your electric clock radio, or at least block its light while you're sleeping
4. Avoid night lights of any kind. If you must have a night light, use a red bulb.
5. Keep all light sources off, even if you get up to go to the bathroom, including your computer and TV. I have a small Himalayan sea salt lamp on my bedside table. I flip that on if I need it at night.
6. Avoid any sources of electromagnetic radiation, such as all electrically driven appliances in your bedroom, especially when connected to the AC-operated main electricity. Electrical transformers, Wi-Fi controlled light bulbs and smartphones produce dirty electricity and dirty electromagnetic radiation, which interferes with melatonin production. I put my phone in airplane mode when I sleep.

## THOUGHT IN ACTION



### **Tip #6: Make your room cold.**

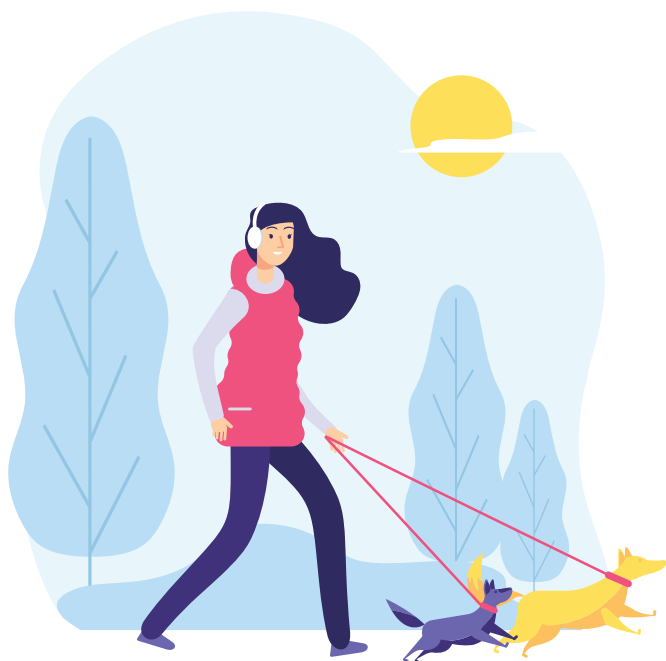
The suggested bedroom temperature should be between 60 and 67 degrees Fahrenheit or 15.5 and 19.5 degrees Celsius for optimal sleep.



### **Tip #7: Invest in a noise-canceling sound machine,**

or use a smartphone App to play ocean or rain sounds as you fall asleep. I use my

noisy fan at home or when I'm traveling. I like the App "White Noise." In our hunter gatherer days distracting noises were supposed to wake us up for safety reasons, like not getting eaten by a lion.



## *When you wake up*



### **Tip #8: If you must use an alarm, opt for nature sounds**

rather than a blaring beep. Loud, jarring alarms disrupt your natural sleep cycles and lead to sleep deprivation.



### **Tip #9: Take a warm shower**

to help stimulate the central nervous system and naturally get the blood circulating.



### **Tip #10: Open the curtains**

immediately and let sunlight in. Take advantage of the sunlight as much as possible before it goes down. I walk

out on my porch to let the sunshine hit my face. Read this article for a lot of great gadgets to help mimic the rise and setting of the sun: <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.cnet.com/google-amp/news/light-alarm-clock-wake-up-to-light/>

Why is light so important when waking? Light is registered first through the retina; the signal travels through the optic nerve to other regions of the brain, activating the release of serotonin. Levels of the stress hormone cortisol increase within the first 30 minutes of waking. This morning cortisol influx is a desirable genetic mechanism that prepares us for the energy demands of a busy day.

## Other ways to minimize risks associated with night shift work



### **Tip #11: Get your vitamin D levels checked.**

Since night shift work largely prevents the sun exposure needed for vitamin D production, measure your vitamin D and maintain a healthy level of 40 to 70 ng/ml by trying to get sun exposure during the day, or with an oral vitamin D3 supplement along with vitamin K2.



### **Tip #12: On your days off,** strive for somewhere between 10 to 20 minutes of direct sunlight between 10 a.m. and 3

p.m. Expose your skin just long enough to get a slight tan.



### **Tip #13: Pay attention to other strategies** that promote mitochondrial health. Such as: become fat adapted, fasting, exercise, and nutritional

supplements like coenzyme Q10, L-carnitine, D-ribose, magnesium, animal-based omega-3, B vitamins and alpha-lipoic acid (ALA). Being fat adapted has helped me out tremendously as I can get through most of my shift still having energy, not crashing and not moody. I feel great and energized because my body is using my own stored fat for fuel and not looking for sugar all the time.



### **Tip #14: Avoid sleeping pills** as

much as possible, as the side effects may cause more harm than good. Alternatives include Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), listening to a brainwave synchronization tapes, and trying a natural remedy that can help you relax. I use guided meditation and *Yoga Nidra* on YouTube. I also use essential oils like lavender to spray on my bed before going to sleep.



### **Tip #15: Take a nap.**

If I am able to step away at work I will usually go to my car, turn the air on and close my eyes with either a guided meditation playing or some kind of White Noise App playing. Naps are a wonderful way to recharge your brain.

I encourage you to implement some of these tips tonight, as high-quality sleep is one of the most important factors in your health and quality of life. It also affects the lives of our family members, especially for us healthcare workers.

Coaching Programs Available at  
<https://herestoyourhealthbyjamie.com/>

# THE HEARTFUL LEADER

- part 8 -

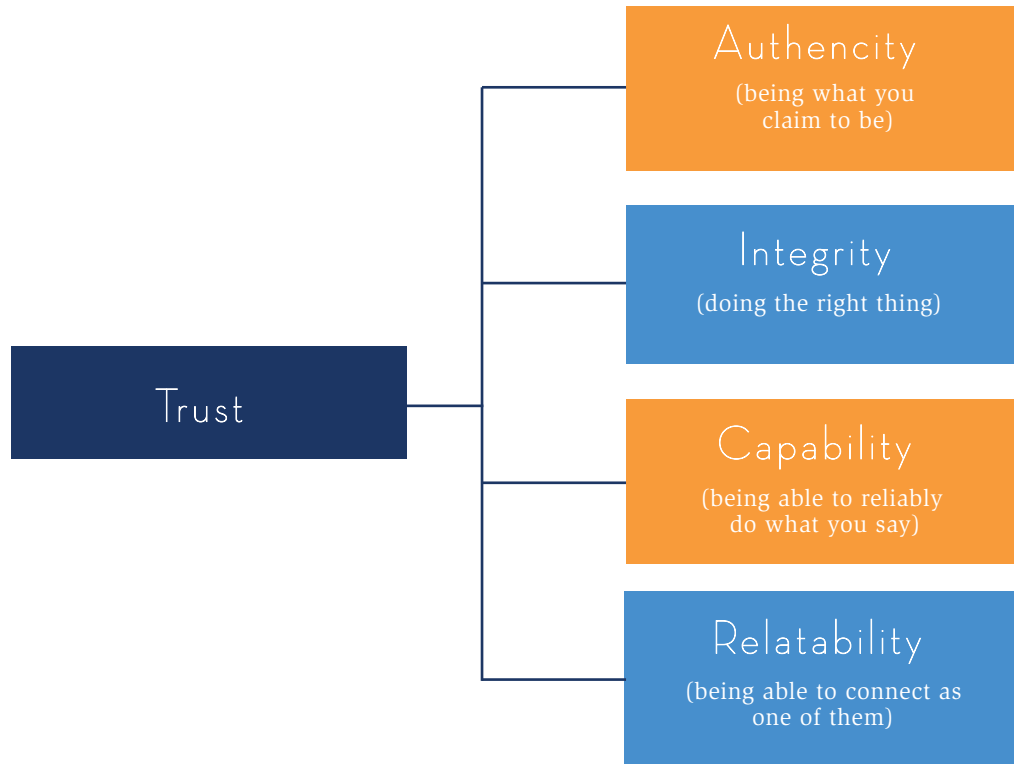
*Extraordinary outcomes through inspiration*

## BUILDING TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH BEHAVIOR SHIFTS

In previous articles, **RAVI VENKATESAN** introduced the Heartful Leader framework, and explored Reputation, Trust & Relationships and Outer Behavior. He also explored what constitutes our Inner State and how to manage it by reversing negative cycles and triggering positive cycles. He then explored a 3-step process to make shifts to our behavior. In this article he looks at managing the Inner State and creating better long-term relationships and trust.







In part 3 of this series he discussed the components of Trust: Authenticity, Integrity, Capability and Reliability. Let's dive into how management of the Inner State leads to behavioral shifts, and can address each component.

Take the example of Jennifer. She started as a Senior Leader with InnoComp, an HR consulting firm that designs compensation structures for large companies. She made some quick changes to the company's go to market strategy and pricing structures in the first few months, and also laid off some of the staff that had been there for a long time but did not seem to have relevant skills. All these changes led to suspicion and mistrust. Now she feels like she is not able to get things done as effectively as she would like. She works with Tina, her executive coach on a strategy to address this situation.

## THOUGHT IN ACTION

Tina identifies Jennifer's challenge squarely as a trust issue. She took actions that were necessary, but they resulted in collateral damage. She needs to quickly build trust and establish better relationships. Tina recommends the Heartful Leader inside-out approach. She also advises Jennifer to focus on 2 to 3 key influencers on the team to begin with. Armed with this new knowledge, Jennifer gets to work.

She meets with 2 of the most influential team members, Tom and Susan, and initiates a candid conversation about how things have gone. Susan is a little hesitant with her response, but Tom openly shares that most of the team, including himself, view Jennifer as a threat and don't believe she has their best interest at heart. Jennifer feels an immediate rush of anger. Her instinct is to tell Tom about how much pressure she has from her boss and the board. But she follows the 3-step process of noticing her inner state, getting to neutral, and shifting positive. Instead of her behavior being defensive, she addresses Tom's comments directly: "I realize how you and the team feel. It is entirely on me to communicate better, not just about what is being done, but why it is being done. If I were in your shoes, I would have felt the same way. Do you think it would help if I provide more context around the actions we took?"





With this approach Jennifer immediately demonstrates authenticity and relatability. The rest of the conversation shifts to a constructive mode, and she gets a lot of great feedback from both Tom and Susan. She agrees to make some changes and sets expectations on some others that cannot be executed. Over time, as she does exactly what she says she will do, Tom and Susan become champions for her. Trust and relationships lead to a much more effective and enjoyable mode of working.

As a refresher, in part 4 of this series we talked about “cures” for relationships. Sincere apology, creating opportunities to collaborate, doing a favor without any expectation of one, and asking for help. By shifting herself from a negative inner state of anger to a positive inner state of compassion, reflecting outer behavior of collaboration instead of defensiveness, Jennifer was able to apply all these cures.

As an exercise, observe your inner state carefully in a work meeting where debates and heated discussions may occur. See if you can make a shift in your inner state and behavior when someone makes a negative comment or disagrees with you. Can you make this a habit? It is well worth it to build trust and great relationships.





# INNERVIEW

*In love, there  
is no place for  
expectation, but  
only for gratitude.*

DAAJI





# Spirit Is the Foundation for Everything

**BOB BOISTURE** speaks with **JUDITH NELSON** at the Spirit of Humanity Forum, held in Reykjavík, Iceland on 1 June 2019. He shares with us the vision of the Fetzer Institute, and the need for personal transformation and love to bring about the changes necessary today to address the most pressing issues of humanity and our planet Earth.



Q: Welcome sir. One of the lovely things I read about the Fetzer Institute is its approach to life and the fact that it comes from a foundation of love. Can you tell us more about the Institute and this principle of love? How does it work?

I'll start with John Fetzer, the founder. He was born in 1901 and died in 1991, so he lived in every decade of the 20th century and his life had this amazing trajectory. He was born in a very small town in the American Midwest, into a fairly conservative, narrow, religious environment. The course of his life was an opening to a global spirituality, beginning fairly early in his life when he became a student of world religions and practiced within a number of traditions. He was always perhaps grounded in his Christian beginnings, but was very open to eastern traditions.

It was really extraordinary because in his public life he became a very successful businessman and entrepreneur in the early days of radio and television. He then bought

one of the major league baseball teams and was a pioneer in putting broadcasting and sports together. He did all this in a culture where if you were a businessman you didn't talk about spirituality and, if you did, you talked about it in the context of the Christian tradition. But his passion was this global spiritual vision.

As he got older and accumulated a significant amount of wealth, he became increasingly convinced that his calling was to set up an organization, a spiritually-grounded community, that could do its small part in helping humanity as a whole to take the next big step in the spiritual journey. The grounding for his vision was that the fundamental reality is not atoms and energy, it's spirit – "Spirit" with a capital S. For him, Spirit and Love (with a capital L) were really synonymous.

His vision was this: Love is the core energy that holds everything together. If only we would profoundly open our hearts to love, we would be able to take that next big step together in humanity's spiritual journey.

*Love is the core energy that holds everything together. If only we would profoundly open our hearts to love, we would be able to take that next big step together in humanity's spiritual journey.*

He had this incredible generosity of spirit and saw this as a long term vision; he saw it in terms of several centuries for this evolution in our spiritual journey to take place. He knew that he couldn't see the future that far, that only a community capable of continuing renewal could carry that vision forward over time.

Unlike a lot of donors who try to say in their wills, "This money has to be used exactly for such-and-such," he said to the community, "Listen for the ring of truth and it will be calling you to create [he had this beautiful phrase] this community of freedom. There, you, the community, will discern what the work of the foundation will be. The only thing I'm sure of is that the summary will be unconditional love."

So how about that as a gift to us? We've been trying to live by that vision, and be worthy of that vision, in the more than 25 years since his death. The fundamental insight we think we've come to in our life as a community is that Spirit has to be the foundation, the touchstone, the source of guidance and energy for everything we do.

We're a community of about sixty, which in the world today is enough to have a lot of diversity on a lot of dimensions, including spirituality. So the first question is: Can we find a place to stand together? And is there spiritual common ground across all our different paths? How do we find it and deepen it, but at the same time honor the fact that we get there in very different ways? So we bring our whole community together every Tuesday morning for three hours to really work on that challenge, and we do a lot of different things. Most importantly, we practice together. We have engaged with a broad range of spiritual practices from both the Abrahamic traditions and the Eastern traditions to understand a bit more about our diverse paths and to realize that love is all about relationship.

We've done something very unusual for an organization – very unique in my experience – we've taken the time to share our deep stories with each other and that's been transformative. You can be together with people for a long time in an instrumental way and it remains at the surface, but once you know their life journey, your connection goes to a much deeper level. We feel like we're working in a microcosm on what the global community needs to be working on, which is how to find that spiritual common ground across our differences, and deepen it. And also honor the fact that we reached that common ground on very different paths and make that something that's mutually enriching not dividing.

*Q: There are sixty of you in a microcosm, reflecting or hoping to reflect what could happen in the world. So how do you feel your influence can go from small to large?*

We have this theory of change. It starts with the optimistic proposition that the same forces that are pulling us towards the conviction that humanity desperately needs spiritually grounded individuals and societal transformation are pulling literally millions of people around the world in that direction. The result is that there is an emerging global movement.





I don't think it's yet aware of itself as a global movement, but when you really begin to connect the dots you find that there are people working on all of the big challenges – whether it's climate change and environmental degradation, social justice or gender equality. They come from a deeply spiritually-grounded place, with this same conviction that inner transformation drives outer transformation. If we can find each other and realize that together we comprise a comprehensive global movement, it can unleash an energy that is powerful enough to enable us to meet all these big existential threats.

Our humble goal is to do what we can with our gifts and resources; to help inspire and support the continuing emergence of this global movement. We take that in multiple directions. First, we think that one of the things that can really empower this movement is a shared vision. We use the phrase “shared sacred story”: at the root of all this is this need and possibility of humanity reclaiming a sense of the sacred in everything.

*We feel that humanity can  
come together in a shared  
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which everyone and  
everything can flourish.*



At the most fundamental level, we've had this love affair over the past few centuries with scientific and rational ways of trying to understand the world. It has produced huge benefits in terms of our greater understanding of physical reality, but in the process we have lost the confidence of our spiritual intuitions. We see the key is bringing that spiritual way of knowing back into a balanced relationship with science.

We feel that when we do that we open ourselves to the deep discernment of all the great traditions: The fundamental reality is not meaningless matter and energy, it's the cosmic consciousness that holds us all in love. That should be the headline for the 21st century. Humanity has in fact spent millennia probing the ultimate mystery of existence, and none of the great traditions have come back from that probe and said it's meaningless. They've all come back and said it's sacred. They've come back

and said the only appropriate human response to this sacredness is some mix of awe and gratitude and reverence and, most importantly, love.

We feel that humanity can come together in a shared affirmation of sacredness and love, and build a world in which everyone and everything can flourish. It's a tremendously hopeful vision. It's not our vision, we feel like it's the vision that is being called forth around the world by the sense that we can't go on as we have been.

We've played out the string of an egoistic approach to life because we're realizing that, at rock bottom, it pulls us towards despair and separation and fear. We don't have to live from that place; if we wake up into this knowledge of the sacredness of reality, we open our hearts to each other and to the natural world in a way that everything and everybody flourishes.



*Our conviction is that the  
only thing powerful  
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love begins in each and  
every heart.*

One thing we're doing is bringing together the voices that can help co-create that shared sacred story and then take it out into the world.

The second thing is: Our conviction is that the only thing powerful enough to create that world of flourishing is love. And love begins in each and every heart. So we focus on how to inspire and support as many people as possible in committing to that inner journey of opening our hearts. In the simplest terms, we feel that if we go deep enough inside, we encounter that transcendent reality that's much deeper than ourselves – the sacred reality of love. And that encounter is transformative.

One of the wonderful things about this present moment is that our technology can help us provide support for the spiritual journey to everybody around the world, whatever tradition they're in. We want to do our little bit for that.

We also feel that something special happens when we come together, in person and with the natural world, so another of our initiatives is to support and strengthen the web of retreat centers around the world.

The last thing I'll say is that individual transformation has to connect in powerful ways to societal transformation, because when you look at the world through this lens

of love and hope, and you ask "What needs to change?" pretty much everything needs to change. Whether it's our educational systems, our economy or our health care systems, how can we help make that happen?

We're starting to put a tremendous amount of energy right now in trying to renew our ability to come together and engage in collective action. Certainly in the United States, and in too many countries around the world, our societies are pulling apart and our politics are breaking down into division. So we have a major initiative we're calling "Healing the Heart of American Democracy." We're stepping into the public conversation and saying that the polarization and toxicity in our common life has reached such a point that it's an existential threat to our free society and there's no political solution. This is not going to be solved by one side or the other winning. This is a challenge that has to be addressed at the deeper heart level. We've become so good at de-humanizing and even demonizing the people we disagree with that we can't come together and do anything. We can't come together and address climate change; we can't come together and address racism and inequality. So, the first challenge is to move from this place of de-humanization to re-humanization and that's precisely about this inner work.

We've had some interesting conversations here at the Spirit of Humanity Forum about the bad things that happen when we try to work for a better world from a place of anger. That's something I've certainly experienced in more than three decades of working on non-profit advocacy causes in Washington – the destruction of the angry advocate, however worthy their goals.

So we are inviting people to consider that the most important work for any of us who are inspired to help save the world is to commit to this inner work of transformation, because only when we can get ourselves to a place of sufficient wholeness, inner peace and love, do we have any chance of bridging these polarizing divides.

*To be continued*




## IN THE FIELD

# Consciousness in Management

From the 1 to 3 August 2019, an international group of academics, thought leaders, Yoga and meditation practitioners, and corporate consultants and managers came together at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, the premier business school in India, to address the topic of "Elevating Consciousness Through Meditation for Global Harmony." **ELIZABETH DENLEY** shares some insights on the activities and ripple effect this conference had on the participants and the field of management, and interviews a number of the presenters and delegates.








At this pivotal time in human history, we are seeing the winds of change sweep through management schools around the world. While the existing paradigms of business and management have been successful in many ways, they have never been sustainable. We now realize that a significant shift in human consciousness is needed for us to continue to survive on Earth. Without this shift, management schools are no longer serving any useful purpose; in fact they will only cause more harm.

Dr. Ramnath Naranswamy, Professor of Economics and Social Sciences at IIMB, had this to say during his keynote address: “Management as an academic discipline developed during a dynamic period of knowledge growth and expansion in the western world, evolving out of Fordism and Taylorism. To enrich and balance that perspective, today the need to incorporate heart-based principles of leadership, service and character ethics has become increasingly vital. In particular, meditation offers a way to cultivate emotional, social and spiritual intelligence, and a way to elevate and expand consciousness. Nowadays the mainstream business community acknowledges that meditative life skills are fundamental to well-being and happiness.” But there is more to the story. These life skills also provide us with the elevated consciousness to embrace a new set of paradigms; those needed to solve the current problems facing humanity and take us forward.

This conference was a first. While there have been many forums on management and meditation, this gathering brought together the science of consciousness from the meditative traditions, especially Yoga, with scientific and management principles, and with simple practical tools in order to elevate consciousness.



*This gathering brought together the science of consciousness from the meditative traditions, especially Yoga, with scientific and management principles, and with simple practical tools in order to elevate consciousness.*

Alain Desvigne, Group CEO and co-founder of the Amarenco Group, a European sustainable energy company, and Director of the Heartfulness Institute in France, presented a few chilling facts about our current business models, and proposed the 18th Sustainable Development Goal of “Evolution of Consciousness” as the solution to implementing the other 17. He challenged everyone to consider bringing the evolution of individual and collective consciousness front and center stage, so as to offer new avenues of thought to tackle the SDGs: “A radical change requires a radical shift of approach!” His presentation will be featured in the next issue of Heartfulness magazine.

Sharat Hegde, Director of the Heartfulness Institute in India, summarized the activities in the following way: “The participants came from 15 countries and all regions of India, comprising researchers, academics, leaders and

## IN THE FIELD

practitioners from different faiths and professional backgrounds, who came together to explore the urgent need to elevate consciousness, the tools and techniques available, and the outcome from these tools and techniques. The conference brought together wisdom and practical aspects for individual and organizational transformation. There is growing research on the positive impact of meditation, including studies on Heartfulness Meditation that were presented at the conference.”

Mr. Hegde also noted that, “Over the course of the three days, the discussion moved from understanding the philosophical aspects of consciousness, to the research findings, and finally on day 3 to the implementational aspects in organizations and the changes needed in management policies. Organizations and management schools can benefit immensely by understanding these aspects, which are so fundamental to individual behavior.”

The introductory keynote address was given by Kamlesh Patel, known to many as Daaji, who gave a very inspiring masterclass on consciousness from the experiential approach of Yoga. He mentioned that Yoga helps us “To solve that problem which will solve all other problems,” and this

statement reverberated through the thoughts of many of the participants during the conference. Daaji challenged the audience with the simple statement: “Steadiness and stillness of mind is a must for a leader. How to arrive at this state? Master your mind and allow it to work on your terms.” He then went on to ask, “How to swiftly move from one level of consciousness to another level of consciousness at will – not just by desiring, but at will – and make it more productive in our day-to-day life?” He then went on to share his experience of how this can be done. It was a comprehensive exposé of how to work with consciousness through meditative processes.

Dr. Rosalind Pearmain, from the UK, described her experience as “a palpable taste of a new future emerging. Speakers presented expertise and discerning reflection from the disciplines and practice of science, spirituality, management, psychology and sustainability. Most powerful was the sense

*Yoga helps us "To solve  
that problem which will  
solve all other problems."*







of harmony and heart that permeated the whole event. This is the aspect that still reverberates on for me and suggests a new field unfolding. Something more unified and dimensional is possible that can support us in our dire circumstances on this earth. It will keep resonating on in further connections and no doubt in a further event drawing many more into the gathering wave.”

Enrico Amiotti, Executive Vice President for the Fondazione Enrica Amiotti in Milan, Italy, said, “This conference will be recorded as a milestone for the development of human consciousness, and will have unexpected ripple effects in the months and years to come. I think that each of us will find more insights as we go on in conversations with people we met and in reading and sharing the conference material. We INSEADers are already thinking to export it from Bangalore to Fontainebleau in France next year, to benefit the European audience. It may result in a ‘BangaBleau’ new school of conscious in global economics.”

Dr. Hester O Connor, a clinical psychologist and health service executive from Ireland, said, “These 3 days were a taste of the consciousness that we have been longing for, not only in the business world but globally. It is a taste of the consciousness of the beauty and simplicity of the heart. The task now is to enliven and share what we have received with others in the moment-to-moment connections as we go about our busy lives.”

Dr. Marilyn Cornelius of Alchemus Prime, Fiji, shared her observations: “This conference was of the highest caliber in terms of people, science, and discourse. It also demonstrated heart and soul in a way conferences rarely do. It affirmed my approach of using meditation as a practice of shifting consciousness to address individual





challenges like stress as well as global challenges like climate change. From behavioral and spiritual viewpoints, all we can control are our actions, which collectively can achieve global harmony. This is the priceless hope and motivation we can leverage to keep working to actualize what I call personal and planetary wellness.”

Tushar Pradhan, Chief Investment Officer at HSBC Asset Management (India) Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, felt that “this attempt to cross pollinate the idea of expanded consciousness into all practical fields of human endeavor was truly remarkable. It is indeed undeniable that today’s challenges,

be it the environment, business, or politics, are deeply influenced by human behavior. I truly believe that such thought leadership will permeate larger swathes of society and bring the true potential of the human existence to light leading to a better future for all on this planet.”

Stanislas Lajugie, from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, France, said that the conference “highlighted the urgency to change our individual and collective behaviors and systems in order to live in harmony. The urgency is for our own welfare, and more importantly for future generations. The conference also emphasized how to do it! Change can only

*It is a great platform to build on and hope that we can improve on what was a unique disruption to how management is taught. With conferences like this, corporate life as we know it can shift!*

happen if consciousness changes. The simple experience of heart-based meditation convinced many of us that a shift in consciousness is within the reach of one and all.”

Mutsa Samuel, Founder of the UbuntuLab, from Zimbabwe, expressed that what he enjoyed about this conference was “the diversity of thought, approach and background of all the participants. ... It is a great platform to build on and hope that we can improve on what was a unique disruption to how management is taught. With conferences like this, corporate life as we know it can shift!”

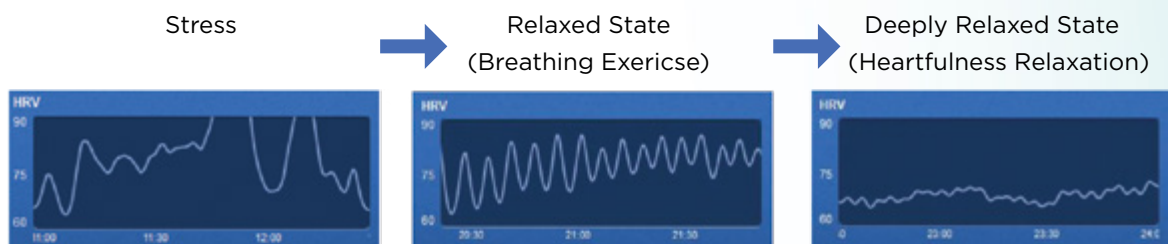
Vasco Gaspar, Human Flourishing Facilitator from Portugal, had this to say: “My heart is full, my mind feels expanded and my body is energized and still resonates with all the inspiration I've received in this conference. I feel that we humans, as a species, need more spaces like this to learn from each other, to cross-pollinate our ideas, traditions and



methodologies. My sincere wish is that this conference may grow, become even more inclusive to different areas of society and traditions, and expand to several places across the world, becoming a luminary for the human race to learn how can we all flourish together for the purpose of a Greater Good.”


The ripple effects are already palpable. One participant noted how refreshing it was that at no stage during the conference was there any argumentative tension with the varying points of view and perspectives. Everyone was inclusive in their approach in order to integrate ideas into a larger framework, embracing all.

Starting with Daaji's thought-provoking address, the conference was able to take the elevation of consciousness much beyond the commonly-held ideals of goodness, values, compassion, emotional and social intelligence, into other dimensions of existence. This was supported through the meditation practices experienced by the participants every day.



Results from the Experience Center



A watercolor illustration of a vast, open sky in shades of light blue and white. Several birds are depicted in flight, scattered across the upper half of the image. The bottom half of the image transitions into a darker, more textured blue, suggesting a horizon or a body of water. The overall style is soft and ethereal.

*Don't forget love;  
it will bring all the madness you need  
to unfurl yourself across the universe.*

MIRABAI



A watercolor illustration of a sky and sea. The sky is a mix of light blue and white, with soft, painterly clouds. Several small, dark blue birds are scattered across the sky, some in flight. The sea at the bottom is a solid, vibrant blue. The text 'it changes everything' is positioned in the lower right, with 'everything' in a red script font.

it changes  
*everything*

# Insight of the

## PART-2

### The Non-Instrumental Dimension of Mindfulness

We continue **SAKI SANTORELLI's** interview with **AMIR IMANI** as part of a webinar series about mindfulness, love, compassion and the way of the heart.

Q: As a student, Saki, what I learnt from you is not to be afraid – this is what you taught me in my training – not to be afraid of not knowing and to rest in just being. And what you call heart and love, you get the power through that. You get the courage to “not know” through loving. I am always amazed to see how science is showing that this is healing. And the clients are amazed how they are transformed by just being.

Now, how do the complexities of the mind affect your work as a teacher? Say you have a mild depression, for example. Do you need to reach a stage of full recovery? Or does this mild depression dissolve through your practice and through your teaching practice?



Well, I would say it depends. If the depression or anxiety is very, very strong in the life of the teacher, it could make working with other people more difficult. On the other hand, we all have bouts of depression or sadness or anxiety or uncertainty or insecurity. So it seems to me it's not a question that you shouldn't teach if you feel some depression, but how will you work with that anxiety or depression or uncertainty in a way that is real and genuine, and the fact that it's known to you.

If you develop a relationship with that situation or that condition within yourself, it's often the way you develop what are called the insights of the heart. In some real way your struggles and your sufferings actually have the potential to open you and open the people who you work with to bring new ways. So it can be a great service to you and your teaching, because it makes you so much more sensitive to others, and your work with yourself in those situations and conditions will inform you about how to work with other people.

So you don't have to be completely cured. If that were the case, we wouldn't do anything. We're all lame!

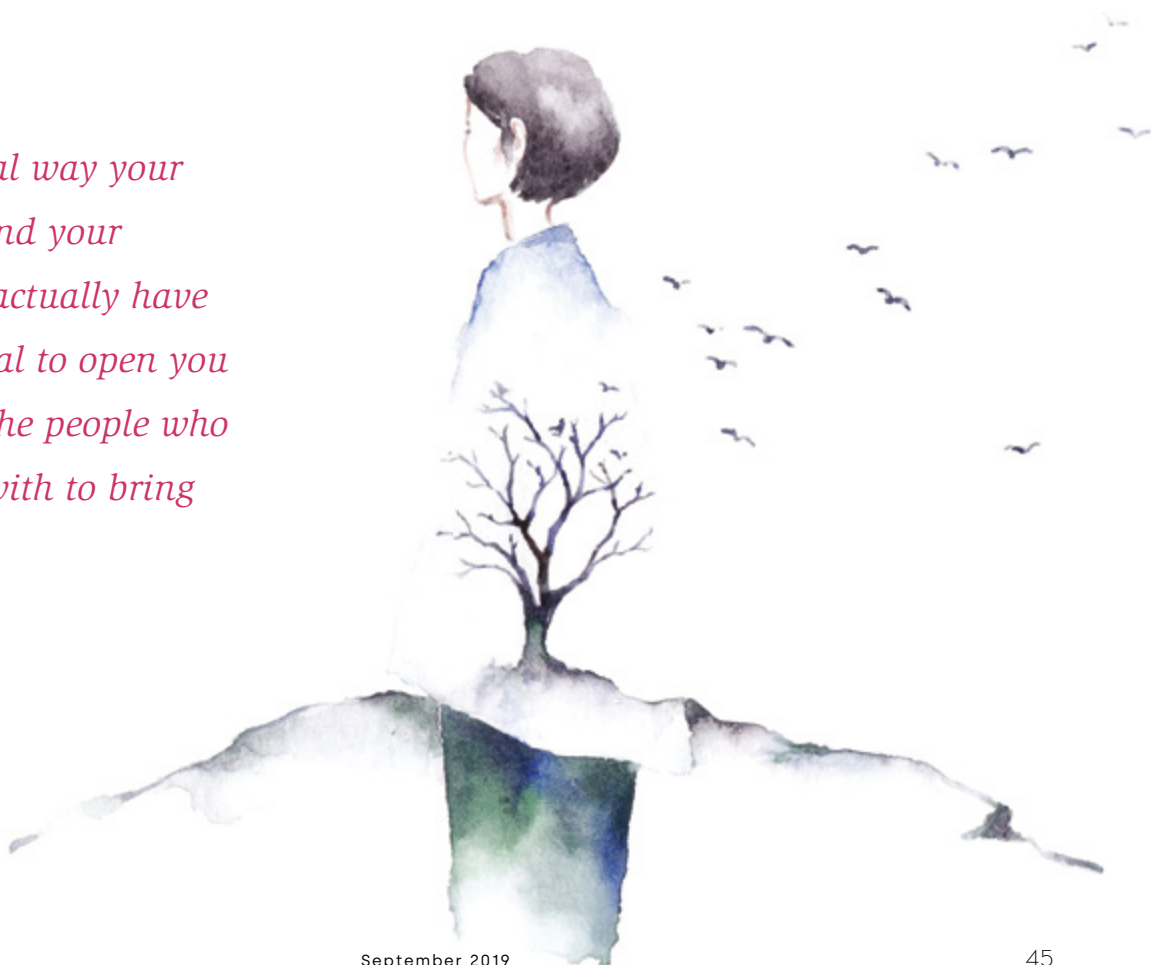
Q: Would it help to say, "Keep some pain! It may help you in your teaching"?

[Laughing] I wouldn't say, "Keep it." I would say, "If you've got it, you'd better work with it."

Q: You give an example in your book, *Healing Thyself*, of the wounded healer from Greek mythology, Chiron, who is better able to connect with his patients because of his suffering.

Yes, exactly. Those wounds actually help us meet other human beings. It is exactly what I was saying before: your sympathy is aroused, your tenderness is aroused. Your understanding of the other is informed and aroused.

*In some real way your struggles and your sufferings actually have the potential to open you and open the people who you work with to bring new ways.*



## IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Q: I remember my early days, Saki, in the teacher training, in the Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course. It is a requirement of the teacher training program to be a patient first. I found myself listening to these 35 so-called patients, talking their hearts out about their pain, their anguish, and I was feeling nothing. I was baffled: Why am I not feeling the pain that they are talking about?

Then I spoke to the teacher of our group about this. She hinted that it would come when I opened up to myself. So, starting with my own wound first, and then opening to the other – it looks like that for me.

Yes, in a very real way we've been taught, especially as health care professionals, to separate ourselves from the people we work with, because the view is that then we'll serve them better. My experience is quite the opposite. If I am able to discover some semblance of what they're experiencing within myself, I can serve them far better.

I may not have the same content: somebody may have cancer and I may not have cancer, but have I suffered from something else? Yes. I may not be addicted to a substance, but do I experience addiction? Yes. And what is that like? What does it do to my body, my mind, and my psyche? What do I know about that in myself? What does awareness tell me, show me?

And I then can go to that source and maybe at least be in the "not knowing," as you described it, Amir. I may have some sense of, "Where can I put my first foothold? Where can I put my first handhold?" This is exactly what Hafiz is saying in that poem. I don't have to know the second or third or fourth step. I simply have to be present and take the risk of taking the first step. The development of our relationship will guide the second step.

Q: When there are stressful sensitivities of life, if mindfulness practices create more sensitivity, should we reduce the length and number of the

practice sessions? How do we find balance in terms a healthy dosage of practice?

Well, these are all important questions. I think in some ways it's true that mindfulness practice can make us more sensitized, and in some way it is parallel to what is happening in the class, in the course for people. For example, sometimes in the early weeks people say, "I'm feeling worse than when I started. I thought this was supposed to make me feel better, but I feel worse."

They're speaking about the fact that through the development of their attention and awareness they are becoming more sensitized to their situation, both externally and internally. And that is a lot to comfort in oneself. And they often express frustration because they are more aware of what's going on, but they don't yet have the capacity to do anything about it. That seems to me to be a normal part of the learning process. What begins to happen is turbulence. And their awareness is perturbing their system. It is because there's the way I was, and then there is what I perceive now; and that differential creates a kind of friction or discomfort.

*So as a teacher and a practitioner of mindfulness, we're all involved in the same process of how to ascertain the right dose to have some sense of balance? I think that involves getting to know oneself better and better.*



The skill of the teacher becomes really important in that moment, in terms of how do we titrate the right dose? Just to keep that, but not too much. Too much is overwhelming; too little, transformation is not possible. They're involved in a kind of alchemy, in the sense that there is a phase of dissolution before reintegration.

So as a teacher and a practitioner of mindfulness, as you said, we're all involved in the same process of how to ascertain the right dose to have some sense of balance? I think that involves getting to know oneself better and better. And also, if it's possible to work with a teacher, it's helpful as well because the teacher can help with that dosage.

You have to be careful not to push yourself so hard that you're doing yourself harm, and at the same time you have to really look deeper into your practice and see if

it is being motivated by love and kindness. And if there is any sense that you're pushing too hard, you have to back off.

Often we instrumentalize practice so much, because we want to gain something. And while it takes effort to practice, there is a kind of skillful effort, which has a degree of resting in the way things are versus pushing too hard against them. And if that's the case, which is not unusual, then you need to ask yourself some really good questions like: Who is pushing so hard? Who wants to breakthrough and to what? And what is motivating? They are not necessarily comfortable questions, but they are fruitful. They help us to be with life and ourselves as we are and as life is.

So maybe we can make this the last question, Amir.

*In some very real way we know we are in love,  
because in some way we're becoming bigger in  
what appears to be our diminishment. So it means  
that we start to give rather than look to receive.*

Q: I think this will be a good one for us. We have been keeping the best for last. What is falling in love?

Okay, the best for last!

Well, that question has been asked by human beings since human beings were on the Earth. And it's portrayed in a very particular way in our cultures. Usually it is portrayed as romantic and intoxicating, and it's usually about what we want. It has its beauty and its value and its function, and it's quite wonderful. It doesn't last though. At least that particular expression of it doesn't last. And not unusually we go looking for it somewhere else; it's a kind of addiction.

I think, for me, love has a lot of pain in it. In some real way, to be able to even come closer to saying "I'm in love" means that we're actually putting someone else in front of us. Our care for them becomes more powerful than our care for ourselves. And in some very real way it portrays a kind of death. And that death is not just

metaphoric, because it always involves a diminishment of the usual idea of the self. The pleasure and the pain of the other become more important than the pain and pleasure of the self.

And that means in some very real way our ego is being slowly dissolved. The kind of separation between the self and the other is being eroded. So in some very real way we know we are in love, because in some way we're becoming bigger in what appears to be our diminishment. So it means that we start to give rather than look to receive.

It seems a fitting way to end.

Q: And it's also a beautiful way to begin, Saki. The sheer fact of touching our wounds, ourselves, for the first time – however it may be, not pleasant, it's painful even – but the touch, the connection, for the first time is like falling in love for us. And that moment we are bigger than before.



Yes, because we begin to discover how big we already are. The world is always squeezing us down, and of course awareness is fathomless and boundless, and touching that boundlessness is ... Love simply arises and is known.

Q: How about rephrasing it to "rising in love?"

Yes, I was going to say that!

Q: Thank you so much for raising the awareness of this small group. And all this started 20 years ago with a simple act of kindness from your side, and it's amazing that we never forget kindness, especially when it's not asked for, it's just given to us. Thank you.

Thank you so much. May we continue to travel in this caravan together.





# The Power of Rest

**JOANNE LAM** is a personal health coach by day and thought-provoker by night. Born and raised in Hong Kong, she has since lived in the United States, the Netherlands, and currently resides in Canada. Here she explores the need for rest, and its role in her daily life.

Remember a time when you could power through a day, a week, and a month with as little as two to three hours sleep a day? Remember a time when you'd wake up tired, acknowledge an earlier night would be beneficial and yet by the time night rolls around, you're out and about ready to rock again?

I certainly remember those days and they were fantastic. The ability to get minimal sleep and wake up ready to socialize and spend time with family is what allowed me to live the Hong Kong city life to its full extent. However, with my current knowledge of the power of rest on brain and body function, I am wary about being prideful of those times.

As a society, we have come to praise and value those who have the ability to complete as many projects and tasks as possible in as little time as possible. We stay busy because that is what our peers and co-workers are doing. Five to six hours sleep has become the norm, and yet our brains and our bodies crave a much longer recovery on a daily basis. Along with other health practices, when we get longer REM and deep sleep, our bodies are able to create



more growth hormones, the key to maintaining, building and repairing healthy tissue in the brain and other organs.

I'm regrettably guilty of not getting enough rest due to my work schedule and trying to include social life at the same time. I do have to say I've made progress in understanding and listening to my body when it urges me to slow down. Tracking my heart rate variability and sleep data using the Whoop band has been a great addition to this process.

That said, with the amount of physical activity I put my body through on a regular basis, my sleep coach is consistently telling me to "catch up on sleep to feel better, and lead to peak performance." Having peak performance on a regular basis during my strength and conditioning sessions as well as Muay Thai training is a goal that I continue to work towards.

In the last two months I've taken an extended weekend vacation once a month. This also means I am away from Muay Thai or weight training for a few days, focusing on active recovery and movement the days I'm away. One thing I've noticed is that despite my fear of having an extra

difficult session after a vacation, I surprisingly performed better than I did directly prior to vacation. My mind was focused, I felt strong, and I felt my body ready and willing to learn new techniques all over again.

Feeling refreshed and strong is a power I strive to have on a regular basis – not only once a month when I return from a few days off. Thus, the process continues.

What changes do I have to make in my lifestyle to ensure my body receives the rest it needs? When do I need to pull back on the intensity of my sessions even if my brain is saying "no days off"? What kind of foods do I need to add and remove from my diet? Most days I know the answers to those questions, but the execution of said answers is the challenge I continue to face.

Reprinted with permission from the author's blog:  
<https://exploreconnectcreate.com/2019/07/23/the-power-of-rest/>





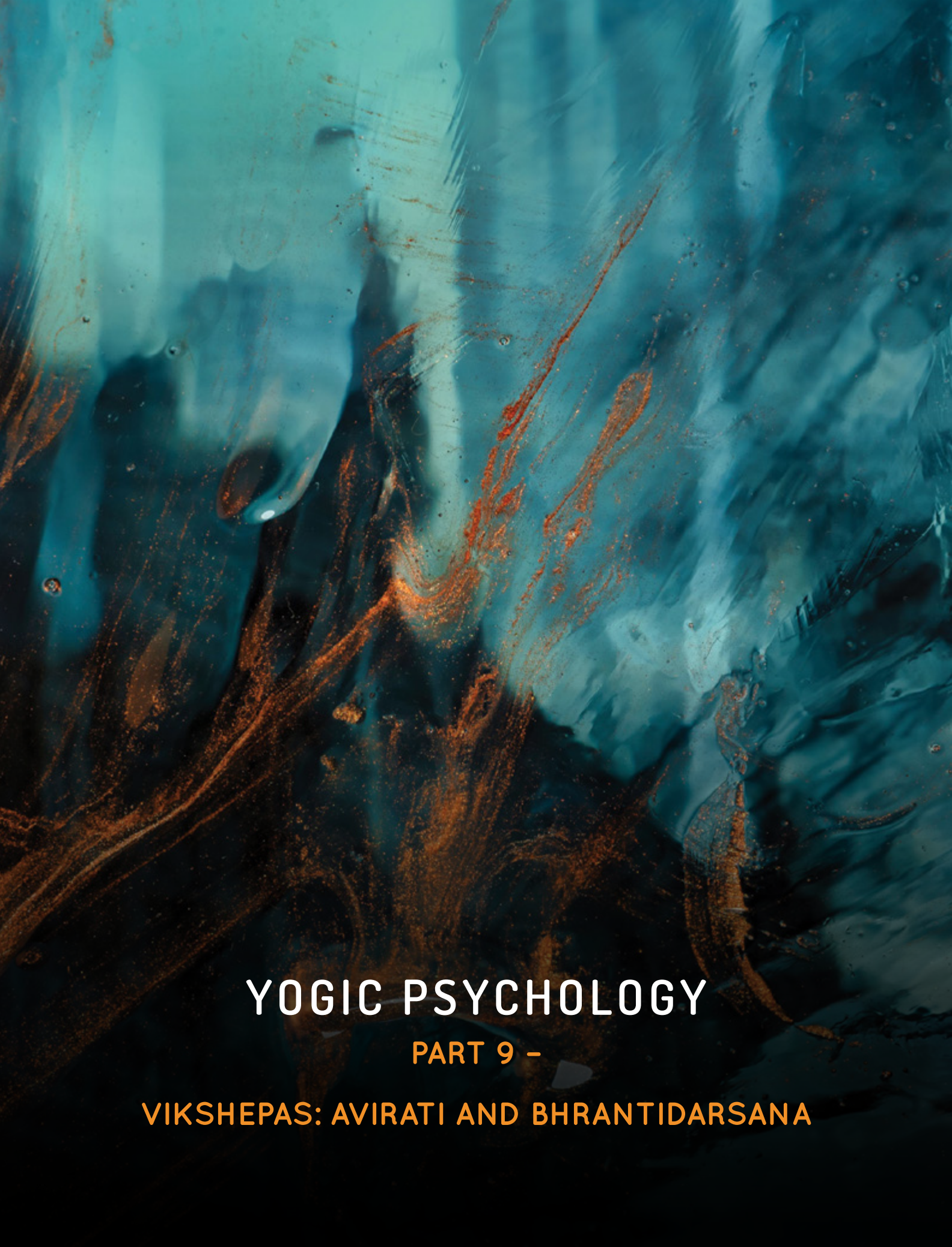


A photograph of a person sitting in a leather chair by a large window, looking out at a brick building. The person's back is to the camera, and they are wearing blue jeans. The window frame is dark wood. The brick building outside is out of focus.

# be inspired

*We are closest to God  
in our own soul. Only  
there can we become  
one with the greatest  
mystery of life. In truth,  
at very rare moments we  
can experience that we  
ourselves are that divine  
mystery.*

JOSTEIN GAARDER

The background is an abstract, textured surface. It features a mix of deep blue, teal, and dark navy colors, with prominent streaks and splatters of a rusty orange or copper hue. The texture appears organic and layered, resembling perhaps a close-up of a mineral surface or a weathered metal plate. The lighting is uneven, creating a sense of depth and highlighting the various textures.

# YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY

PART 9 -

VIKSHEPAS: AVIRATI AND BHRANTIDARSANA



**DAAJI** continues his series on the fundamental principles of psychology, with its foundation in the ancient wisdom of Yoga, as compiled in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. But the discussion on consciousness and mental well-being goes much further back, at least to the time of the Ramayana. Lord Ram's recorded dialogues with his brother Lakshman focused on consciousness, the same is true of the dialogues between Ashtavakra and Raja Janaka from the same era, recorded in the Ashtavakra Gita, and the dialogues of the Rishi Vashishtha with Lord Ram and Lakshman, recorded in the Yoga Sangeeta. Obviously consciousness was an important topic of discussion among the thought leaders of the day. Patanjali was a researcher *par excellence*, and was able to curate all the knowledge available into the Yoga Sutras. That was thousands of years ago, and today we can take Patanjali's elegant framework to a new level of understanding thanks to the practices that have evolved in Yoga in the last 100 years to correct these imbalances. Ashtavakra was very direct, and forthcoming, saying, "Know yourself as Brahm, know yourself as perfect consciousness," while Patanjali takes us step by step in the most practical way. The void is felt in the first approach and the seeker remains clueless as to how to recognize the inner as Brahman.

Although Patanjali provides such well-defined steps in his Ashtanga Yoga, it remains to be seen how a seeker can confidently and masterfully enter the state of meditation and *Samadhi*. It is easier to follow the first six steps of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara* and *Dharana*, as they are at a physical and mental level. The last two steps of *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* belong to the spiritual realm, partly also relating to the subtle bodies. Only through Heartfulness practices can one fully appreciate the spectrum of *Samadhi*.

DAAJI starts from the base of pure consciousness that results in a healthy human mind. He then proceeds to explain how the various mental imbalances arise, and furthermore gives us solutions to regain mental well-being through yogic practices. In this article he continues to explore the *vikshepas*, the obstacles to mental well-being and balance. These 9 *vikshepas* describe so many of the maladies of modern humanity. Here DaaJI focuses on *avirati* and *bhrantidarsana*, two of the greatest causes of dysfunctional relationships today.

## VRITTIS

Instinctive  
thought patterns  
or tendencies

*Pramana* – means of right or valid knowledge

*Viparyaya* – false or wrong knowledge

*Vikalpa* – fantasy, imagination

*Nidra* – sleep

*Smriti* – memory

## KLESHAS

Colorings or  
impurities in the  
thought patterns

*Avidya* – ignorance, veiling

*Asmita* – mine-ness, egotism

*Raga* – attachment, addiction

*Dvesha* – aversion, repulsion

*Abhinivesha* – clinging to life, fear of death

## VIKSHEPAS

Obstacles and  
distractions

*Vyadhi* – disease, illness

*Styana* – mental laziness, dullness

*Samsaya* – dilemma, indecision

*Pramada* – carelessness, negligence, haste

*Alasya* – laziness, sloth

*Avirati* – lack of abstaining,

absence of non-attachment

*Bhranti-Darshana* – false perception

*Alabdha-Bhumikatva* – failing to attain

stages on the journey

*Anavasthitattva* – inability to maintain

the stage, instability

## VIGHNAS

Disturbances  
resulting from  
the obstacles

*Duhkha* – pain, mental and physical

*Daurmanasya* – despair, depression

*Angam-Ejayatva* – trembling of the body,  
nervousness

*Svasa* – inhalation (irregular)

*Prasvasa* – exhalation (irregular)

## VIKSHEPAS

So far we have seen how complexities and impurities accumulate in the field of consciousness and contribute to mental imbalance. When these layers continue to accumulate without being removed, we move towards a state of mental imbalance, complexity and entropy, leading to all sorts of ailments. These ailments or obstacles are known as the *vikshepas* in Yoga. Patanjali described 9 of them, and in today's world we can add a couple more to the list.

Patanjali described the obstacles as follows:

1.30: *Vyadhi styana samsaya pramada-alasya-avirati  
bhrantidarsana-alabdha-bhumikatva-  
anavasthitatvani citta-vikshepah te antarayah*

*Vyadhi* – Disease

*Styana* – Languor, mental dullness, apathy

*Samsaya* – Dilemma, indecision

*Pramada* – Carelessness, haste, indifference

*Alasya* – Laziness, sloth

*Avirati* – Absence of non-attachment, sensuality

*Bhrantidarsana* – False perception, blindness

*Alabdha-bhumikatva* – Not attaining the destination or stage, lack of determination, and

*Anavasthitatvani* – Instability, not retaining the condition

We can add:

Fear of missing out (FOMO), and

Digital distraction.

These are the obstacles on the path  
that distract the mind.

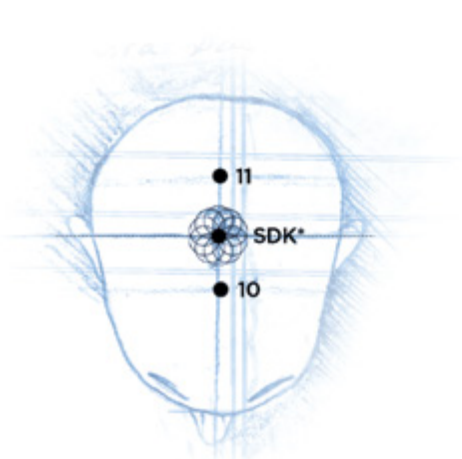
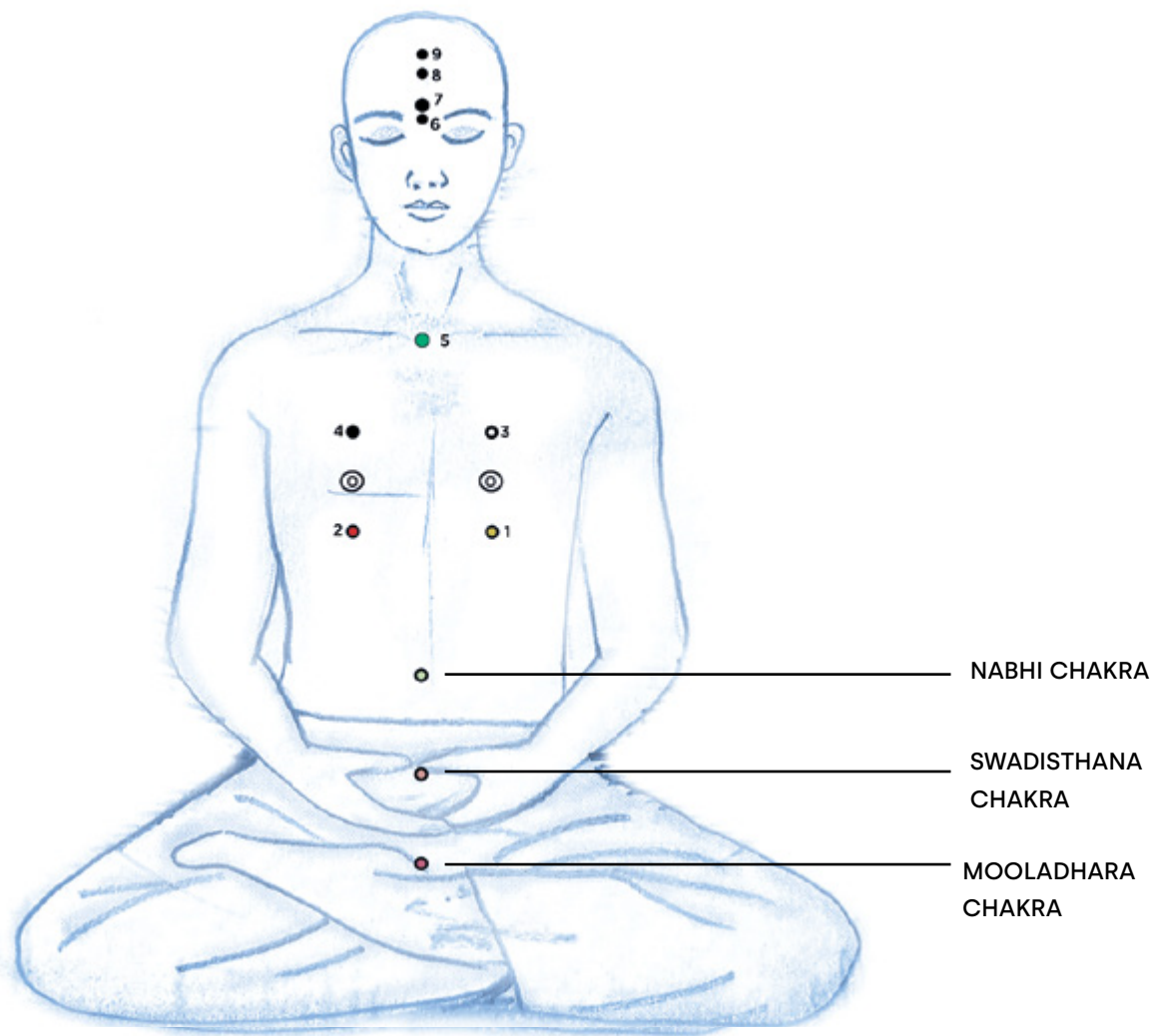
In this article we focus on *avirati* and *bhrantidarsana*.

*The sixth vikshepa is avirati, which translates as “absence of renunciation,” or “absence of non-attachment.” Avirati is the result of indulging, of going beyond needs to desires, and of gratifying the senses.*

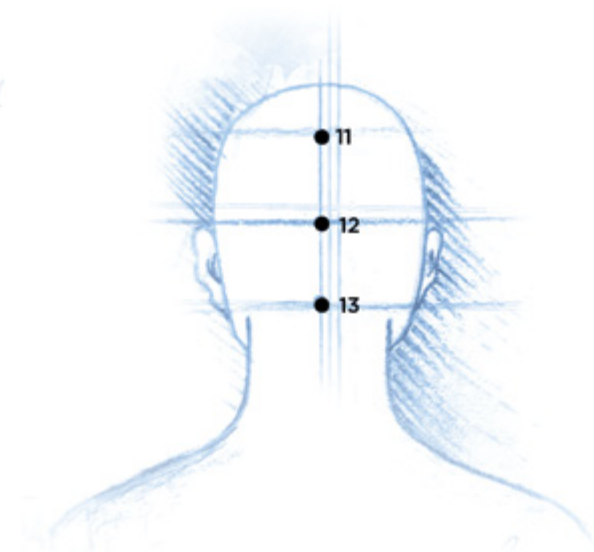
## AVIRATI

The sixth vikshepa is *avirati*, which translates as “absence of renunciation,” or “absence of non-attachment.” *Avirati* is the result of indulging, of going beyond needs to desires, and of gratifying the senses. It is the opposite to one of the four main *sadhanas* of Yoga, *Vairagya* or renunciation. The over-indulging of the senses can be associated with many types of behavior, but it is most often discussed in relation to sexual behavior, thoughts and attitudes, because they involve all the senses.

In the modern world of ready abundance and consumerism in many countries, *avirati* also relates to other aspects of life, such as our relationship with food, and indulging in addictive or obsessive behaviors towards other things, e.g. TV and digital gadgets, drugs and alcohol. It also underpins our fascination with fashion, interior design and decoration. In fact you could say that today's fashion and cosmetics industries are the expression of *avirati* or over-indulgence of our sensory stimuli.



\*SDK - SAHASRA DAL KAMAL





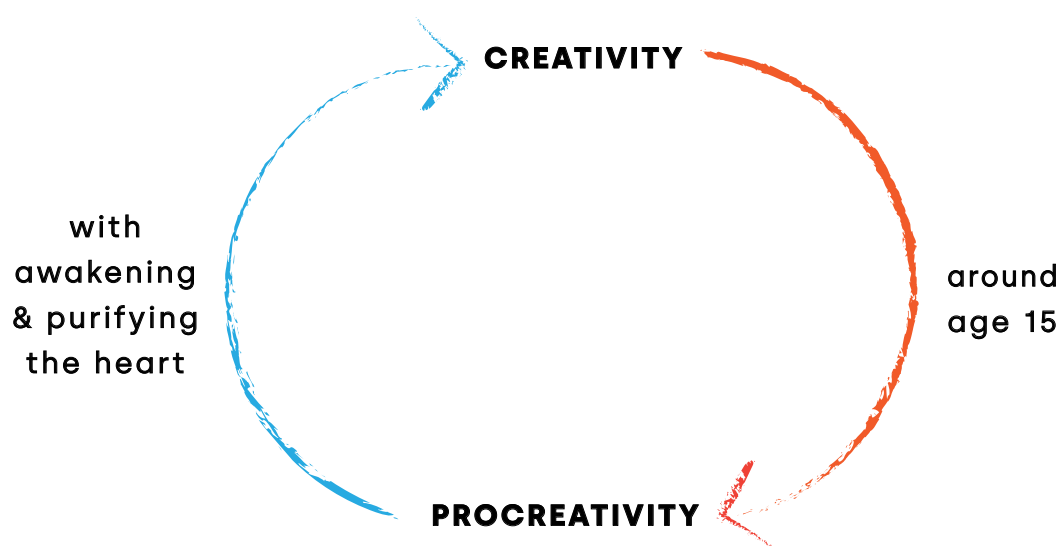
*Energy is transmuted into more and more subtle states. Matter becomes energy and eventually it becomes absolute: physical becomes subtle becomes causal. The most peripheral and complex eventually becomes central and pure.*

Let's first explore why it is important to transcend this obstacle in relation to sexual behavior and desire. In Yoga, passion is known as *Kama*, and it is a divine emotion, necessary for the continuation of the species. If tomorrow we all became celibate, humanity would disappear within 100 years. *Kama* can never be destroyed, but it is important to know how to master it wisely.

First of all, why does sensual energy build up in our physical system? As children, our creative energy is applied to many different activities – play, art, music, dance, storytelling, imagination, problem-solving, and so many other things. Around the age of fifteen, a lot of this creative energy is channeled into procreative energy.

Where does this energy come from? It accumulates in our system when we eat food, drink water, and take in energy from the sun and other sources. In many of us, it accumulates in the lower chakras, as it cannot easily move up into the higher chakras unless and until they are awakened. These lower chakras govern our basic instinctual survival nature, and they are known as the *mooladhara*, *swadisthana* and *nabhi* chakras.

When our energy is centered in these lower chakras, we function like other animal species, with our focus on basic survival instincts: eating to survive, competing with others for resources, and procreating for the survival of the species. There is a very big difference, however, between other



## BE INSPIRED

animals and human beings. Most animals eat simply to survive – they don't take more energy than is required. Similarly, most animals have a defined breeding season – once a month, once every few months, once a year etc., so that the number of young born is well regulated and the species manages its population size naturally. They utilize the energy input and output in a very regulated fashion that has developed through years of evolutionary process. Human beings, on the other hand, have distorted the natural patterns and cycles because of desire.

Because of the build-up of energy in the lower chakras, sex acts like a safety valve, a release, in which the energy taken in is released back into nature, and the build-up is dissipated.

Our relationship with food is also associated with the lower chakras, but instead of dissipating energy, eating adds to the energy balance, compounding the problem. And over-indulgence in food can lead to blockages in the energy flows of the human system, as the *pranamaya kosha* becomes burdened. This is one of the reasons why fasting can be so beneficial in balancing the human system.

Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh wrote about this balancing of energies in a letter to one of his associates in 1924, saying, "Let us observe keenly our anatomical structure and understand the various faculties active within the human body. Let us consider only two of these in the first phase of our study. These are the two basic instincts: satisfying hunger and thirst and satisfying the carnal desire, which is rampant.

"The feelings of hunger, thirst and the need for sleep indicate that there is deficiency of nutrition or water, or that the body is tired, lacks strength, and needs rest and recuperation. This results in the desire to satisfy that feeling, which is fulfilled by Nature through the mind and senses. In Hindi, this desire is called *kama shakti*, the force of passion or sensual desire.

"Corporal desires are also part of *kama shakti*, and relate to the instinctual need to reproduce. But the other limb of the same *kama shakti* is subtle, and does not fulfill the deficiency, instead ejecting the surpluses and fulfilling the deficiencies. So, the human seed or seminal fluid, which accumulates in a cavity in the body until there is no more room, is ejected by the subtle force. Finally if this essence, which is thrown out of the body, is implanted in a fertile womb, the other wish of nature is then fulfilled, namely, that from one there become many.

"Surplus and waste substances that accumulate for long periods in the body breed poisonous matter. This you can witness as the result of constipation or of being unable to urinate. But an excess of semen creates a sense of embarrassment and affects the wisdom of the heart."

By doing a regular yogic practice with the help of a capable Guide, we are able to shift the fulcrum of energy upwards. This happens in Heartfulness from the very first meditation sessions with a trainer, when the heart chakra is awakened. The *yatra* or inner journey is activated, and as the chakras are traversed, the center of energy moves upward, so that the human system becomes a transformer. Energy is

*As each chakra awakens, with the support of the Guide's Transmission, the energy moves higher and higher, and sensuality is no longer the driving force.*

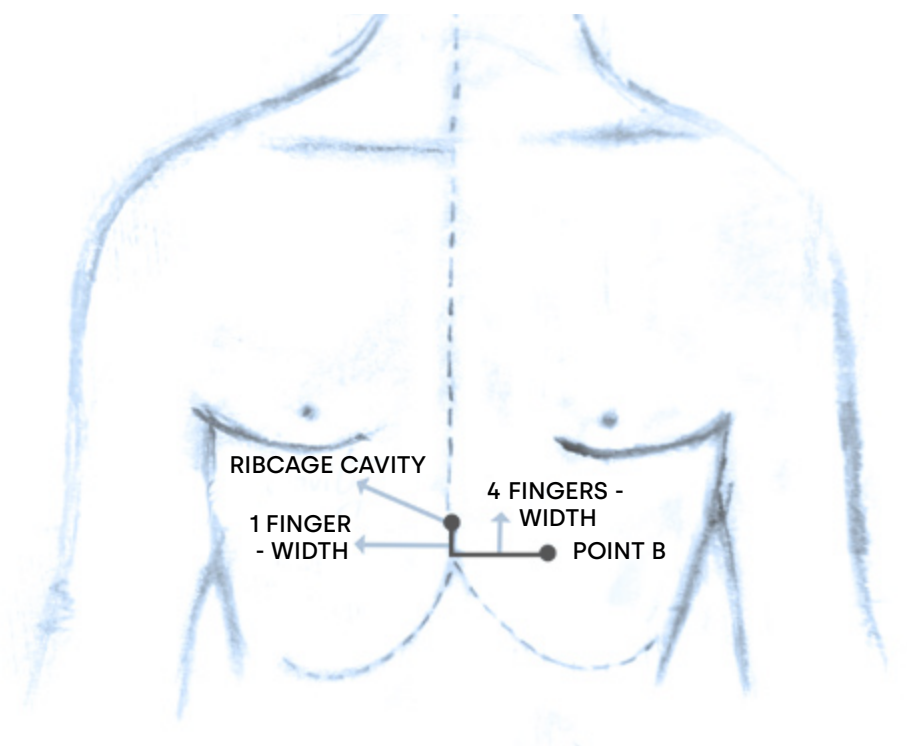
transmuted into more and more subtle states. Matter becomes energy and eventually it becomes absolute; physical becomes subtle becomes causal. The most peripheral and complex eventually becomes central and pure.

In addition, Heartfulness offers a simple morning practice known as Point B Cleaning, which is done first thing in the morning in order to manage the build-up of sensual energy. It is practiced for five to seven minutes as follows:

Fix your attention on Point B and imagine that all impurities and heaviness are going out of Point B from the front of the body. Imagine that as this process is going on, the glow of the soul begins to appear from behind.

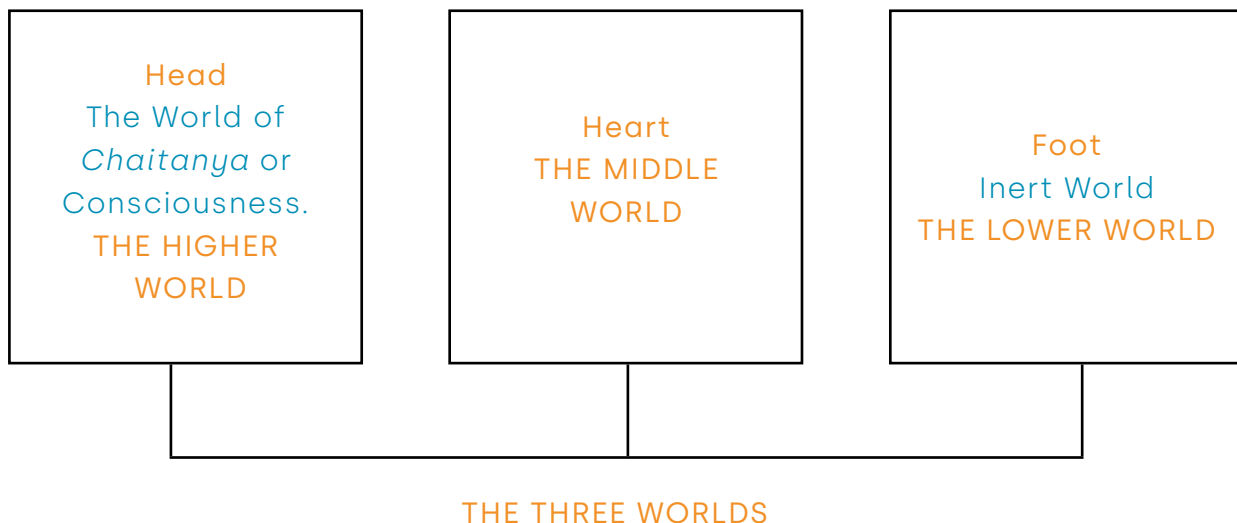
Just as celibacy is not the natural state, at the other extreme, passion can also get out of hand and end up in sex addiction or perversion. Instead of either extreme, the procreative energy is managed and balanced. For this purpose, the cleaning of point B works as a passion detox or sex detox, so that sensual desires are no longer overwhelming. Imagine the harmony that would result in human societies if people practiced this technique daily!

Life then takes on a different dimension and a new meaning. Nature transmutes to sequentially higher stages of supernature; consciousness transmutes to sequentially higher stages of superconsciousness. This is how our being expands, and our subtle bodies can disengage from their close attachment to the physical body. The center of our *pranamaya kosha*, of the energy flows in the human system settles in the heart, where it belongs, the middle link of our existence.



## BE INSPIRED

Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh wrote: “The heart, being at the center, functions to absorb the effects of the higher and lower regions, which is its characteristic.” He demonstrates this in a simple diagram:



As each chakra awakens, with the support of the Guide’s Transmission, the energy moves higher and higher, and sensuality is no longer the driving force.

Sex offers a more physical form of ecstasy, because it involves the outer senses and desire. When love is also there, it is not purely physical; it can also involve subtler aspects, but it is still at a lower level. Higher bliss, known as *ananda* in Yoga, which emerges naturally with the spiritual journey, transcends lower pleasure. The more subtle it is, the more potent. That is why yogis have run after bliss, and extolled it so much. But they can also indulge in desiring the ecstasy of these subtler forms of bliss. *Avirati* is perhaps even more of an obstacle in these higher realms, as it is so potent.

Many seekers have been caught in this trap of meditating to find their bliss. Many wait for those intoxicating states of consciousness that can be found in deep meditation, in various stages of *Samadhi*. As a result, they stop there – they are not willing to renounce this bliss to go beyond it to the Absolute state. In such cases, meditation is also like a drug for ecstasy. This is one of the biggest hurdles in the spiritual journey – moving beyond *satchidananda* to higher states of Reality and nothingness. As Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur once said, “I feel irritated to see someone acclaim *satchidananda*. This is like a worm feeding on cow dung and admiring its flavor. The *satchidananda* state is nothing compared to *laya avastha*.”



Even in a marriage, over a lifetime together, the pleasure and bliss in each other's company becomes more and more subtle, until eventually it reaches a stage of apparent nothingness. Some time back, I was lucky enough to observe an elderly couple taking a stroll along the river in Princeton, New Jersey, their steps totally in sync. You could see they had been together a long time. They didn't need to speak much, communicating their togetherness in the subtlest ways. They settled on a park bench overlooking the river, pulled out a flask of tea and some sandwiches, and together enjoyed their lunch in perfect silence. Their movements were in tune – the way she poured the tea was full of gentleness and care, as was the way he received the cup. They ate their sandwiches and enjoyed the stillness of the riverside.

They had reached a stage in their marriage of purity in connection and communion. This is the other end of the spectrum from the days of young love, when a couple is more physical and verbal in their demonstration of love. Now, extrapolate this evolution to a higher dimension altogether, and you will have some idea of where we may be headed with seeking subtlety in the spiritual realm.

## BHRANTIDARSANA

The seventh *vikshepa* is *bhrantidarsana*, meaning false perception, delusion or blindness. It is the opposite to another one of the four main *sadhanas* of Yoga, known as

*Viveka* or discernment. If we define consciousness as the degree of perception, when we falsely perceive it interferes with our consciousness and its evolution.

In fact, *Viveka* and *Vairagya* are the foundation of mental well-being, and come about naturally as a result of yogic practice. Both *avirati* and *bhrantidarsana* arise when we go in the opposite direction – towards dissonance, disharmony, entropy, separation and complexity.

How does false perception arise? And how do we distinguish what is false and what is true? In order to understand this, we need to go back to the beginning. Try to imagine the original state of our being, where there is only stillness, nothingness and total peace. From that Center everything we think and do emanates. We can call it the default position, the zero position, the balanced state. Of our three bodies, it is our soul that is at home in that Center, in the balanced state of nothingness.

Contrast that with the interplay of senses, thoughts, feelings and tendencies that draw us out into the world of movement and thinking, creating the various *vruttis* in the field of consciousness. But our soul is also embodied, and is connected with the physical body, so the soul, the *atman*, is also involved in movement and thinking (*atman*: *ath* means 'movement' and *man* means 'thinking'). The soul is just as much at home with movement and thinking as it is with stillness. There is a constant flux between stillness and activity, between activity and repose.

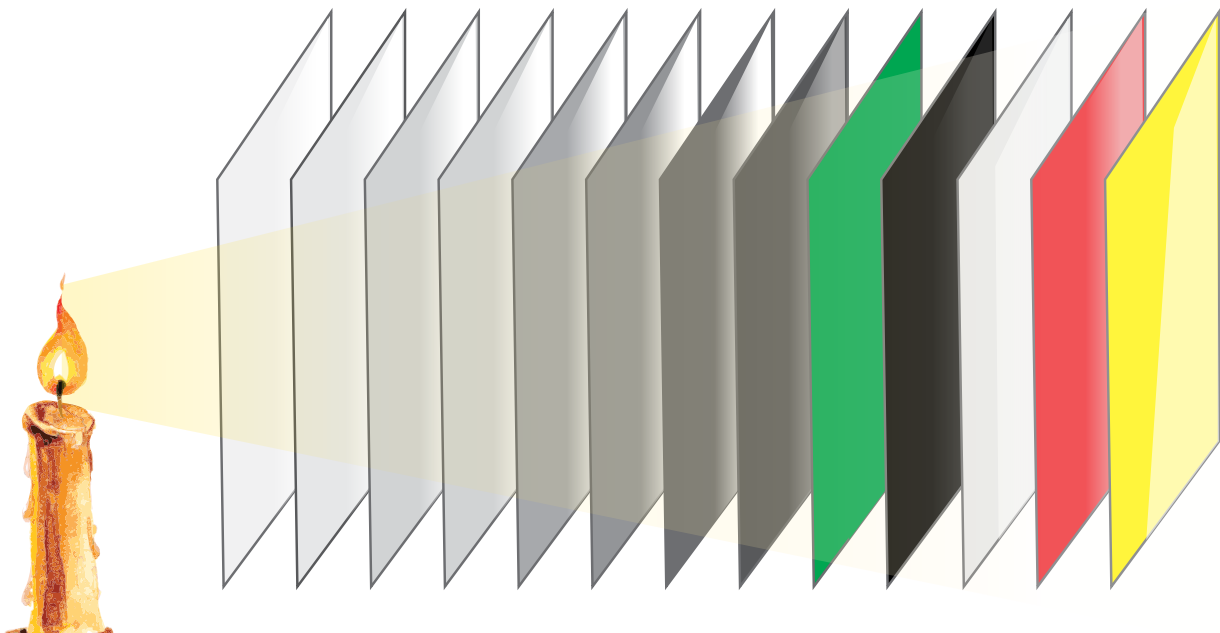
*In Yoga we try to maximize the potential of all three – stillness, thinking and movement. To do this, we do two things: turn our attention inwards during meditation towards the stillness of the Center, and refine our outward activities so that our thoughts and movement are in tune with our inner Nature. Then they are conducive to evolution, happiness and balance.*

Therefore, in Yoga we try to maximize the potential of all three – stillness, thinking and movement. To do this, we do two things: turn our attention inwards during meditation towards the stillness of the Center, and refine our outward activities so that our thoughts and movement are in tune with our inner Nature. Then they are conducive to evolution, happiness and balance. We cannot rest in stillness all the time, and that is also not the aim of Yoga, which is just as much about skill in action. So instead we learn to integrate stillness and activity in our daily actions.

In this combination of stillness and activity, lived out in purity and simplicity, the soul can shine, radiating inner joy and happiness. When the waves of the *vrittis* calm down during meditation, we see our true nature. As we master the art of meditation, we then can externalize that true nature into our daily activities. This is another one of the specialties of Heartfulness – to carry the meditative state with us into the day, into the other 23 hours of the day when we are not meditating.

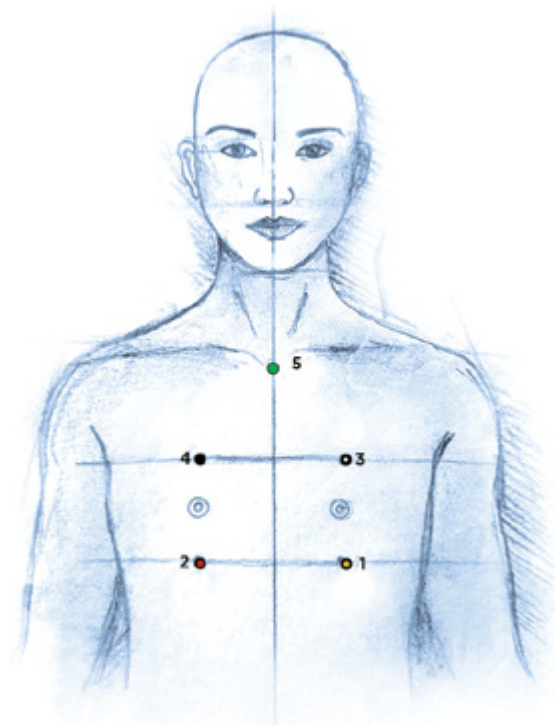
What complicates and pollutes the purity of the balanced state? The impressions that are activated and then accumulate in our heart-mind field of consciousness, as the *vrittis* become colored and repetitive, forming a web of complexity that is then mirrored in the neural networks and pathways of the nervous system. These we call *samskaras*, and they create cognates by which we perceive the world – layer upon layer of them – so that our perception can be likened to looking through many lenses of different colors, until eventually we cannot see clearly at all.

If we are not regularly removing these impressions, it will be like driving at night through heavy fog; we see only a few feet in front. There is no clarity, no vision, and no larger perspective. It is like the old English proverb, “You can’t see the wood for the trees.” More specifically, as per the spiritual anatomy of Heartfulness Yoga, it is only once the 5 chakras of the Heart Region have been purified and traversed, up to the throat chakra or air point, that real clarity and discrimination – *Viveka* – become the natural



state of being. In fact, *Viveka* is not as simple as distinguishing between right and wrong; it is also distinguishing between two right things and knowing which is more appropriate. True *Viveka* enables us to discriminate against anything that interferes with our goal or purpose in life.

As a case study of *bhrantidarsana*, Rohan is 25 years old. He is a very successful engineer living in Silicon Valley, California, with a good salary and a generally healthy lifestyle. He has had a few girlfriends, and each time a relationship ends he feels rejected, hard done by, mistreated and betrayed by women. By now he has come to expect this to happen – feeling that women are using him for his money and success. Everything is always their fault in his eyes.



THE FIVE CHAKRAS OF THE HEART REGION

This makes him sad, because he really wants a permanent committed relationship and marriage. Will he embark on a new relationship with openness, or is he likely to start with the false perception that all women will use and betray him? He is not even aware of this pattern; he is blind to his own prejudice, as it has become an automatic subconscious response. His subconscious cognates will surely sabotage the next relationship from the outset, without him knowing that he is affecting the outcome. Anyone new will gradually be forced to live up to his expectation of failure, unless he becomes conscious of the patterning and chooses to remove it.

How will Rohan change his patterns? The most effective way is to remove the past impressions or *samskaras* that have accumulated in the subconscious mind. In Heartfulness, this is done daily during the evening practice of Cleaning. After a few months of Heartfulness practice, Rohan is already noticing big changes in his inner environment. Some of his old habits have already left as a result of the Cleaning practice, and he has learnt simple ways to change his behavior. Gradually, he is mastering his emotions, and approaching life with positivity and confidence, along with more openness and humility. Through Heartfulness Meditation and Prayer, he is also learning to listen to his inner voice through the heart, develop clarity and make wise decisions. His heart is opening and becoming more generous. The obstacles are melting away, one by one.

In the next article, we will take up the *vikshepas* of *alabdha-bhumikatva*, *anavasthitatvani*, FOMO and digital distraction.

# taste of life

*The meaning of things  
lies not in the things  
themselves, but in our  
attitude towards them.*

ANTOINE DE SAINT-  
EXUPERY





INSPIRE OTHERS  
everyday





## LESSONS FROM THE GARDEN

# Tangles

**ALANDA GREENE** writes about likes and dislikes, annoyance and irritation, and how a simple shift in attitude can make all the difference in the world.





I've been weeding in the Tomato House – a recently built small greenhouse that replaces the decades-old plastic “hoop house.” Although this year the number of plants growing inside it is reduced by a third, the space feels crowded, especially during this weeding process.

The tomatoes are supported by jute cord strung from the ceiling and tied at their base. As the plants grow, I wrap them around the string instead of tall support stakes used in previous years. The poles were easy to see but these thin cords are often not noticed as I reach for weeds. My hand repeatedly collides with taut string. Stepping and bending between plants, crawling on my knees, I get

*The mind is swayed by likes and dislikes. These cause mental perturbations that push and pull with attraction and avoidance. They feel compellingly justified. Seeing into the nature of likes and dislikes is a way to be free of them.*

tangled in the thin black tubes of irrigation hose lying on the dark soil, also often not noticed. Leaning to grab a few more weeds in an uncomfortable stretch, I feel the twang of another support cord as my leg collides with it.

And I notice how these persistent interferences – reaching for a weed and feeling restrained by a tangle of hose, leaning for another and finding a string blocks the motion, gently moving aside a frond and tearing off an unnoticed one – these obstacles feel irritating and I recognize that this is a response that often arises in situations where movement is constrained, obstructed or blocked.

I begin to move more slowly and deliberately to avoid tearing out an irrigation line or breaking leaves, or – which has happened – pulling out the entire tomato plant as I lurch in an awkward loss of balance against one of the support strands. In this slower, more careful movement, I wonder, “Why does this irritate me, these tangles and this sense of being restricted when I reach for something and feel blocked, held back by invisible restraints?”

I note that this feeling arises elsewhere in my life, when a momentum with intentions, desires or goals is blocked.

*There is no inherent quality of irritation, difficulty, discomfort in it. Those qualities come from my condition of dislike at being constrained or blocked and from wanting it to be otherwise. Neutralize my response and there's no reaction.*

In the greenhouse, I want to explain that it's because of my poor eyesight and accompanying lack of depth perception; or that it's an offshoot of my two brothers delighting in doing what brothers often do – torment sisters. They enjoyed holding me down, sitting on my legs, tying my hands behind my back, pressing my face into the living room carpet.

But my eyesight and childhood wrestles are blame wrongly placed for this irritation. I have to face where the issue arises: when I hurry, rushing to finish something or get somewhere and an unexpected situation hinders my progress, I get annoyed. It isn't about the past – it's right now. I realize also that it isn't about the hurrying but the feeling of being restrained.

Feeling some chagrin, I distill the insights to: Things aren't going the way I want. I resist writing these words. They appear too blunt. They seem to tell me that not getting my way annoys me. Annoyance is a version of anger but gentler. Am I trying to escape facing what this feeling really is?

But the word anger is indeed too strong for what is a more subtle, almost background irritation, going along

beneath the birdsong that brings soft delight, the tangy scent of tomato leaves and freshly moved soil, the wonder of delicate yellow blossoms and tiny balls of emerging fruit. It could be easily missed, probably often is missed. But the garden atmosphere allows these subtle patterns to be recognized. So finding this annoyance at being restrained is both pleasing – as a discovered behavior to identify and change – and something I'd rather not find, for the same reason. The irritation has been subtle enough that I haven't acknowledged it; in catching it, my self-concept of who I am in the garden needs adjustment.

So here is the condensed insight: I'm doing something, I'm hindered. I don't like it. Thus I arrive at what is essentially a like/dislike situation. In the simple environment of the garden, my response leads me to seeing into my human nature once again to find a basic yogic teaching: The mind is swayed by likes and dislikes. These cause mental perturbations that push and pull with attraction and avoidance. They feel compellingly justified. Seeing into the nature of likes and dislikes is a way to be free of them.

Here in the greenhouse where there is no particular hurry, I have the space to attend to this response and make a choice to release it. Each time my hand gets twisted with a hose or a strand or a branch, as the feeling of dislike for the sensation of being held back rises, I breathe into the moment, soften it and let it go. After awhile, I don't notice it anymore – the irritation that is. Getting tangled in hose, colliding with strands, my grasp obstructed: this continues. My response has changed.

I wonder about the situations outside the garden, where it's more than just tomatoes and me, the cases where what I want is thwarted. My teacher Kirpal said, "I cannot take the thorns out of your path, but I can give you heavy boots." His words delighted me. "What do thorns matter, if they do not pierce my feet, if I do not feel them?" I asked myself. His gift of metaphorical boots has been an inestimable treasure of teachings, practices and guidance. But in this moment with tomatoes, I have a renewed





insight as to my responsibility to put on the boots. The irritating situation is still active but if my response changes, the irritation is nonexistent. If I wear the boots, the thorns aren't felt.

In the greenhouse, the tangles and obstacles have not changed. My response has. I see that it can be this simple each time irritation at these restraints arises. It isn't like once the lesson is learned the situation that provoked irritation ceases to exist. It's just that when these tangles do not evoke a response, it is as if they no longer exist. Thorns are on the path. They are not felt when wearing heavy boots. When the challenges of life arise, as they do, I can put on my boots and choose my response.

This feels so simple that I laugh out loud and recall the lines of the 14th century Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Longchenpa, who wrote:

Since everything is but an apparition,  
Perfect in being what it is,  
Having nothing to do with good and bad,  
Acceptance or rejection,  
You might as well burst out laughing!

The tug of the irrigation hose, the tangle of the support strings, collisions with unseen stalks as I reach for a weed – this is just what's happening. There is no inherent quality of irritation, difficulty, discomfort in it. Those qualities come from my condition of dislike at being constrained or blocked and from wanting it to be otherwise. Neutralize my response and there's no reaction.

"This," I tell myself, "is another small step on the path of liberation." At least for now, in the greenhouse, I am liberated from the tangle of irritation. Birdsong continues, the scent of earth, strands of twine. Laughter.



# ORDERLY

*Chaos*

An Art essay by

**THANEYA MCARDLE**



Cosmosis (2004)





Ambrosial Accent (2005)

Abstract art is an ideal way to express matters of the spirit that can't be easily verbalized. It transcends the boundaries of language, drawing viewers into an internalized space where they can experience the artwork in a personal, subjective way, extracting whatever meaning it stirs up inside them. I generally don't assign any specific meaning to my abstract art, because I prefer the viewer to interpret each piece in his or her own unique way. The colors and chaos paradoxically induce a quiet mental stillness, as I allow my eyes and mind to travel across the many details without assigning meaning to what I'm seeing. I just let the art take me for a ride.

My abstract art explores how color, pattern, composition and personal symbology express the mystery and delight of our existence. It manifests the intangible elements of everyday existence –



Billowing Light (2006)



## TASTE OF LIFE

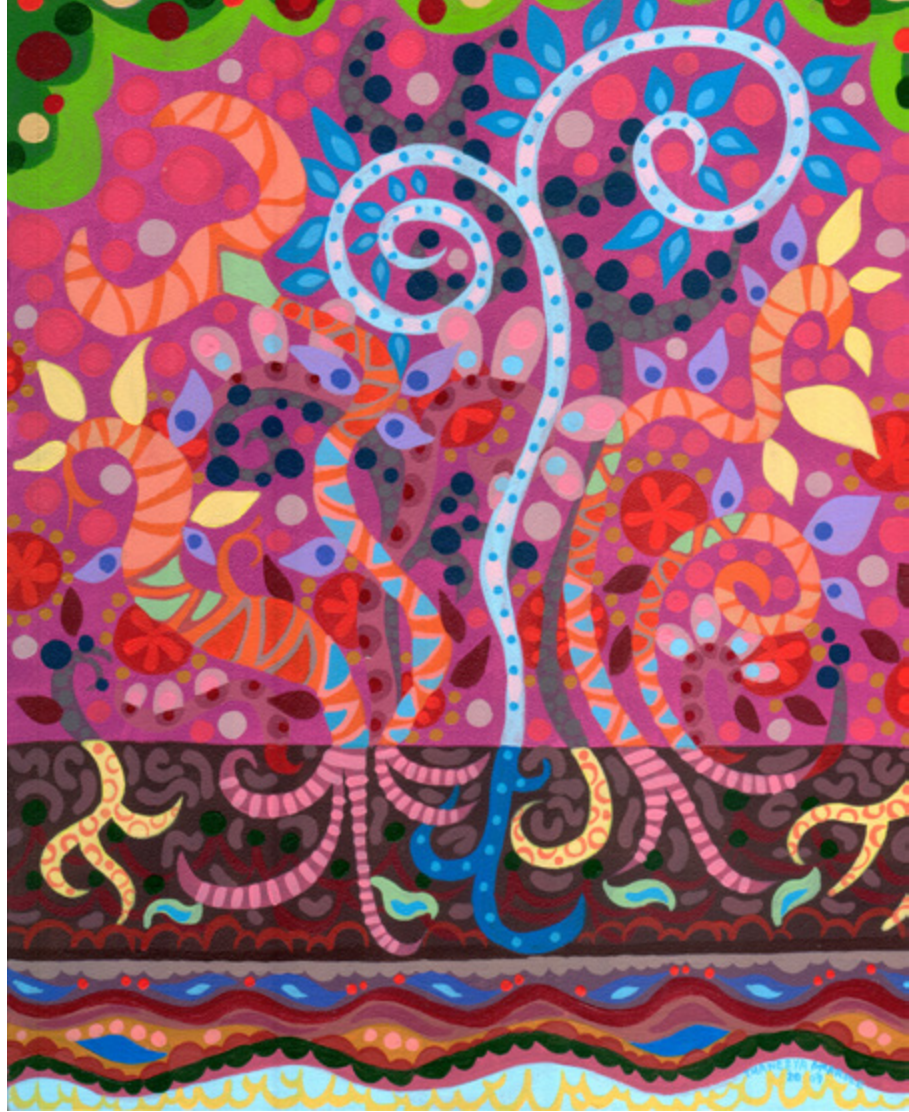
emotions, thoughts, energy – by translating them into colors and patterns. It is often highly detailed because of my desire to achieve balance through multiplicity, in order to reflect the complexity of human consciousness and our shared experience in the multiverse. The result is a whimsical concoction of color and form, interwoven into a lyrical, visual harmony.

This style of abstract art can be described as “orderly chaos.”

My first abstract art was in 2003, experimenting with a variety of tools and surfaces, as well as various methods of mark-making. It wasn't long before a personal style naturally emerged, with an innate tendency towards bright, eye-popping colors and intricate detailed designs. I am particularly influenced and inspired by folk art from cultures around the world, such as Persian miniatures, Mexican huichol and alebrije,



Infinitude (2005)



Dharma (2007)

Aboriginal dot painting. Modern art influences include Hundertwasser, Klee and Kandinsky.

These abstract paintings range in size from a tiny 3" x 3" to a relatively large 30" x 40". Most pieces are somewhere in between. I've come to enjoy creating abstract art on a small scale, with as much visual information as possible in a relatively limited space while respecting the overall cadence and flow of each piece. When working on canvas, the painting often extends onto the sides, creating a 3-D work of abstract art.

This colorful abstract art uses acrylics, colored pencils, watercolors, watercolor pencils, alcohol markers, paint markers, pens and mixed media, as well as art-making Apps on an iPad, such as Procreate, and Adobe Illustrator on a desktop computer.





Orderly Chaos (2006)





Spin (2008)

Abstract art can be an eye-catching and uplifting companion in your everyday life, thanks to the variety of products featuring these whimsical abstracts.

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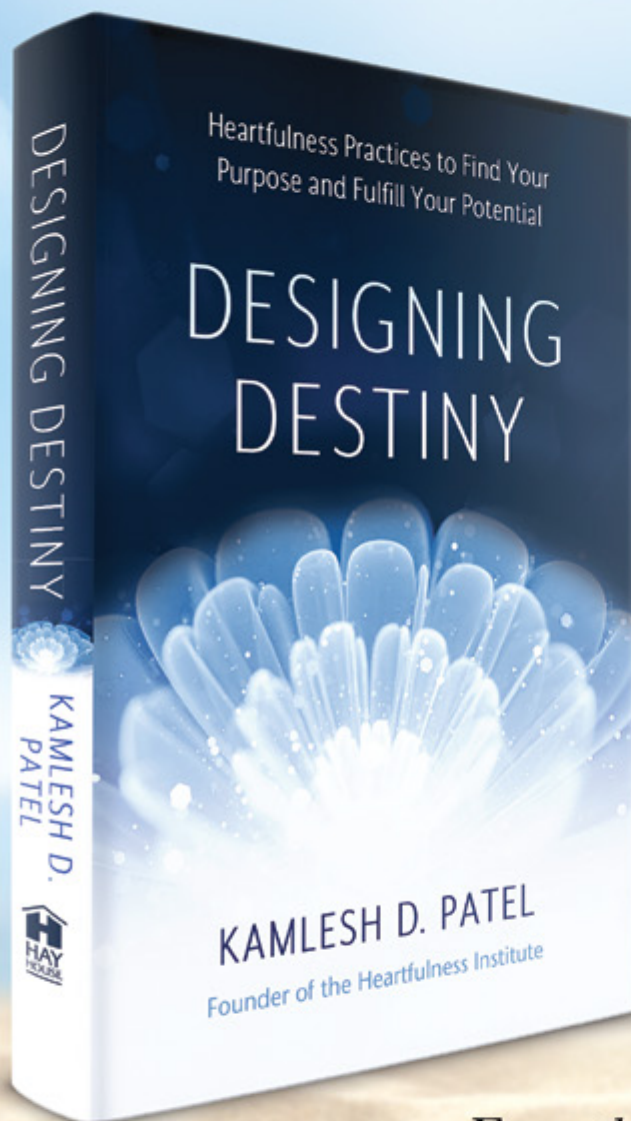
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Today Is (2006)



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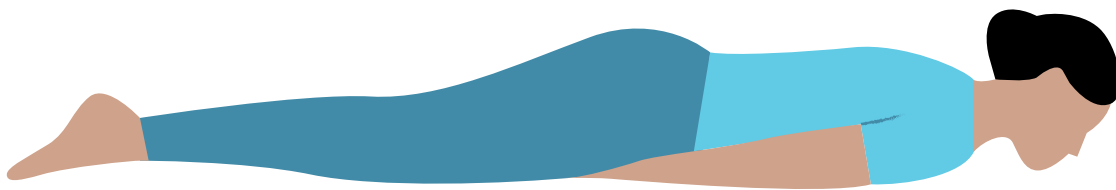
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# Heartfulness Yogasanas

## SHALABHASANA



### *Stage I*

Lie flat on your stomach with legs straight, feet together, the soles facing upwards.

Bend both your arms, place the right palm on the left arm and the left palm on the right arm.

Place your chin at the point where your forearms cross each other.

Breathe out, relax your whole body and close your eyes.

Breathe in deeply, and while inhaling raise your left leg straight up as high as possible.

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

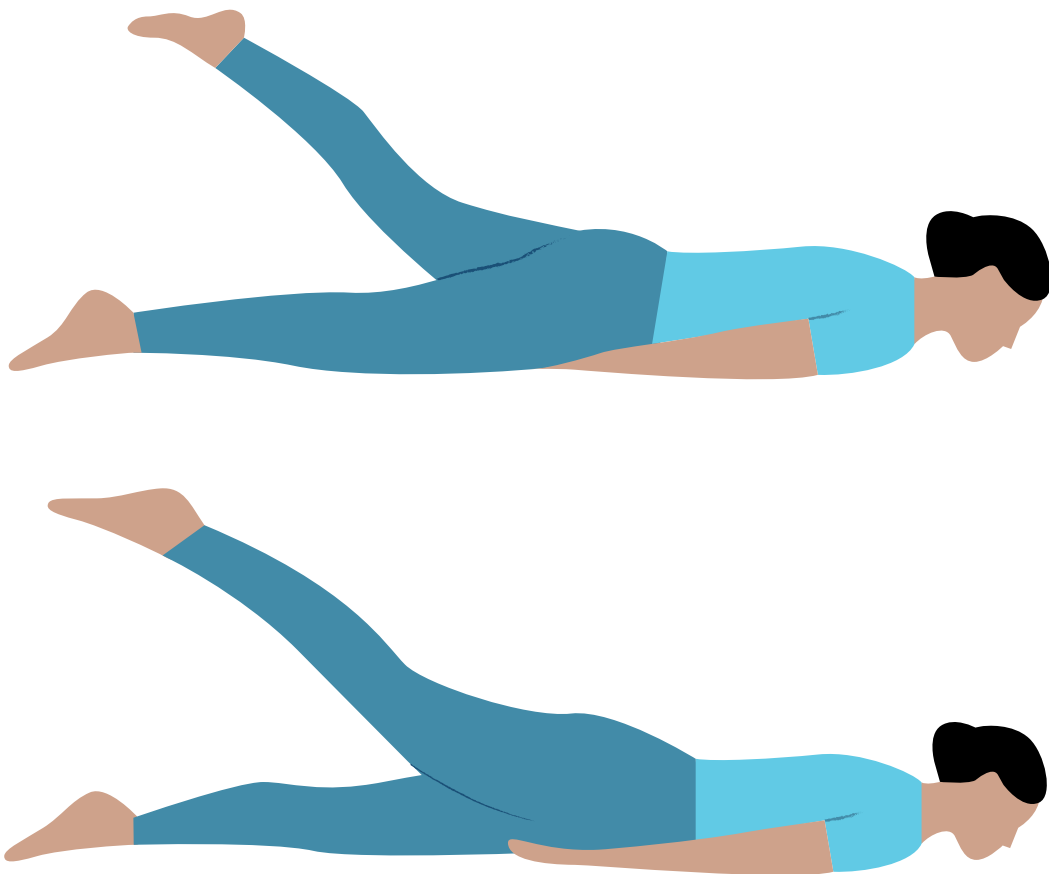
Breathe out and, while exhaling, lower your leg.

Repeat the practice with the other leg.

### *Stage II*

Breathe in deeply and while inhaling raise both the legs up, keeping them straight and together.

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



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*Shalabhasana* increase the digestive fire, improves digestion and alleviates several gastric troubles and diseases of the stomach.

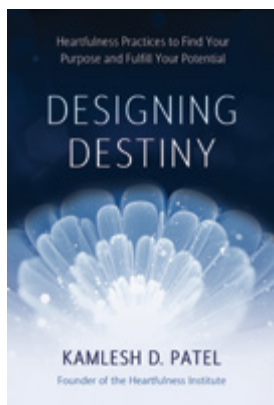
Strengthens the lower back muscles and increases flexibility of the back.

This *Asana* gives relief from rheumatic pain and sciatica.

Helps to control diabetes.



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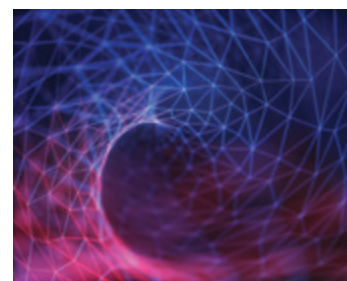
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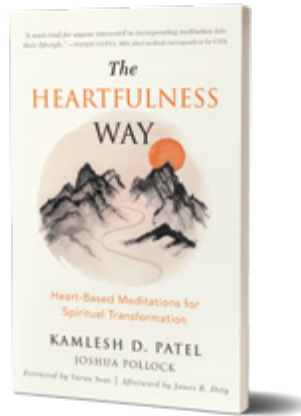
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