

July 2019

# heartfulness

purity weaves destiny

**Daa Ji**

*From Disease  
to Well-being*

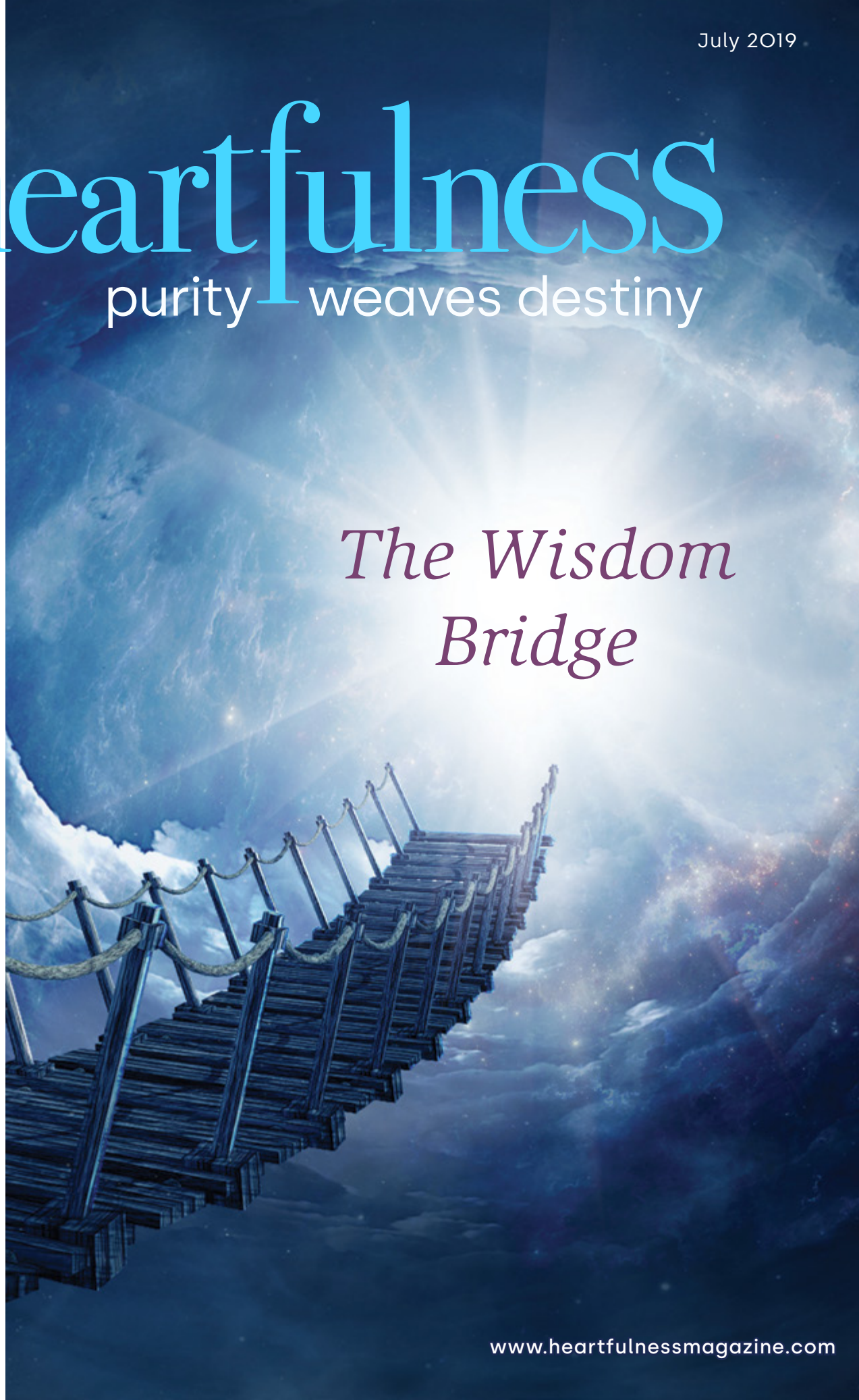
## *The Wisdom Bridge*

**Spirit of  
Humanity  
Forum**

*Towards Core  
Human Values,  
Iceland 2019*

**Vikram  
Sridhar**

*The Art of  
Storytelling*



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## CREATIVE TEAM

**Editorial Team** — Meghana Anand, Elizabeth Denley, Emma Ivaturi

**Design Team** — Emma Ivaturi, Uma Maheswari, Rahul S Parmar, Jasmee Rathod

**Photography** — Rajitha Fernando, David Malec, Rajesh Menon, Nila Newsom, Martinho Smart, Kichigin, Larcsky

**Art** — Kathleen Scarboro, Jasmee Rathod

**Writers** — James Joseph, Serge Nicolai, Usha Padmasola, Kamlesh Patel, Fausto Russo, Kathleen Scarboro, Ravi Venkatesan, Robert Welton, Elaine Williams

**Interviewees** — Robert Chilton, Kamlesh Patel, Vikram Sridhar

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

## ADVERTISING

advertising@heartfulnessmagazine.com

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions

**EDITOR** – Neeraj Kumar

**PRINTED BY** – Sunil Kumar

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# The Wisdom Bridge

Dear readers,

Building bridges between people, and enabling resonance and communion between young and old, brings with it a sense of continuity from past, to present, to future: grandparents with grandchildren; community elders with youth; ancient knowledge and traditions with modern society. Does it mean that we are always looking back to a past that is no longer relevant? Not at all. The Wisdom Bridge is dynamic and evolutionary. Learning and evolving from the past to change the present to create a better future is the pressing need of the moment for humanity in its current state of entropy, unrest and uncertainty. In this edition, various authors share their wisdom bridges: Daaji, Elaine K. Williams, Robert Chilton, Kathleen Scarboro, Vikram Sridhar, and more.

There is an inspiring report about the recent 'Spirit of Humanity Forum' of thought leaders in Reykjavik, Iceland, and we discover more about consciousness, beauty, silence, and how our inner state determines what sort of leader we are. Daaji continues with Yogic Psychology by exploring some of the obstacles to physical and mental health.

During this month, why not build a few wisdom bridges of your own - in your family, your local community, the broader humanity, and even within yourself.

Enjoy!

The editors

# contributors



Kamlesh Patel

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.



Kathleen Scarboro

Kathleen has had a lifelong career in public art. Currently she is working on a book entitled *Painting India: Women and Color*, with reproductions of her paintings accompanied by quotes from talented Indian writers of the past and present on the themes developed in the paintings.



Elaine K. Williams

The author of *The Sacred Work of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, Elaine has spent her career working with multiple generations from children to elders. Her expertise is in the area of trauma, loss, life transitions and inter-generational communication. Elaine is a nationally respected coach, trainer and therapist known for her common sense approach to helping her expand their human potential to live an inspired, meaningful life.



Robert Chilton

Robert Chilton is an IT specialist based in New Jersey who works internationally on projects to preserve and share the literary and cultural heritage of the Indo-Tibetan traditions.

His current project is [www.gompaservices.com](http://www.gompaservices.com). With a BSc in Computer Science and an MA with focus in Tibetan language and Buddhist literature, Robert's interests include philosophy, music, physics, cognitive science, and contemplative practices.



Vikram Sridhar

In today's technological era, Vikram is dedicated to keeping the tradition of storytelling alive. Calling it "an art form as old as human existence itself," this former software engineer uses storytelling as a bridge between the young and the old. Vikram is the mind behind Around the Story Tree, a conservation initiative through storytelling, and the main contact for the marketing and publicity of Tahatto, a Bangalore-based theater group. He is a frequent TEDx speaker.





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# *focus*

the wisdom bridge

*Wonder is the beginning  
of wisdom.*

SOCRATES









# The *Wisdom* Bridge

**DAAJI** shares his views and personal experience with **ELIZABETH DENLEY**, about the transfer of wisdom between generations, between friends, and between organizations, using the concept he has coined called the Wisdom Bridge.

Q: Hello Daaji. Can you please tell us about the Wisdom Bridge?

It's an interesting concept to ponder – building the wisdom bridge. Will one bridge be enough? Knowing how many hills we carry within ourselves and how many rivers flow through us, we need many bridges to connect all these various aspects. Not only within, but when a friend has an idea, and I have to understand that idea, I have to extend my awareness, respectfully honor it and build some sort of a connection with that person's idea. I need to build a connection with the other person and their ideas. That is a bridge.

Between hills, bridges help connect people and make life less strenuous. Across rivers, also, we see bridges. It's easier to cross; it's easier to connect. How do we build bridges that connect individuals, with a purpose? We need to build bridges with a variety of individuals – those we love, those we don't like so much, and people who make no difference in our life but with whom we need to interact. The most important is to build a bridge with those who will not be with us for much longer: I mean to say our grandparents.

Many of us who were born in the 50s and 60s were not so fortunate as to have grandparents around for many years, because their life span was shorter, whereas today, millennials especially are familiar with their grandparents. Recently I happened to meet one girl who has grown up in front of me. She is now 26 or 27.

Casually I asked her, "How is your family?" and the talk went in the direction of "Who do you like the most in your family?"

She said, "My grandmother."

I asked, "Why so?"

"Because of the way she was. She taught me so many things, and she shared many stories. Things like that."

And that reminded me of my grandmother. We did not interact much and we did not speak much. She was a silent person, but I would watch her lifestyle. She would wake up in the morning, respectfully go to one of the deities' photographs, put one or two flowers, stand in front and

remain absorbed for some time. You could see how she melted away. She would get absorbed just standing there and then quietly walk away with a lot of reverence and respect.

She didn't have to speak about it, because knowledge can be transferred but not wisdom. Wisdom can be witnessed in excellence, in behavior, in work, in thoughts, in attitude. When we witness modern parents – busy the way they are today – do we witness their wisdom or their foolishness? Now, compare them with an individual who is sitting quietly, reading the newspaper or reading a book, listening to music or doing some gardening – I'm specifically hinting at grandparents. When we spend even five minutes with them, they share a treasure with us, and this treasure lasts forever.



PHOTO: STEPHANE BIDOUZE / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Anyway, I asked the girl, “When are you getting married?” She said, “Oh, I have a lot of time. I’m only 26 uncle.” I said, “All right, so when do you think you’ll get married? Let’s put it that way.”

She said, “Maybe 32 or 33.”

So I asked her, “When you have children, do you want them to have the opportunity of knowing your own mother as a grandmother?”

She started calculating her mother’s age, the age she would have children, and so on.

She said, “It looks unlikely that my mother will see her grandchildren if I do things my way.”

“Then why are you robbing your mother of her grandmotherhood, and robbing your children of a grandmother’s wisdom?”

So she started thinking.

Similar scenarios are arising in many parts of the world – in the Amazonian jungle for example, where elderly people would love to share the knowledge they have gathered for thousands of years. They are the walking encyclopedias of knowledge of the surroundings – what herbs work, what fruits, what animals, how they interact – all these details will be lost when one elderly man from the village goes, with the migration of young people from the villages to the cities. The wisdom transfer is not happening between generations.

Modern-day times rob us of this opportunity of learning something profound from our very near and dear ones. Of course, parents have their duties and they’re doing their best. Grandparents, when available, will be the most wonderful gifts that can happen to any grandchild. Grandparents transfer so much knowledge, which they themselves were not able to transfer to their own children. But now, during the sunset of their lives, they are very happy to transfer such wisdom. So this wisdom bridge is the bridge that we’re trying to build between generations.

I was shocked to hear recently of a girl agreeing to marry only on the condition that her parents-in-laws would not stay with them. Such a demand by a prospective bride speaks a volume about her. She is not understanding the

vital role of the wisdom bridge for her children, and even herself, and only thinking of comfort and convenience.

Now, individually we can build bridges between ourselves, sharing knowledge, but how do we build bridges between, say, two universities? At the moment only sports games are being played, but are there other ways of bridging so that this wisdom transfer can happen between universities? Not just knowledge transfer, which we can get anytime from Google, but wisdom transfer. No Google, no search engine, can grant that wisdom. One has to live with such a wise person to imbibe those vibrations of wisdom, so that life is richer and worth living.

The wisdom bridge is to connect oneself. You know I can go from my side to the other side of the hill; from my hill to the other hill; from one side of the bank to the other side of the bank. As well, other people should also be able to come to my hill, to my side of the bank. There’s a mutual connection, mutual bridge, mutual sharing, and only then this bridge will be functional. If it is only one way it will be a tragedy. It will not be called a wisdom bridge, but a foolish bridge.

*Grandparents, when available, will be the most wonderful gifts that can happen to any grandchild. Grandparents transfer so much knowledge, which they themselves were not able to transfer to their own children. But now, during the sunset of their lives, they are very happy to transfer such wisdom.*





Q: You know this statement, "It takes a whole village to raise a child," but today parents are busy, and sometimes grandparents aren't around. How do we create this in our current social fabric? It is no longer the traditional way. Do teachers and mentors take on this role? How do we re-establish the wisdom bridge in a dysfunctional society?

It's very difficult now. Yes, it takes a village to raise a child. And now when migration is happening – from village to city – you're entering into a totally different environment where people are unknown to each other. Even in a high-rise building with 200 apartments, do you know your neighbor? When such is the situation, how are we going to come together and share knowledge? Moreover when

there is no trust left, when you don't even trust your uncles and aunts, when pedophiles are everywhere, it's so difficult to trust someone with your child. What happens as a result? Where is the transfer of knowledge and wisdom among families?

So I really don't have an easy solution to offer, but let's make use of technology and share something worthwhile instead of surfing and wasting time in unproductive things. I don't say that all are wasting time in unproductive things, but we can make it even better. Life can be enriched using technology. I think technology is the only way many families can come together and make a virtual village, and share knowledge, share wisdom, share activities that can be taken up at an individual level. I think that's the only way we can proceed forward. Of course it will not be as good as the whole community of a village coming together.



**Q: On a personal note, you're a father, and you're a grandfather. From your own experience, how has being a parent and then a grandparent changed you?**

Well, I'm the father of two sons and the grandfather of one granddaughter. It's a big difference raising sons and raising a grandchild, especially when she happens to be a girl. Maybe it is different for a mother or a grandmother, but I find a great difference raising children and grandchildren. And another great difference I find is in raising a girl child. So much of tenderness is involved in raising a girl, because some sort of vibratory level comes into play. There is much more that can logically be explained. I have started thinking, "What will happen to this little girl?" who has not crossed even two years. "Where will she marry? Whom will she marry? How will she be treated?" Things like that. "And how should she be prepared from now on to love the world the way it is?"

When I was raising boys I didn't worry much about them. Though now, in retrospect, I think that one also has to shower a lot of tenderness while raising them. We cannot take things for granted with boys either, as they are also vulnerable. I see already that a girl who is less than two years old bounces back faster than boys when she is sad. When boys are too ecstatic, also, it is difficult to bring them back to a normal state. It becomes quite challenging, whereas a girl child understands a lot better, so less energy is invested in correcting her course. This is what I have found.

I have observed another interesting thing, while holding her on my lap so that she can watch rhymes being played on my computer. She scans through a dozen of them and already, at this very early age, she chooses which rhyme to listen to and watch. She doesn't speak yet, but she expresses herself. She'll gesture "Not this." Earlier, she used to just look up, trying to say, "Let's move to the next," but now she demands. She gestures, asking me to fast-

forward to the next one. If this tendency continues, I think it will not be very good for her. We are feeding a fast culture: if you don't like this, you can fast-forward. You can fast-forward a video, but you cannot fast-forward your life. So this is a valuable lesson that I have learned by observing my grandchild.

At a whim, at a snap, we are ready to satisfy every little gesture and thing they demand. One toy is not enough. The whole room is full of them. There are clothes galore. "You don't like this fruit?" You offer another fruit. Many choices are offered at a very early age instead of helping a child to make do with things, and training a child to be happy with what little is there. I think that will prepare them mentally and emotionally to face life in a real sense.

Even though you may have plenty of things in life, and you may not have to worry about curtailment or restricted offerings, what happens to the mind of a child? Expectation increases manifoldly. Later on, one car won't be enough. One house won't be enough. One boat won't be enough. Psychologically, it is translated into demanding things at all levels. We rob children of getting used to certain impulses, certain stimuli.

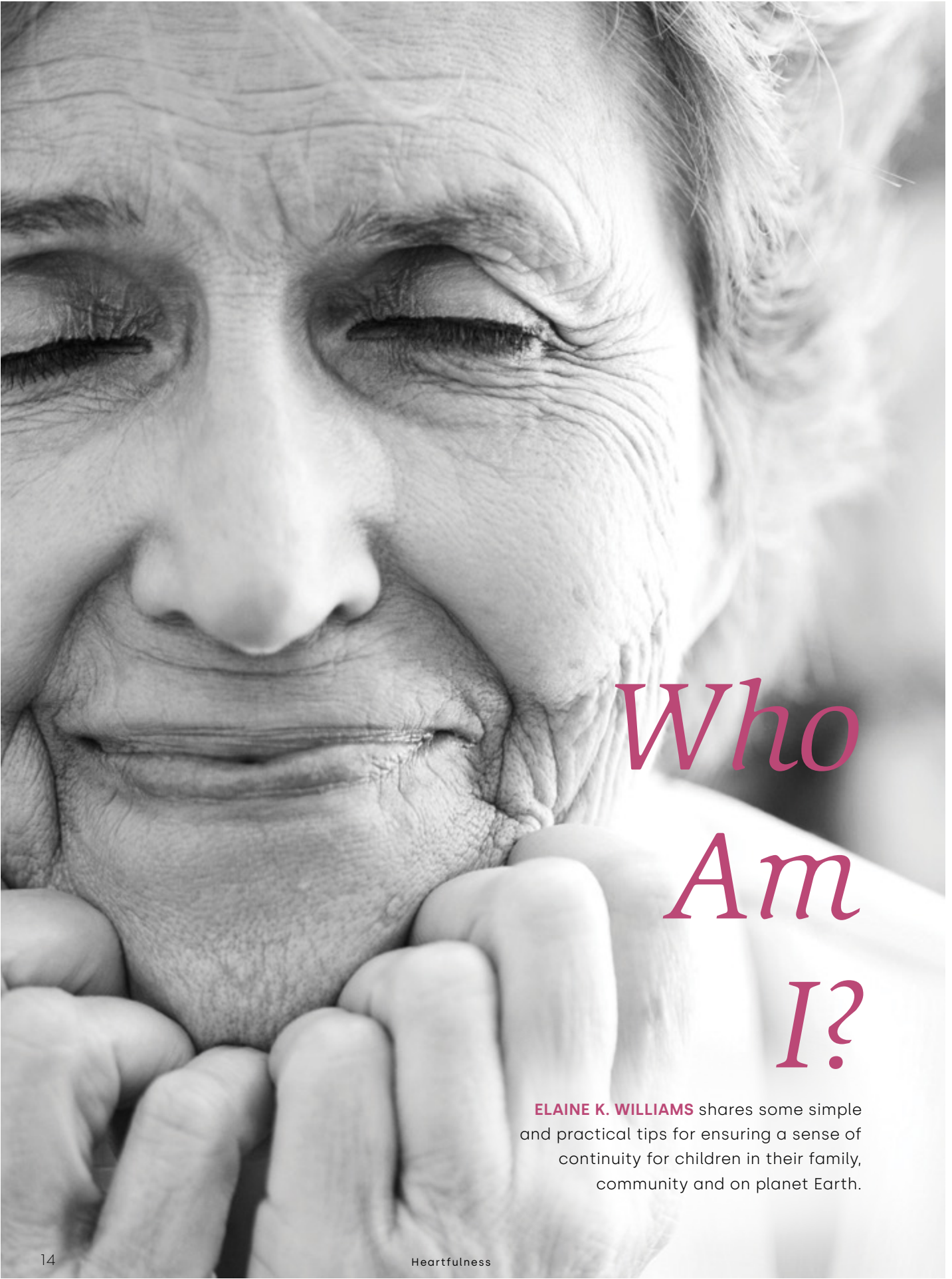
Recently, while cutting the ribbon at a grand opening of one meditation hall, I found that the scissors were not working. They were quite blunt and I had to really pull the ribbon to cut it. So I learnt that just as overused scissors become blunt, our overused faculty of happiness and joy makes that faculty dull and blunt. It requires sequentially greater and greater impulses of happiness and joy to make us happy. When such is the case, we are not using the other side of the blade – sadness, pain, misery and unhappiness. We try to avoid them; even a little bit of inconvenience is avoided. So that part of the scissors remains very sharp. The slightest inconvenience and our balance is lost.

So when we are raising children, we often don't expose them to the realities of life, trying to avoid even the slightest inconvenience. Of course, as parents we love the fact that our children don't go through any inconvenience. There is no need to create inconveniences knowingly, but when they happen, it is good to let children face them. There can be multiple situations: a child doesn't want to eat a certain food, or wear an item of clothing, or play with a toy. Don't try to circumvent those inconvenient moments. Let children go through them, and let them learn from them.

Well, anyway, you are all very smart and very intelligent. You may decide how to make each part of the blade or the scissors sharp or dull – it depends on you. How will you transfer your wisdom?

*So when we are raising children, we often don't expose them to the realities of life, trying to avoid even the slightest inconvenience. Of course, as parents we love the fact that our children don't go through any inconvenience. There is no need to create inconveniences knowingly, but when they happen, it is good to let children face them.*





# *Who Am I?*

**ELAINE K. WILLIAMS** shares some simple and practical tips for ensuring a sense of continuity for children in their family, community and on planet Earth.

*One of the many things you do as parenting grandparents is to give your grandchildren a sense of belonging to a family, whose ancestors left a legacy of values, beliefs, stories and more. This sense of belonging to a lineage that describes who came before us helps define who we are in the present and the legacy we will leave to those who come after us.*

At some point in our lives, or perhaps at many points in our lives, we ask the question, “Who am I?” At times like these, we are looking beyond the obvious, beyond our names and the names of the cities and states we came from, into the layers beneath our surface identities. We may feel the need for a deeper sense of purpose in our lives, or we may be ready to accommodate a more complex understanding of the situation in which we find ourselves. We may connect with our internal voice, finally, attending to our intuition.

Whatever the case, the question of who we are is a seed that can bear much fruit. It can send us on an exploration of our ancestry, or the past lives of our soul. It can call us to take up some form of mindfulness in order to discover that voice deep within us that seems to know the answers to a multitude of questions. It can draw our attention so deeply inward that we find the spark of spirit that connects us to every living thing in the universe – that mystical moment we intimately know Oneness.

While it can do all these things and more, I want to focus on how it allows us to explore our ancestry. One of the many things you do as parenting grandparents is to give your grandchildren a sense of belonging to a family, whose ancestors left a legacy of values, beliefs, stories and more. This sense of belonging to a lineage that describes who came before us helps define who we are in the present and the legacy we will leave to those who come after us.

While your grandchildren may not be thinking of this right now, it is very re-assuring for them to know they are part of a family with roots that nourish not only them, but will nourish their children and grandchildren, also. Here are some ways to keep them connected and rooted to their heritage.



1. Share your stories about when you were growing up and what the world around you was like.
2. Show them pictures of your parents, their great-grandparents, and talk about where they came from and what they did for a living.
3. Talk about each generation's extended family, not just brothers and sisters, but cousins, aunts and uncles.
4. Buy an inexpensive book that inquires about your life. One I completed for my grandchildren is called, *Grandma Tell Me Your Story*, or *Memories for My Grandchild*, both found on Amazon or in bookstores. Don't just write your answers to the questions, talk about your answers at dinner, or dessert time or when you gather in the evening before watching TV.

This will be the gift of gifts for your grandchildren. As a parenting grandparent you have given them a home where they are safe, secure and loved. Now give them a sense of pride in their roots by making sure they know where they have come from and who came before them. This not only establishes a foundation for the development of their identity, but in large measure will help them answer the question "Who Am I?" as they grow up.

With gratitude,  
*Elaine*



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# THOUGHT IN *action*

*Everybody needs  
beauty as well as bread,  
places to play in and pray  
in, where nature may heal  
and give strength to body  
and soul alike.*

JOHN MUIR





# THE QUEST FOR *beauty*

Serge Nicolai

Who is not after beauty?  
What is real beauty?  
And why are we looking for it?

Beauty gives pleasure to our senses, be it a beautiful landscape, a beautiful face, a beautiful artifact, or a beautiful piece of music.

One may argue that as a community or a civilization frees itself from the struggle to cater to its basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, there is more effort and resources given to fulfilling this search for beauty.

A poet said, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

But is it?

Experience shows us that the possession of one thing never satisfies us and, as soon as we get it, we embark upon the next pursuit, ad infinitum. So what are we really after?

I would say that we are attracted to beauty because it reminds us of a lost harmony, of a subtle balance of forms. We would not recognize it outside if it were not already imprinted in us.

We are really looking for our own lost beauty, a beauty not of this world, a light that alone makes everything resplendent.

When we find it, whether in a child, a sage, or a pure person, we stand in awe. Something from another dimension beckons us. For a moment we are transported out of this mundane existence. And that is what we are looking for in this pursuit.

Alas, this self-forgetfulness doesn't last and we are back where we were. What is the solution?

The only way is to turn our pursuit inwards, turn our efforts to our own making, so that we cultivate inner beauty. As this grows, our dependence for outer beauty will diminish.

Finally, sages say that a time comes when the beauty unfolding inside is an unceasing wonder, making one forget everything else.

That, this mystery, is what we are all really yearning for.

# THE HEARTFUL LEADER

- part 6 -

*Extraordinary outcomes through inspiration*

## INNER STATE – THE ICEBERG BENEATH

In previous articles **RAVI VENKATESAN** introduced the Heartful Leader framework and explored reputation, trust, relationships and outer behavior. In this article, he explores the inner state that results in this outer behavior and helps us understand how to manage it.



We can broadly categorize inner state into what goes on in the heart and mind. In reality, they are not distinct, but rather two parts of a whole, and together they constitute the vibrational field within us. The state of this field is what we refer to as our inner state. It can also be understood as the conglomeration of all our feelings, emotions, thoughts and ideas. The above picture shows a framework for the inner state that was introduced in “The Heartful Negotiator” [<https://www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/heartful-negotiator-part-1/>].



As an exercise, take a moment to write down the following. It is okay if you don't have answers for all of these questions:

1. WHAT ARE YOUR STRONGEST LIKES AND DISLIKES?
2. WHAT IS YOUR STRONGEST DESIRE?
3. WHAT ARE YOU WORRIED OR CONCERNED ABOUT?
4. WHAT DO YOU REGRET THE MOST OR FEEL GUILTY ABOUT?
5. WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE OF?
6. WHAT IS MAKING YOU RESTLESS?
7. WHAT CREATES ANGER IN YOU?
8. WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?
9. WHAT CONFUSES YOU OR LEADS TO INDECISIVENESS?

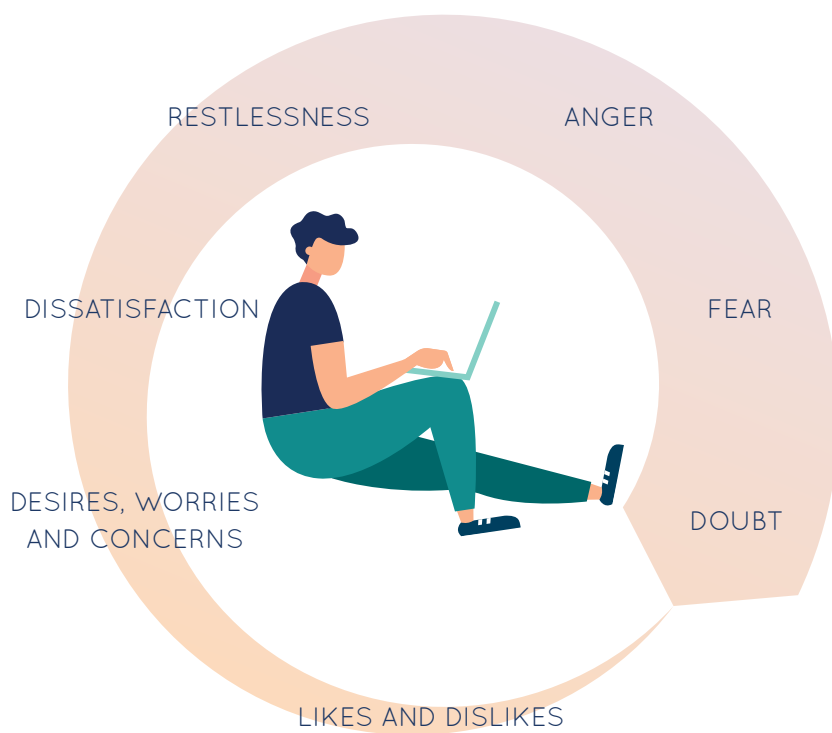


## THOUGHT IN ACTION

You have just taken a snapshot of your inner state.

Most of the time, we float through our days, unaware of what is going on inside us. After doing this snapshot, reflect on your behavior in the past 24 hours. Were you rude to someone? Did you feel impatient in a conversation with someone? Can you trace this back to anger inside you, or restlessness inside you? Outer behavior is always linked to the inner state.

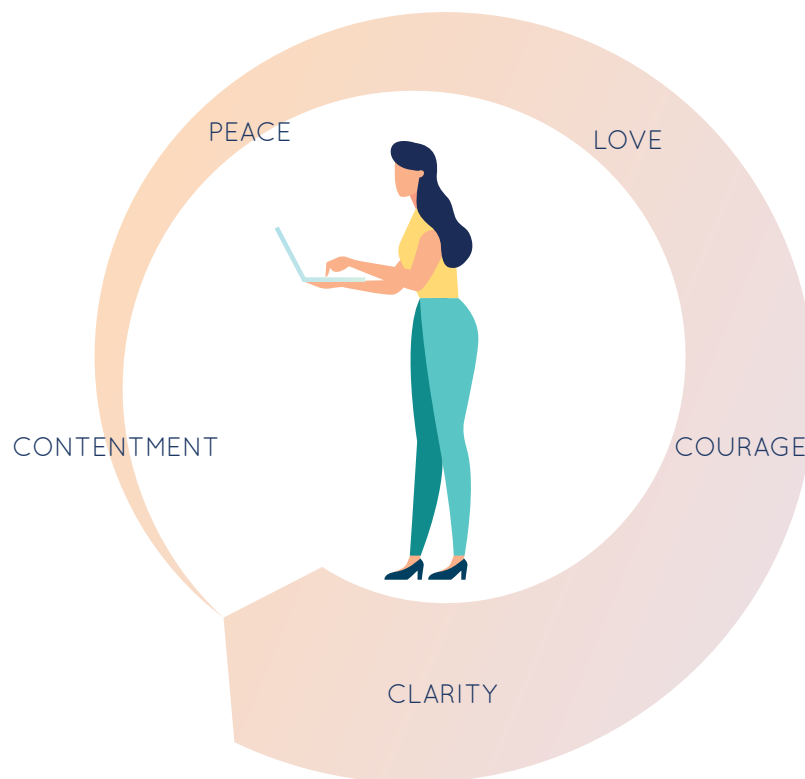
Sometimes situations we encounter trigger a change in our inner state that in turn reflects in behaviors that we regret. I remember an email from an executive at a partner company after we had a failed launch of a joint solution. This executive placed the entire blame on our company without taking any responsibility for their mistakes, and even demanded financial compensation beyond anything covered by our contractual relationship. I was already not a big fan of this executive, and this email increased that personal dislike even more. It triggered all kinds of emotions all at once. I was angry at how unfair his position was, worried that we would now waste energy on legal proceedings, restless to get out of the situation, and fearful of the eventual consequences. I walked into a meeting with all these feelings and thoughts around how to respond. Needless to say, I was unable to focus on the issues that were discussed at the meeting and came across as lacking clarity of thought. There was a vicious cycle at play here:



This cycle can be reversed though. It all starts with adopting a “neutral” position in terms of likes and dislikes. We can use our own willpower to resist the inclination to like or dislike anything, whether it is a person, a situation, an object, or anything else. This gives us the opportunity to adjust ourselves to a neutral state, irrespective of the situation. This in turn leads to peace of mind, a general feeling of love or compassion, courage to tackle whatever is in front of us, and clarity of mind.

In subsequent articles we will look at how shifting this inner state, starting with bringing ourselves to a neutral position with respect to likes and dislikes. This will lead to better outer behaviors, and eventually to great influence and outcomes.

*This cycle can be reversed though. It all starts with adopting a “neutral” position in terms of likes and dislikes. We can use our own willpower to resist the inclination to like or dislike anything, whether it is a person, a situation, an object, or anything else.*





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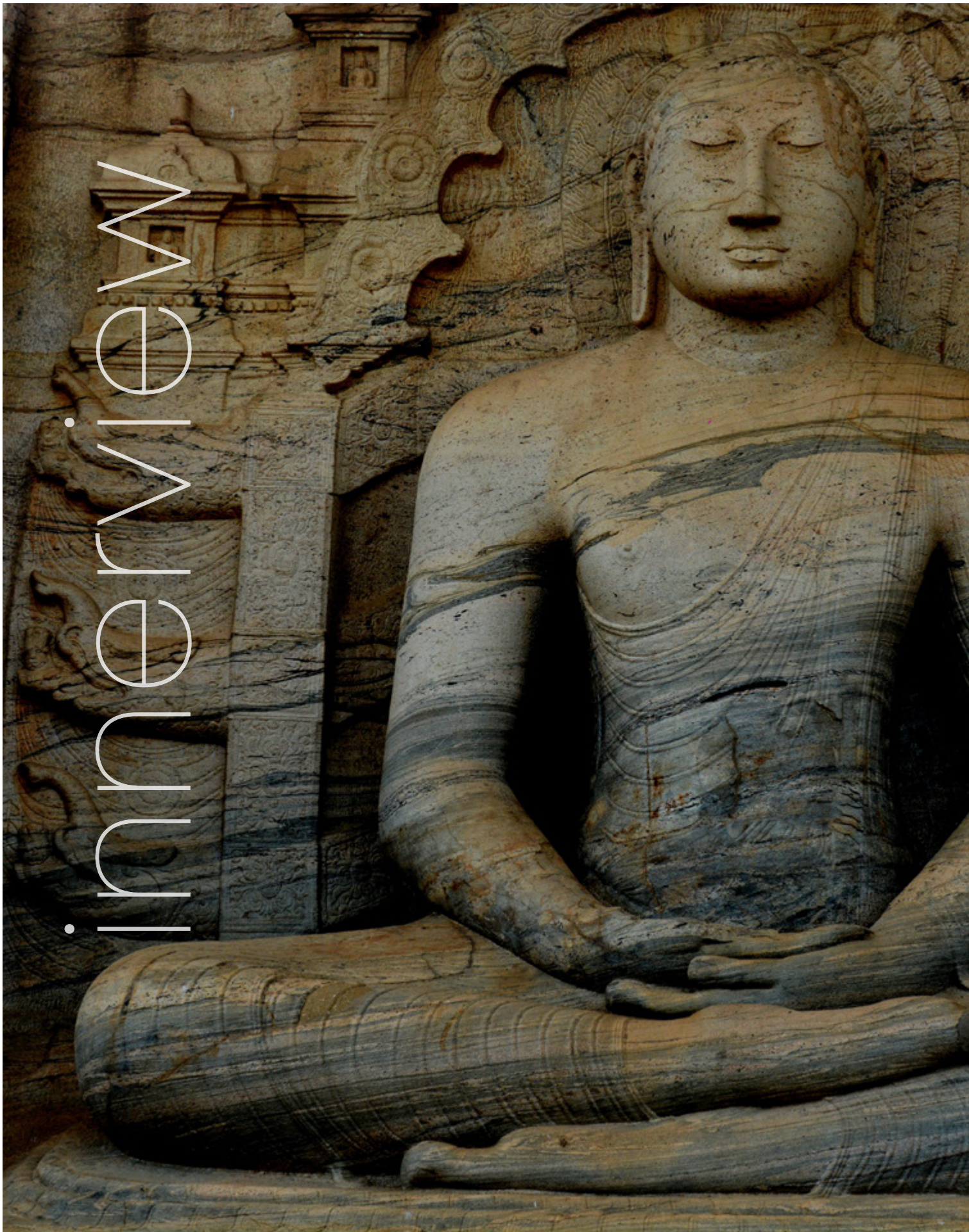
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# • interview •







*Your work is to  
discover your work and  
then with all your heart  
to give yourself to it.*

ATTRIBUTED TO  
THE BUDDHA

# A Tibetan Journey

## PART 2

**ROBERT CHILTON** has spent most of his adult life working with traditions of Buddhism in the Tibetan language. In Part 1, he shared the significance of this work in preserving the most accurate record we have of the Buddha's teachings. In part 2, he tells **ELIZABETH DENLEY** about the Gompa Tibetan Monastery Services, where technology is used for good to connect the monasteries with followers, and create a platform for sharing the ancient wisdom.

**Q: So what is happening now with the Tibetan monasteries? I don't mean politically, but is the tradition alive still?**

These great masters were able to come out in the early 1960s. They eventually were able to reform the monasteries and continue their training. They were in refugee camps, first in Indian prisons, and then they were in these camps where they were living in tents with keep-guards to keep the elephants from rampaging through the camps. They went through a lot of hardships, but they were able to keep transmitting the knowledge.

The system of the monasteries is all about how to keep the knowledge alive from one generation to the next. And that was happening in Tibet since the time it was transmitted from India, in places like the great monastery in Nalanda and other great monasteries in India. They kept it going, and up till now they've been able to keep it going.



It used to be that every extended family would send at least one boy to the monastery to become a monk. It was just normal. And there were all these people in Tibet who were also coming into India through Nepal and Bhutan, and they would come into the monasteries and take up their spaces, cohorts in their classes, but recently the police forces have stopped that flow.

The monasteries and nunneries are doing great things in their local communities in terms of social welfare programs. They're the ones who establish the clinics. They have hospitals, library resources, and there are people for any spiritual needs to be met in various ways, such as with prayers and advice, giving names to the children and blessings, and so on. All this plays a very vital role within the refugee communities in India and Nepal. Also, people in these communities have found ways to go abroad, to Malaysia, Singapore, USA, Canada and Australia.

There's a need for them to have access to spiritual services, and that's the project I'm working on now. That's called

Gompa Services, or Gompa Tibetan Monastery Services. Gompa Services is an online service platform that connects more than 50 monasteries and nunneries in India and Nepal to the world of their followers.

If people want to watch a webcast of a teaching, or some special ceremonies or a public *puja*, or if they want to arrange their own personal *puja* with a dedication for a specific purpose, they can do all that through the website. If they want to make donations toward other social projects, like the ones that help expand a library or build needed dormitories, they can make offerings through our service. We don't charge any fees on those transactions.

We have members who help support the functions. It's been going on since we started in 2014, and we really got launched in the last couple of years. We started a publicity launch a few months ago, in terms of making ourselves widely known, after we had made sure everything was working well.



PHOTO: LARCSKY / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Q: So is this mainly for India and Nepal, or is it global?

The monasteries and nunneries that we've been connecting through the platform have been in India and Nepal. Our main coordinating office is in Dehra Dun, which is in North India. And we also do webcasting up in the North: whenever we have any events we send our crews out for the webcasting. We also have one in the South in Karnataka state that covers the southern region. There are a number of monasteries in that area, where people arrange *pujas* on demand. And then we also have our Kathmandu office for most of Nepal. There are other places, but it is mainly Kathmandu where most of the monasteries and nunneries are located.





We have recently been looking at bringing individual Dharma Centers – where they have events or teachings that are relevant to the community or followers worldwide – into our platform. Basically we have a system of providing for the distribution of the webcasts, which is all integrated. People can sign in with a user ID, they can make donations or not, it's up to them.

But most of what's really happening, in terms of the big events, is happening in the monasteries and the nunneries, especially for the arranged *pujas*. You have 200 monks who do the prayer for half a day, and there's an energy. It's really extraordinary when there are that many people all doing the same practice, and they're trained to do it.

**Q: There's a history of Buddhism in the Indo-Nepali part of the country, which goes back to the original traditions.**

Yes, that's definitely true, but it's much more. I think in our educational system we value empirical evidence. What people are only starting to realize broadly is that the foundations of what we call empirical evidence are completely subjective in a sense. For example, first there was Einstein and his theory of general relativity. Then you had Neils Bohr and Heisenberg and the whole quantum worldview, which has taken a long time for the average person in the West to even understand.





One of my personal hobbies is to study quantum physics, and luckily I have enough mathematical and scientific training that I can sort of follow it. What I find fascinating is that when I read one of the early Indian philosophers, Nagarjuna, and his presentation of the Middle Way, he says that nothing exists the way it appears to, but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist. When I put that up against the quantum worldview, as I understand it, there's a way I can interpret the data coming from quantum theory that lines up pretty closely with what was said 2000 years ago in India. So we're going back to what the Indians have always been teaching, and what the West is finally coming to.

Another great example is that the English and other scholars, who encountered Indian philosophy in the 1800s, dismissed it as very speculative: There was this idea that there's not just a world, but countless world systems; these huge universal world systems. What were they thinking? They were just trying to do this kind of mental gymnastics and see who could outdo whom, and turn to describing the physical world.

And then you know, a century and a half later, guess what? The West is saying that there are all these multiple millions and uncountable world systems. It's all expanding, and whether it's going to contract or not contract, we do not know. Everything of the Indian philosophies that was laughed at as ridiculous, now is acknowledged as the way it is, according to the West.

My mother-in-law is a nurse, and she had been studying both her nursing and Indian explanations of karma when she came across a passage in one of the early Indian books. If you look at who has the biggest karmic impact, in terms of doing a good action or a bad action, one of the biggest is the parent, the mother in particular. And then there was a recorded case with one mother who had the ovum and another mother who carried the baby to term. At the time she was reading it, it was a long time ago when surrogacy wasn't done yet, and my mother-in-law was saying, "Why would they even speculate on this? Why is this in a book from 500 BC or 300 BC?"

A few years later they did exactly that. Answer the question now: Which one has the karma of being the mother?



There are just so many cases! I could write a book about all the times the West has come around to the ideas that they previously dismissed as ridiculous Indian ideas, and now they go, “Oh, actually that’s true!”

**Q: Well, the concept of nothingness is from the Indian philosophy. So many of the fundamental principles of mathematics came from India.**

William James, the psychologist, said around 1900, “The nature of the human mind is that it cannot stay on a single thought or a single object for more than a second or two.” Meanwhile these meditators in India could just stay there; forget hours or days, they could just stay there. That was completely out of the mindset of the Western scientists of the Victorian era.

**Q: One thing that amazes me that Babuji said is, “The way forward for humanity is Eastern heart and Western mind, together.” It’s not that you need one; you need both. Somebody like you has the possibility to live that, right?**


That’s my goal. I feel so blessed that I was given a rigorous scientific education at a time when quantum theory was known, general relativity, transistors, everything that we know about the natural world, and at the same time, the great thinkers of India like Nagarjuna and others had been translated.

Before 1980 you could not find a good translation of Nagarjuna, and before 1980 you really couldn’t find any presentation on general relativity or quantum theory for lay people. And now you find both if you know where to look. Someone has to still show you some of these things, because they are pretty impenetrable at a certain superficial level, but if someone leads you through it, you can get it. I teach a one-week symposium on this.

**Q: You are welcome to do it sometime here.**

I’d love to. It would be a blast! Thank you very much.





*One wants to  
wander away  
from the world's  
somewheres, into  
our own nowhere.*

D.H. LAWRENCE





it changes  
everything



**FAUSTO RUSSO** was an Italian seeker who arrived at the feet of Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur (Babuji) in Rome in 1976, and who left this world in December 2014. This is a posthumous publication of one of his articles, in which he shares his experience of the role of a Guide in his own evolution, and the importance of silence and learning to listen to the heart.



We see anxiety and tension all round us – in people, organizations, nations and events. It is easy to be disturbed by the confusion they produce. I have often wondered where exactly this disturbance comes from, and the conclusion I have come to is that it comes from the ego. In fact the desires produced by the ego trouble our minds in such a way that we feel great anxiety if they are not fulfilled, when reality doesn't meet our expectations. If, on the other hand, we follow our inner voice rather than our desires, then deeper guidance prevails and we experience calmness and freedom.

I remember my Guide once saying, "When Babuji is in my heart, I go free like the air because he looks after me. But when he is not with me I have to look after myself, I'm in tension, I'm responsible, and that is a very tragic situation." In that situation anxiety creeps in and also fear. We feel like a child who has lost sight of his parents and starts wandering around in anguish, with tears in his eyes.

Looking at this situation from another point of view, I have noticed the negative effect that anxiety and agitation have in any field of endeavor – our actions become unbalanced and risk creating further problems.

We try to use a crane to pick up a needle, whereas when we are calm, confident, and have faith, every action utilizes only the minimum amount of energy or effort required.

Another benefit of this state of mind is clarity and perception. We enjoy a wider consciousness, a circular perception, and we are able to evaluate our problems in their right dimension and find the right response. The heart is able to make its voice audible and answer our questions.

Miseries and troubles are easily avoided if we conduct life wisely, following the guidance of a Guide. This guidance is not external, imposing itself from outside, as is commonly thought.

One day we find that an inner voice has been awakened within to help us accept and realize the inner truths, inner impulses and inner verities which until now have lain dormant, unheard.



## IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

A Guide creates in us the necessary state of silence in which we can perceive the inner voice – the Voice Real. This Voice Real is heard when all other voices are stilled. In our small and disorderly lives, our minds have become too confused and disturbed by a host of very small things to be able to perceive the soundless messages coming from within. We cannot still them ourselves, so we need a Guide to do it – one who has arrived at self-mastery.

When this silent vacuum is created it is very potent. It is perhaps the greatest power, so it needs to be oriented toward higher objectives, not those coming from material existence. A Guide purifies and opens the recesses of our hearts, allowing them to respond to the universal Voice that has been speaking to human beings from time immemorial.

The terms ‘within’ and ‘without’ are conventions, because the source of inspiration is not positioned in space and time. We are dealing with something beyond those dimensions. Time does not have a beginning or an end; it is circular. When we go beyond it, past, present and future merge in one circular eternal present. I think that ‘truth’ must similarly be circular, and ‘life’ itself too, in the sense that they are infinite and perceivable from higher and higher planes as we grow, as we expand.



As more and more faces of the same Reality appear to us in this journey toward Infinity, I think that one day we will perceive Reality as it is, in its total, circular expression. The great discoveries made in the field of science were achieved when scientists were able to go beyond the mere physical aspect of Reality and penetrate other planes of existence.

In a momentary state when their mind was “silenced,” they were able to go beyond the sensory world to discover higher laws of the universe. Meditation is a way of training the mind to better perceive these subtler planes of existence and allow the spark of intuition to manifest itself.

We all know that it is not advisable to act when we are in a state of excitement or emotion, because this unbalances the mind and leads us into wrong action. So when important decisions are to be taken we feel the need to be alone, to go to a quiet place away from the pressure and excitement of the world, to listen to our heart. It has always been said that, “Silence is the voice of God.” The silence created in our heart, when it is cleaned of emotional impressions, stills the mind and makes it capable of perceiving the divine impulse that emerges from within, coming up in the calm water like a bubble. When the inner ocean is calm and clear, our state of expanded consciousness opens up to us a vast new realm of existence.

*Looking at the green lake,  
Suddenly my heart wept in prayer,  
“When shall I achieve total union with you?”  
Then, after a while, I felt my eyes becoming  
clear and calm like the lake,  
And from the heart a voice said,  
“It will come.”*





# A Flame Without Smoke



**ROBERT WELTON** is a metaphysician living in Santa Barbara, California. In this article from his book, *Be Your Own Light*, he shares his insights on relationships, soul mates, and love.

The purpose of our lives is revealed in our relationships with family, friends, lovers, enemies, and everyone we chance to meet. Everyone plays a part in everyone else's life experience. In great or small roles, people appear on the stage of our lives in different costumes, in different lifetimes. Their true character or importance may not be recognized except in hindsight.

Mystics report that kindred spirits, like birds of a feather, group together for each migration through the material world. These soul support groups encompass all types of people from all walks of life because, help or hindrance, friend or foe, all polarities are necessary for all-weather navigation and course corrections.

The circles of family, friends, work mates, acquaintances and strangers, occupy different orbits of intimacy. In friendships we often find our true "family" of soul mates, those with whom we can be most intimate and vulnerable. They can bring out the best and the worst in us. Both

reflections of personality are needed to witness our strengths, and the weaknesses that need exercise.

The success of a relationship depends upon the degree we allow ourselves to become vulnerable. We cultivate love when we allow our most vulnerable selves to be known, and when we honor the spiritual connection that grows from that offering, with trust, respect, and affection. When you are in love, you must be authentic without any pretense. You must be a flame without any smoke.

Love is a feeling that defies description in every language. Each experience of love is unique and different, combining wings that have never flown together before. Each love passing through our lives leads to a greater understanding of ourselves and the beloved. Love is a bridge that connects us to the wisdom of our hearts.

Love, like happiness, is not perfected until it is shared. You cannot kiss your own lips. Paulo Coelho, the famous Brazilian novelist of *The Alchemist*, wrote, "Love is not found in someone else, but in ourselves; we simply awaken it. But in order to do that, we need the other person. The universe only makes sense when we have someone else to share our feelings with."

Love is the Alchemy, the magic Elixir of Life that transforms two into One. In love, the different colors of your being become unified as one pure white light. Hindus call this state of being, *Ananda*, meaning, happiness, joy and bliss. In every life Signs appear, pointing the same way as all Masters have pointed. The Path to Happiness and Joy follows Love wherever it goes.

Raymond Moody, an American medical researcher of near death experiences and author of the bestseller, *Life After Life*, wrote, "People who return from near death experiences tell us that in the seeming closing moments of their earthly lives, they learned that the most important thing we can do while we are here is to learn to love." Once you have learned to love, you will have learned to live.



# Life Lessons

**USHA RANI PADMASOLA** shares her sense of loss at growing up without grandparents, and the wonderful significance they hold in the lives of her children and for the younger generation in general.

never saw my grandparents. My descent was delayed and they had an early ascent. Being raised in their absence left a strange impact on me. I would look at all my cousins and friends with much wonder and longing whenever they fondly mentioned their grandparents.

Clearly, I missed the presence of an old couple at home. In contrast to my lifestyle, where I was completely under the charge of my parents and older siblings, my children are so fortunate to enjoy the loving gaze, embrace and pampering from both sets of grandparents. I observe they bond easily with each other and have established a strong, loving friendship. The life lessons imparted by wise grandparents percolates down into sensible grandchildren with ease.

I know for certain that I, in all my capacity as a parent and with all my expectations and anxieties, could never generate that kind of warmth, love and care that exudes naturally from the generation above me.





In this day of rush and few holidays in our calendars, I notice that the young and the middle-aged prefer to take a vacation outside their city or country and seldom thinking of vacationing at their grandparents' home. In this day of nuclear lives, young parents are gifting their children a lonely life in the name of expensive holidays, higher levels of "technoference," and the associated relationship conflict, lower relationship satisfaction, depressive symptoms and lower life satisfaction.

Let's give it a thought: What will our children remember when they grow up?

A few children are lucky enough to spend precious holidays alongside their cousins in their grandparents' homes. If for no other reason, our children, like us, will certainly recall their childhood fondly and perhaps the knowledge

acquired by virtue of their travels to the warm feelings of familial love.

Allowing those moments that bind children with their roots, and some time for loving attention, gives them strength and security, which our independent lives otherwise cannot provide. And in exchange, a deep satisfaction fills an old soul who lives far away, in fear of aging and helplessly observing the uncertainty of how life will unfold.

Although grandparents rarely give us a glimpse of their unease, this precious bond can alter a tale of loneliness, anxiety, fear and uncertainty, even as they eagerly become a part of their grandchildren's everyday life while the vacation lasts.



*To be born in  
a human body is rare,  
Don't throw away the reward of  
your past good deeds.*

MIRABAI



*be inspired.*




# YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY

## PART 7

### VIKSHEPAS: VYADHI AND STYANA

In this series of articles, **DAAJI** explains the fundamental principles of yogic psychology, with its foundation in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. He explains Patanjali's descriptions of the human mind and the various mental imbalances, and furthermore gives us solutions to regain mental well-being through yogic practices. In this article he starts to explore the *vikshepas*, the obstacles to mental well-being that have arisen because of the accumulation of *samskaras* in our system. These 9 *vikshepas* describe so many of the maladies of modern humanity. Here Daaji focuses especially on the first two, *vyadhi* and *styana*.



Remembering the fundamental principle of yogic psychology: our underlying mental state is one of purity and stillness. This stillness is at the Center of our existence, like the eye of the tornado, and is present in every fiber of our being, at the center of every atom. Yoga is all about our journey home to that Center, and we start by removing all the complexities and impurities in our field of consciousness.

In this series so far, we have seen how complexities and impurities start to accumulate, by exploring the normal everyday workings of the human mind – how the 5 *vrittis* work in the field of consciousness. Some of the *vrittis* are pure and in sync with mental balance, while others are colored and take us away from that pure, balanced state. Then we explored the next layer of complexity – the 5 *kleshas* or mental afflictions that take us further away from our Center of balance and result in suffering.

Now we continue further away from the Center, into the realm of entropy, complexity and instability, as we become more and more entangled in those afflictions playing out in our daily lives. We create behavioral patterns and habits through the accumulation of *samskaras*, and these lead to all sorts of ailments. Yoga calls these ailments or obstacles *vikshepas*. Patanjali described them as 9 types in his Yoga Sutras, a few thousand years ago. In this day and age we can add a couple more to the list.

## 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* – doubt, indecision

*Pramada* – carelessness, negligence, haste

*Alasya* – laziness, sloth

*Avirati* – lack of abstaining,  
absence of non-attachment

*Bhranti-Darshana* – false perception

*Alabdha-Bhumikatva* – failing to attain  
stages on the journey

*Anavasthitattva* – inability to maintain  
the stage, instability

## 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

We have already discussed the need to spend some time every day focused inward on the core of our being, of our existence, in order to counteract the entropy that would otherwise take us outward into entanglements, suffering and afflictions. That is what we do in Heartfulness Meditation – we turn inward to our heart. It is simple: when we direct the mind towards the heart, we move towards balance, peace, stillness and harmony; when we direct the mind outward into the external world, without a strong connection to the heart we encounter more and more entropy and instability.

Daily life is the interplay of the two currents – the outward and inward flow of energy and attention. Once we are well established in our inward connection with the heart, it permeates our being and oozes out into every aspect of life, so that we are able to avoid the pull of outward entropy. This is the most preventative approach to mental health we could possibly take. Imagine if every young person knew how to do this before embarking on the journey of life. How different the world would be.

Now, what happens when we don't have that inward awareness with attention or connection developed, when we are not centered in the core of our heart? We become like leaves tossed about in the wind. Whatever colorings or afflictions are there in our system become more complex and manifest as the *vikshepas*, the obstacles and distractions to our further progress. Patanjali described these obstacles as follows:

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

*Vyadhi* - Disease

*Styana* - Languor, mental dullness, apathy

*Samsaya* - Doubt

*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

*Anavasthitatvani* - Instability, not retaining the condition

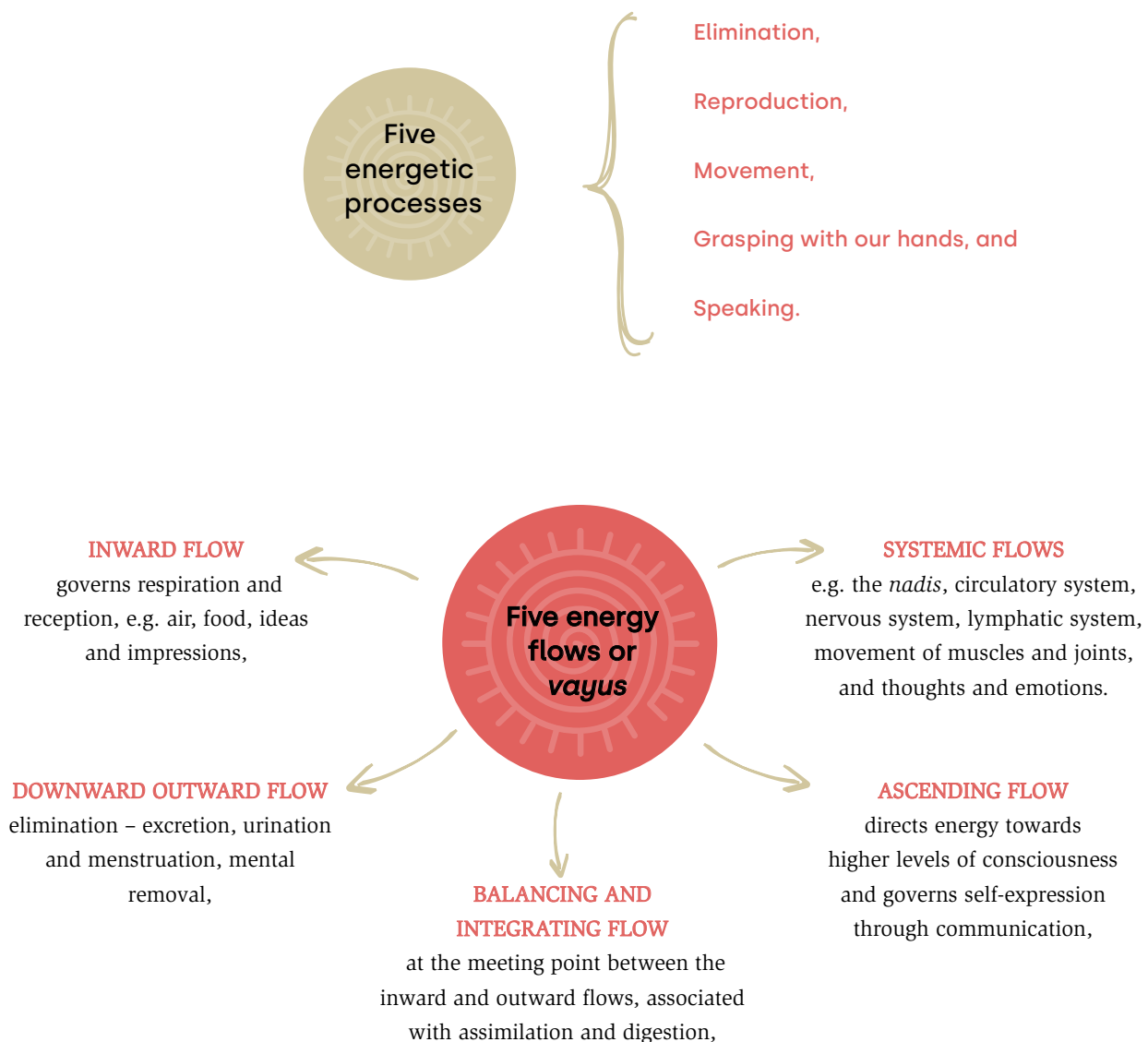
They are the obstacles that distract the mind.

In the modern context, we can add two more to the list:  
fear of missing out (FOMO),  
and digital distraction.

## VYADHI

The first of the *vikshepas* is *vyadhi* or disease. Here Patanjali means physical dis-ease, where the system is away from ease. Where does disease start? Rarely does it initiate in the physical body itself, unless it is the result of an accident or physical trauma. Generally, it starts in the sheath of *prana*, in the bio-energy field known as the *pranamaya kosha* in Yoga.

The *pranamaya kosha* is the sheath where we experience the flow of energy within us, and with the world around us. Yogis describe the energy flow according to five energetic processes (*karmendriyas*) and five energy flows (*pranas*):



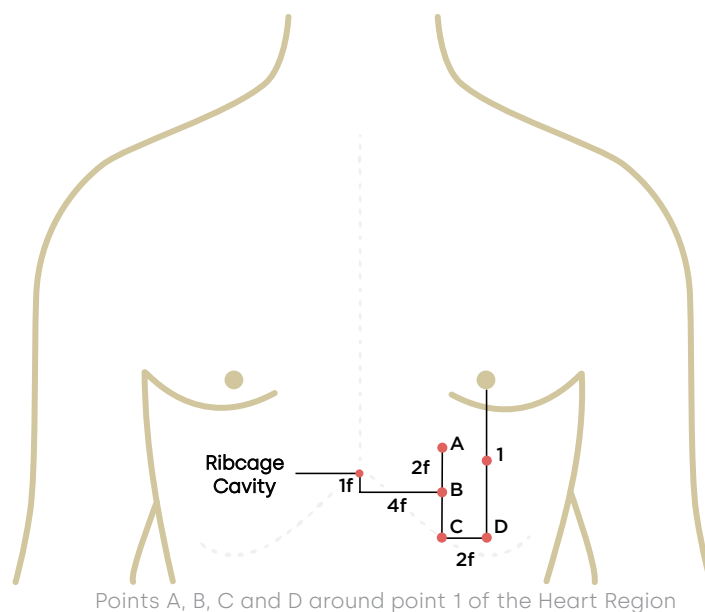
The sheath of *prana* is subtler and more refined than the physical sheath and is not glued to it. It envelops us like an energy bubble, creating the aura. The *chakras* of the subtle body are associated with this sheath. Because it is affected before any physical illness occurs, traditional healing systems like acupuncture and acupressure work on the energy meridians. Whenever an imbalance or illness happens, the first *kosha* to be compromised is usually the *pranamaya kosha*. Sometimes we can even predict the health of a person just by looking at the aura around their face, and disturbances in this bio-energy sheath have also shown up in Kirlian photography months before any physical disease manifests. Kirlian photography also captures unique images of individuals after meditation, with newer levels of consciousness affecting the aura in a positive way.

It is our attitude that affects our *pranamaya kosha* to a large extent. When this *kosha* is light and shining, our overall health is benefited. We radiate whatever state we have in our energy sheath, whether that is a loving joyous feeling or a negative feeling. When we are stressed, angry, or emotionally reactive, we need more energy. As a result, the *pranamaya kosha* is activated and this activates the sympathetic nervous system: our heart rate goes up, our breathing changes, and our body goes into its stress response. And today, stress is the great epidemic of the early 21st century, leading to all sorts of other chronic diseases, both physical and mental.

This is one of the reasons why *pranayama* came into being in Yoga – to balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. When our sympathetic nervous system is activated by stress, we can calm ourselves by activating the parasympathetic system through the *Chandra nadi*. And when we need to be more active and engaged, we can activate the sympathetic system through the *Surya nadi*. We are able to bring about balance.

The *pranamaya kosha* is not easy to refine, because here the ego mixes with consciousness, and that can be a volatile mix! All our energetic processes and cognitive senses derive their energy from this sheath, which also regulates our waking consciousness. Emotions like passion and anger are nourished by it. Fights and conflicts result from its misalignment, and we may become very egotistical if it is not refined. Excessive desire and materialism also upset the balance of the *pranamaya kosha*, leading to dis-ease. Per contra, moderation of emotions and mental faculties harmonizes the *pranamaya kosha*, which in turn harmonizes the physical body. The Heartfulness practices, including Point A Meditation and Point B Cleaning are very beneficial in refining this *kosha* and thus, ultimately, in preventing disease.

Continuous mind chatter, likes and dislikes, attraction and repulsion, all make this sheath unstable. So it helps to





*The word for health in Sanskrit is swasthya, meaning 'to be centered in one's Self'. In English, also, the word 'health' is from the same root as the words 'whole' and 'holy'. When we are healthy, centered and whole, the energy in our pranamaya kosha circulates freely, without blockages.*

cultivate a smooth way of speaking, gentle body language, and a gracious inner attitude. Heartfulness practices provide the foundation for this moderation. It is our reactions of likes and dislikes that create the first vibration or stir in the field of consciousness, which affects point C, the strategic point or landing point for *samskaras* into our system. To prevent point C from being affected by likes and dislikes, try to maintain a meditative state throughout the day, like a beautiful lotus flower resplendent and contented in a dirty pond.

When we are humble and respectful towards everyone, no matter what their status in life, including young ones and the elderly, and when we constantly dive into a state of insignificance and curb the ego, we find that this sheath becomes more and more refined. It finds its true luster when we have totally refined the ego to its original purity.

As we have already discussed, Heartfulness Cleaning removes the underlying *samskaras*, cleaning the complexities and impurities in the field of consciousness at the vibrational level, and this significantly reduces the volatility of the *pranamaya kosha*.

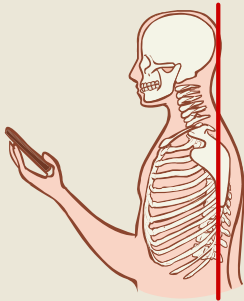
The word for health in Sanskrit is *swasthya*, meaning 'to be centered in one's Self'. In English, also, the word 'health' is from the same root as the words 'whole' and 'holy'. When we are healthy, centered and whole, the energy in

our *pranamaya kosha* circulates freely, without blockages. Energy is not dissipated entropically, and is perpetually recycling. And this is important because we also need energy to reach the Center – we need escape velocity, and that requires a healthy body and a healthy mind.

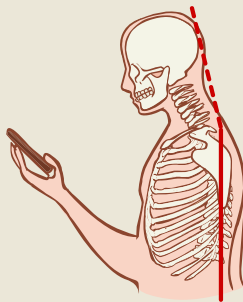
This aspect of careful utilization of energy gives us a clue as to why the *Asanas* for meditation are cross-legged with feet and hands turned inward, with a straight back and closed eyes. The body dissipates energy easily through the fingers, feet and eyes. When our hands are gently clasped, and our feet are crossed, they form closed circuits and energy is conserved. Open eyes actually dissipate the largest amount of energy from our *pranamaya kosha*, and when we close our eyes this energy is conserved well.

When the spine is straight, we conserve energy in another way. With the body and head upright, gravitation doesn't lead to more energy being dissipated than needed. Even when they are balanced lightly on top of our necks, our heads weigh around 5 kilograms. When the head is straight and balanced, it will feel almost weightless. But when our heads fall forward during meditation or at other times, 15 degrees of movement away from the balanced position adds 12 kilograms to the weight of the head, and 60 degrees of movement adds 27 kilograms of strain on the neck and shoulders. So it is important to stay upright, steady and balanced in a relaxed way during meditation.

## EFFECT OF BENDING THE HEAD ON THE CERVICAL SPINE



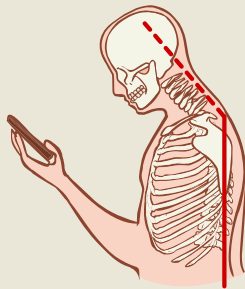
0°  
5 Kilos



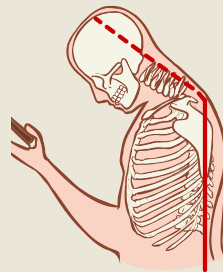
15°  
12 Kilos



30°  
18 Kilos



45°  
22 Kilos



60°  
27 Kilos



Now, let's move to another level of functioning entirely: imagine the role Transmission or *pranahuti* plays in regulating the bio-energy sheath and directing our attention toward the Center, away from the entropy of afflictions and obstacles. In the very first Heartfulness Meditation, a person can dive deep into *Samadhi* because of Transmission, because it is the subtlest energy emanating from the core of our heart itself. While it requires a Guide of the highest caliber to infuse Transmission into our hearts in a masterly way, so that it acts as a catalyst in our system, the process is simple. The Guide is taking the *prana* of *prana* itself, the ultimate form of energy – so subtle that it has no hint of actual energy left in it – and is utilizing it to transform us from the inside out. Through Transmission we learn how to stay connected. It gently entices us from the core of our heart itself, so the connection becomes more and more effortless. In fact it is an effortless antidote to our individual entropy.

## STYANA

The second of the *vikshepas* is *styana*, meaning – languor, apathy and mental dullness. Apathy is one of the greatest obstacles to any endeavor, as it is a state in which we waste energy. Our energy is drained, we go round and round in circles, and we may talk a lot but it does not translate into doing. We lose interest, and without interest nothing is possible. What does the word 'enthusiasm' mean? It comes from the Greek word *enthousiasmos*, meaning 'possessed by God, inspired'. Transmission is another way of infusing Divinity into our hearts, inspiring us, enthusing us, so that we have interest. With Transmission apathy can disappear overnight. The source of all energy, the source of all vitality, the life in life, is being infused into us so subtly and so gently. It is like a tree that has been thirsting for water all through the hot dry summer, and one day the monsoon rains arrive. The level of vitality in that tree will improve instantly. Similarly, when we receive Transmission, life takes on a new level of vitality. The Transmission nourishes our soul and the ripple effect is so palpable, comforting our heart, mind and body.

Even still, the need to conserve energy is there, because if we keep on dissipating energy we will lose the vitality we receive through Transmission, and we will deflate like a balloon that has been untied. The balloon will be inflated then deflated, inflated then deflated, inflated and deflated. What a waste if nothing is retained after each meditation! That is one reason why it is important to sit for a few minutes after Heartfulness Meditation and absorb the inner condition received, making an attempt to be one with it. It allows us to acquire it, enliven it, imbibe it, become one with it, in union, so that it does not dissipate. That way we make the most of every opportunity.



Lastly, Swami Vivekananda has beautifully explained that it is our consciousness, our “*chit*, our mind-stuff, that is the engine that draws in the *prana* from the surroundings, and manufactures out of this *prana* the various vital forces: first of all the forces that keep the body in preservation, and lastly thought, will, and all other powers.” So imagine how effective this *chit* will be in utilizing *prana* if we keep it in a purified refined state, regularly immersed in Transmission in daily meditation. Now, compare that with a *chit* weighed down by mental afflictions, obstacles and heaviness. There is no comparison. With a pure consciousness vitality is effortless, while with a consciousness that is complex, impure, entangled, and has succumbed to entropy, apathy is almost inevitable because energy is always dissipating. It is as difficult as swimming against the current.

Swami Vivekananda goes on to say that it is also *prana* that makes new neural pathways in the brain: “With every fresh idea we make a new impression in the brain, cut new channels through the brain-stuff.” So imagine the impact of Transmission, the most potent form of *prana*, on neuroplasticity! Imagine the inspiration, the creativity, and the expansion of potential for continuous improvement and scaling new heights that comes by the simple act of meditating every morning with *pranahuti*.

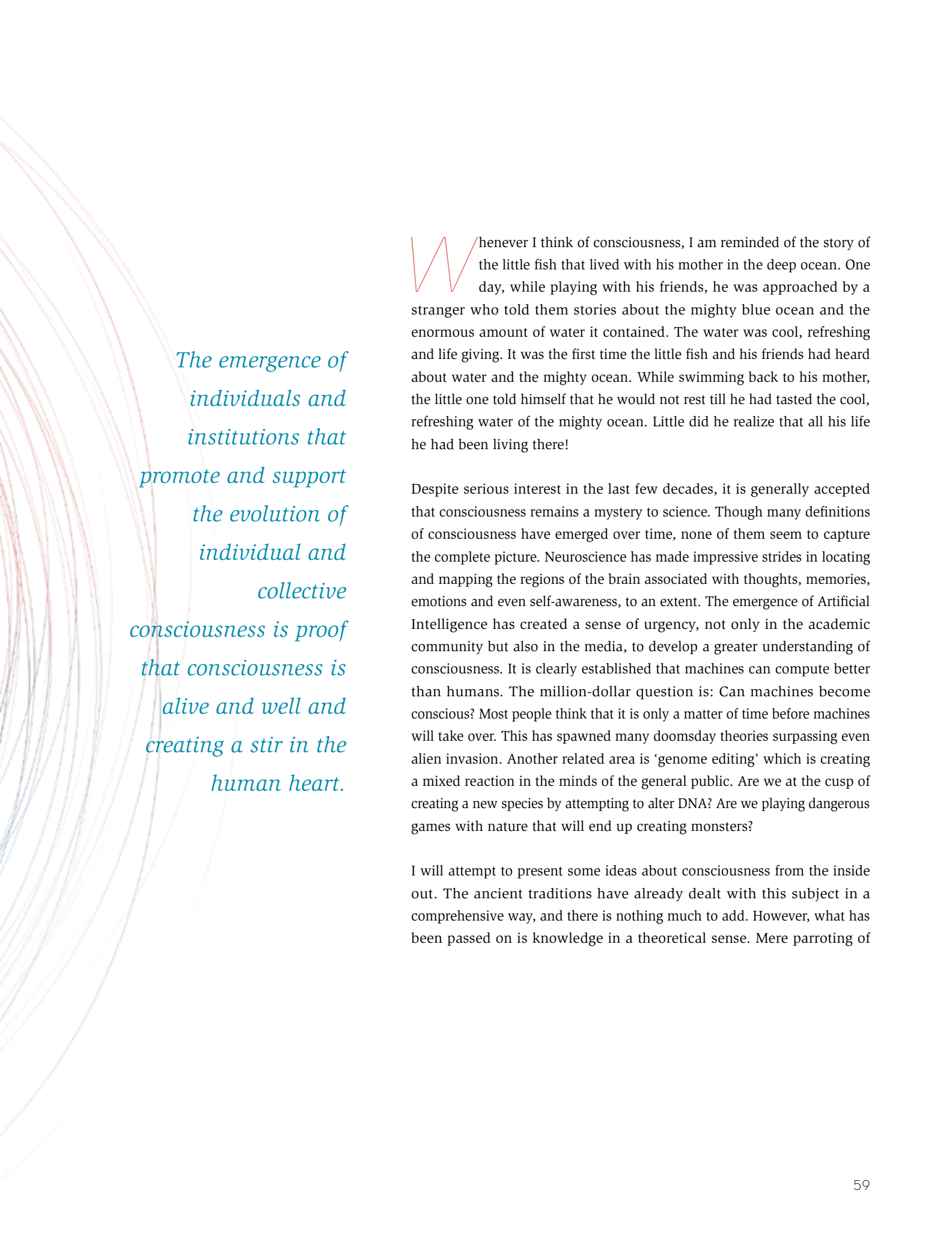
In the next article, we will explore more of the *vikshepas*, and how they can be transcended through the simple practices of Heartfulness, bringing greater and greater mental well-being.

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# The Field of Consciousness

**JAMES JOSEPH** gives us an inspiring bird's eye perspective on consciousness, relating ancient and modern, spiritual and scientific, experiential and theoretical, and individual and collective.





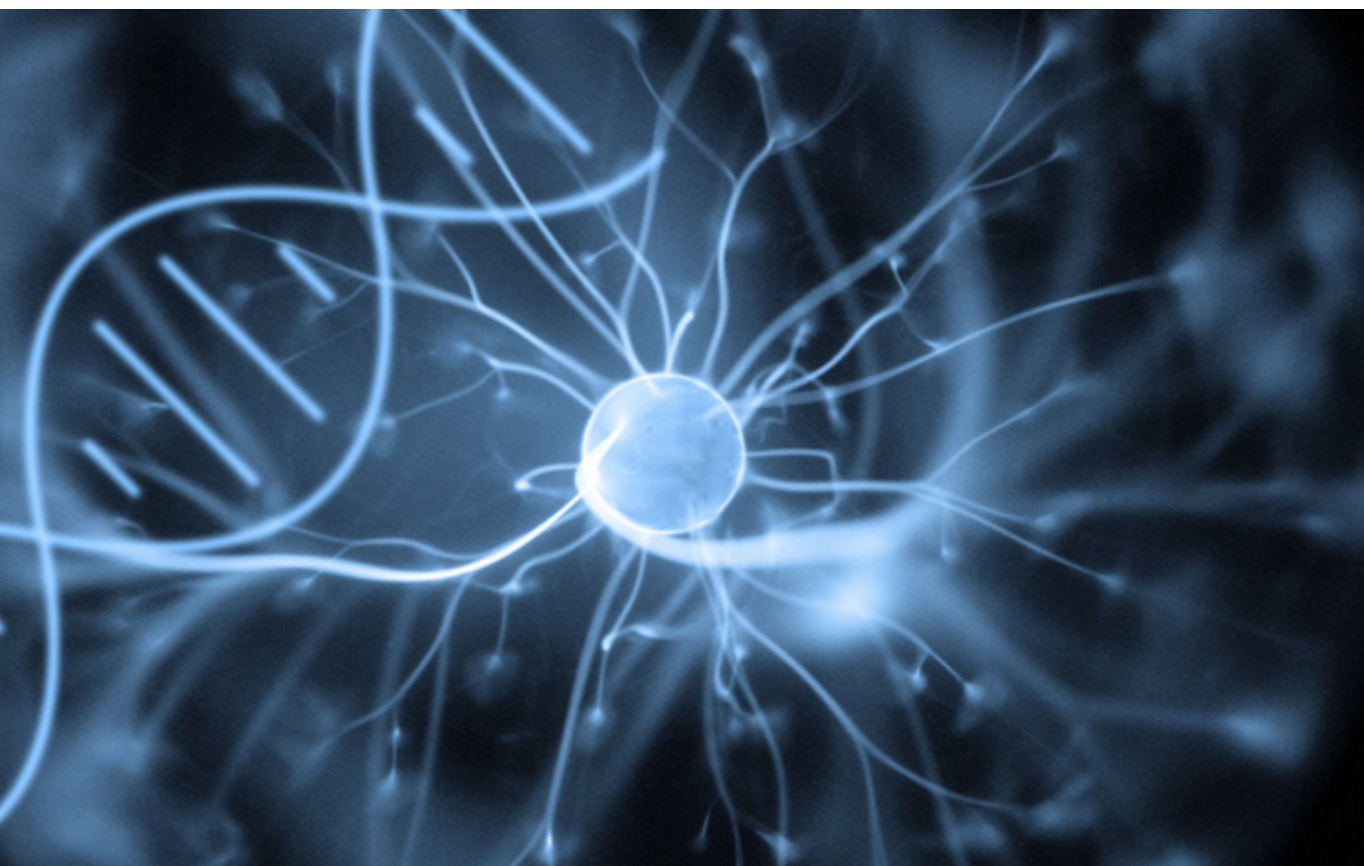
*The emergence of  
individuals and  
institutions that  
promote and support  
the evolution of  
individual and  
collective  
consciousness is proof  
that consciousness is  
alive and well and  
creating a stir in the  
human heart.*

Whenever I think of consciousness, I am reminded of the story of the little fish that lived with his mother in the deep ocean. One day, while playing with his friends, he was approached by a stranger who told them stories about the mighty blue ocean and the enormous amount of water it contained. The water was cool, refreshing and life giving. It was the first time the little fish and his friends had heard about water and the mighty ocean. While swimming back to his mother, the little one told himself that he would not rest till he had tasted the cool, refreshing water of the mighty ocean. Little did he realize that all his life he had been living there!

Despite serious interest in the last few decades, it is generally accepted that consciousness remains a mystery to science. Though many definitions of consciousness have emerged over time, none of them seem to capture the complete picture. Neuroscience has made impressive strides in locating and mapping the regions of the brain associated with thoughts, memories, emotions and even self-awareness, to an extent. The emergence of Artificial Intelligence has created a sense of urgency, not only in the academic community but also in the media, to develop a greater understanding of consciousness. It is clearly established that machines can compute better than humans. The million-dollar question is: Can machines become conscious? Most people think that it is only a matter of time before machines will take over. This has spawned many doomsday theories surpassing even alien invasion. Another related area is 'genome editing' which is creating a mixed reaction in the minds of the general public. Are we at the cusp of creating a new species by attempting to alter DNA? Are we playing dangerous games with nature that will end up creating monsters?

I will attempt to present some ideas about consciousness from the inside out. The ancient traditions have already dealt with this subject in a comprehensive way, and there is nothing much to add. However, what has been passed on is knowledge in a theoretical sense. Mere parroting of





revealed knowledge gets us nowhere unless we make an attempt to traverse the inner path the wise ones have traveled, making that knowledge our own.

Much of what science has begun to understand about consciousness has already been mapped and codified by ancient spiritual scientists, such as the Vedic seers. The most comprehensive map of consciousness has, however, been passed on to us by the great 20th century yogic Master, Ram Chandra, also known as Babuji, through his writings and oral teachings. In a recent book, *Designing Destiny*, Kamlesh Patel (Daaji) has presented some of these teachings and also added his own research on all matters related to the evolution of consciousness.

But these writings of the yogic Masters are only signposts. All serious students of consciousness have to undertake the journey for themselves. This is the ancient way – the contemplative journey informed by intuition, insight and the helping hand of the great ones who have traversed that path.

The first step in this journey is to go beyond the realm of matter (*Maya*) through a series of steps into the quantum field of the mind. For this we have to overcome both the weak force – the gravity created by likes and dislikes, attachments and aversions – as well as the strong force – the quantum force exerted by ego

identification and conditioning. This is achieved through the process of retracing the path of descent taken at the time of creation.

We use the mind as the vehicle for this journey back home. Our will is the impelling force that powers this vehicle. As we traverse the realm of material manifestation into the realm of the quantum field of the mind, we realize that both matter and mind emanate or co-emerge from the field of consciousness.

Explained in a simple way, behind matter there is mind. The mind has many layers. The outer layer is conditioned or programmed, and beyond the conditioned mind is the pure mind. Behind the pure mind is consciousness. Behind consciousness is the field of potentiality and behind that is the sphere of the Absolute.

It is not possible to understand consciousness in its entirety through the instrument of the mind, as consciousness extends beyond the shores of thought. What is required is a purified perception or direct perception. So it is possible that there is no direct correlate of consciousness in the human brain. Hence consciousness may never reveal itself to science as long as science remains confined to the realm of matter.

Consciousness itself has many layers and becomes more and more subtle as it approaches the Absolute. It pervades everything in creation, animate and inanimate. In matter, which is energy in a frozen state, it exists in a dormant state. It is what animates the mind and all its constituents such as the ego, the intellect and the thinking faculty. In a sense it holds the code for the whole of creation. It is the repository of the blueprint for everything that is manifest and unmanifest in creation. Consciousness is part of our everyday life. We interact with it every moment. It animates our senses. It is what enables the eye to see and the ear to hear. It is what makes us self-aware. It is what helps us focus our attention.

So why is consciousness relevant in our human existence? It is now widely accepted that the human being is the most

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## BE INSPIRED

evolved of the sentient beings. From the perspective of consciousness, humans have ascended the highest rung of the ladder of consciousness so far. This level of evolution is etched and coded in our DNA. According to the Heartfulness Guides, human beings have reached such a stage of ascent that it is possible to complete the journey of evolution in one lifetime through a quantum leap in consciousness.

While each one of us, by virtue of our DNA, has the potential to make the great leap, the actual progress is determined by the level of our collective consciousness. In reality it is a collective leap and this collective leap is greatly enabled by individual efforts.

To understand this requires a paradigm shift. In our current paradigm, each one of us perceives our self as an individual point of awareness existing in a space-time continuum. We are limited by the belief that we are individual entities living in our own little bubbles alongside that of others. Our point of reference is our physical body in space and time. We believe that we each have a soul that resides in the physical body. At the time of death, the soul leaves the body and goes back to base.

In the new paradigm we see ourselves as part of the whole. This can be understood if we imagine that we are each a television set that receives the programs broadcasted by one TV station. We have antennae that can pick up the signals sent by the station. Cutting edge research in epigenetics is helping to define this new paradigm, in which

the Self does not reside inside the physical body. Our DNA has protein antennae that receive the signals from the Source. We exist in a sea of consciousness. At the time of death, it is the body that leaves us, not vice versa.

This supports the spiritual viewpoint that there is only One and that One manifests through various physical forms. The source is experiencing life through various forms and all that experience is captured in the consciousness of the Source, of which we are an individual but integral part. We are connected to the collective consciousness through the portal of our heart, which is the instrument of consciousness.

So when we have this idea that we are not individual beings struggling through life, but the Great Spirit, the Absolute, manifesting itself through various forms both animate and inanimate, it is a sign of enlightened awakening. This awakening is what helps us remove our likes and dislikes, attachments and aversions, so that we live in harmony with our fellow beings, in tune with Nature. It is also what inspires us to raise our vibration by living a life of virtue, and help to awaken others within our sphere of influence.

The most important step in this is meditation. Meditation is a process of regulating the mind through focused attention and awareness. Both are qualities of consciousness. It is with the help of the refined mind that we ascend the ladder of consciousness. When we imbibe these qualities of consciousness in various stages of enlightenment, and

*When we imbibe these qualities of consciousness in various stages of enlightenment, and manifest them in our day-to-day living, we raise our own vibration and that of humanity as a whole. This then contributes to the evolution of the collective consciousness of humankind and of all creation.*





manifest them in our day-to-day living, we raise our own vibration and that of humanity as a whole. This then contributes to the evolution of the collective consciousness of humankind and of all creation.

What is most important to remember is that the vibratory level of the planet and the universe cannot be raised by meditation alone. Our day-to-day living has to reflect the states of mind that we harvest in meditation. When each one of us manifests our best on a consistent basis, by molding our living to such a high order that we not only inspire ourselves but also inspire others, we change our collective destiny.

The emergence of individuals and institutions that promote and support the evolution of individual and collective consciousness is proof that consciousness is alive and well and creating a stir in the human heart. We watch with gratitude and wonder as corporations the world over are encouraging their employees to learn and practice meditation. It is also gratifying to see that there is a movement underway to encourage non-profit as well as commercial organizations to embrace the principles and practices of 'conscious business'.

I continue to think about the little fish, and wonder whether he ever managed to see the ocean. Sometimes when I see birds flying over the ocean, I can't help thinking that the little fish may be among them. Maybe his intense craving to know the ocean gave him wings so that he could see the ocean from the perspective of the sky. Maybe all of those birds were at one time little fish with an intense desire to see the ocean.







# TASTE *of* LIFE

*Story, as it turns out, was  
crucial to our evolution –  
more so than opposable  
thumbs. Opposable thumbs  
let us hang on; story told  
us what to hang on to.*

LISA CRON



# ONCE UPON A TIME

## There Lived a Storyteller

**VIKRAM SRIDHAR** is a modern day storyteller from Bangalore, India. Here he shares with MEGHANA ANAND some insights about the art of storytelling and how it is an enabler of the wisdom bridge.



Q: Hi Vikram. Tell us how you came to be a storyteller.

Storytelling connects three broad areas of my interest – theater, conservation and social work – though my academic qualification is in engineering and management. Theater for me meant acting, production, backstage, and ticketing; basically producing a play. I used to work with wildlife organizations in the rescue space in Bangalore, rescuing kites, monkeys and snakes. I also used to work with children, senior citizens and others in the social sector.

Storytelling first happened once when someone asked me, as a theater person, to come and tell a story. But when I looked at the story world a little more deeply, I understood that actually every folktale has flora and fauna deeply embedded in it. And if you extrapolate that into Indian mythology also, every deity has an animal or a bird and a tree or a plant. That means conservation is not outside, it's already there in our households and folklore, and these stories are what we today call folktales.

Conservation is not only about flora and fauna. It can be about our languages, the textiles we wear, and even our emotions. For example, how do you express anger? How do you use it? That is conserving your own emotions. The Bhagavad Gita says, “*Ahankaram balam darpam kamam krodham,*” meaning, “Arrogance, strength, pride, lust and anger.” These are all part of our emotional palette. Every story has these emotions. Either as a listener or as a teller we are going through these emotions. That's what makes us human beings.

What I love from a theater perspective is that it is not about performing on stage, where I need to learn lines by-heart. Storytelling is more candid and more open. Second, I can see the audience's reactions and change or adapt, by listening to their voices. And third, now I had a tool for social work, and in today's times you definitely need a tool to make a change. That's what happened.

I realized that I love being in spaces with children, telling them stories. Who doesn't like to laugh? So from the Spastic Society to an old-age home to an orphanage, even in



hospitals sometimes, story is a medium that I use. It is not only about going to different spaces; even speaking to another human being itself is social work. In today's times, when people need a lot more of a human voice, just listening itself is therapeutic.

Q: Absolutely. So what kind of stories do you narrate? From where do you get your inspiration and what is the source of your stories?

In today's world, a huge chunk of what we call folktales, which connect us from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Gujarat to Arunachal, are found only in the children's section of bookstores. That is my source. A lot of revival has happened in poetry today, but these folktales that have come down to us through generations, are today to be found in books in the children's section mostly. Of course I give credit to the writers who have documented them. But this is an oral tradition of our country, and when it is no longer orally transmitted, there is no longer life in it.

## TASTE OF LIFE

So my source is just these pure simple tales – *The Panchatantra*, *The Jataka*, and even *The Stories of King Vikramaditya*. If you go deeper into the Vikramaditya stories, there is so much more from an adult's emotional perspective. Today who knows these stories? They are profound, and told in a simple language which can be understood. For a child it may be just a joke, but for an adult it's such a strong thing.

So my source is digging the folktales of our country itself. Every state has thousands and thousands of folktales, and that's where I start my collection. The word 'folklore' means 'wisdom of people', so it could be anything from Tenali Raman to Birbal, Rabindranath Tagore to Bharatiyar. It could be stories from the history of known people and unknown people, stories about the origin of food and so on.

So one source is definitely folktales, and the other is listening and digging deeper, questioning. When I question, I discover that everything has a story.

**Q: Who are your audiences? How do they respond to your sessions?**

My assumption is that human beings like to listen to stories. We assume that children are the ones who love stories, whereas I feel that anybody who is emotional will love stories. And I think everyone is emotional.

It's also a journey for me. Even if I don't achieve a certain emotional response today, it may happen tomorrow. I am not a storyteller; I am trying to be a storyteller. I may be a storyteller tomorrow and then I will connect more with someone.

Each person responds based on their baggage – on their mindset, how their day passed, and so on. For children there is absolutely no yesterday, today or tomorrow, and that's the ideal state that we all try to reach. As adults, we are constrained by the traffic, what we are going to make or eat for dinner, and in that, how we express our emotions. So, depending on the day people react to the stories differently.



**Q: Storytelling for children is popular, but what triggered you to reach out to adults through this medium?**

One trigger was definitely discovering a deeper meaning to the stories we generally tell, like *The Hare and the Tortoise*. It's a story we tell children about life, but if you look at it deeper, are we a mammal like the hare or a reptile like the tortoise? Are we running life like the hare or are we walking life like a tortoise?

The original story is in Aesop's Fables; Aesop was a somewhat romanticized character who is depicted as a Greek slave who was freed because of his cleverness, and ended up becoming an advisor to kings and city states. From the little bit of travel that I have done, I have come across the phrase "*Haraka haraka haina baraka*", which is a proverb in Swahili that means "Haste makes waste" (Literally it means "Hurry, hurry, no blessing"). In Hindi, it's *dhire dhire* (slowly, slowly); in Tamil, *arakka parakka* (hurry-burry).



And in Sevagram, where Gandhi lived, there's a huge placard which says "Mad Rush," and he talks about how the world will keep running. He quotes Aristotle, Socrates, Vivekananda, Buddha, and says that every generation will have people running, running, running. There will only be a few who run slow. And when these runners look back in life, it will be an empty road. Now if you look at *The Hare and the Tortoise* story from this perspective, it's symbolic of this fact of life. And that for me was a trigger.

The second trigger was when I went to the Sabarmati Ashram about two or three years back. I was at their bookstore, and there were these three monkeys that Gandhi is famous for.

A grandparent was showing the three monkeys to the grandchild, asking, "You know what these three are?"

And the grandchild said, "Speak no evil; hear no evil; see no evil."

I wondered, "Is the child seeing evil, hearing evil or speaking evil? Shouldn't we be instead asking ourselves? That means the stories we are trying to tell our children are actually meant for ourselves."

That for me was a big trigger. Maybe that is why adults tell stories! It was not for the children but for the sake of themselves. We are telling stories to ourselves and the children are merely spectators. We are bombarding the spectators today and expecting children to know everything, whereas us adults have lost the charm of relating to something wonderful.

**Q: How far does this tradition of storytelling go back?**

I think it is from the time we had to do time-pass. Somebody told me a beautiful thing, "Life is between birth and death, and in between we are time-passing." And if you look at our basic needs, and you take them away, aren't we doing just storytelling in between? For example, apart from hunting and gathering, our ancestors did storytelling. You can see it in cave paintings and cave architecture.

If you look at storytelling as plain art, it has a start, an end, and in between there's a curve of adventure, and we either go to a new state or we come back to the earlier state, transformed. That is a simple way to look at a story.

**Q: Storytelling is an age-old tradition: it's a pity we see it dying today. How do we keep it alive for the future generations?**

I think as long as human beings are there in this world, there will be arts. The mediums for these traditional arts will definitely adapt and go on. Unfortunately the word 'storytelling' is skewed, because today everyone is a storyteller. A moviemaker is a storyteller, a photographer

*Storytelling is an educational tool. It is a performance. It is connecting. When you do any art form – not only storytelling – you express and touch others with your emotions.*

## TASTE OF LIFE

is a storyteller. I don't have a word for myself; I sometimes wonder what I should call myself. I am just a storyteller. The media have changed. There is now a movie maker and a storyteller.

What storytelling means etymologically is 'something told by a human being orally'. So as far as human beings are there, and as far as there's a need to listen to the human voice, storytelling will exist. The media of course will change based on distance and time.

**Q: How is storytelling therapeutic?**

Storytelling is an educational tool. It is a performance. It is connecting. When you do any art form – not only storytelling – you express and touch others with your emotions.

Why do you feel so relaxed when you listen to a song? You may not have even seen the person in your life, but their singing immediately triggers something within you. It is because the human voice is a deeper connector than a visual. So when you throw it on the mike, you are touching the audience in some way – it's a comfort. And comfort is a therapy in itself.

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thinking of something else?  
It's just my space,  
my spiritual space.*

If I go deeper, when I am performing the story live in front of an audience, it has something to do with *Nada Yoga*, the Yoga of Sound, which is the *bhava*, the voice from within. This voice from within is why we do a *satsangh* or sing together. And as much as there is silence-sound-silence, there is sound-silence-sound. *Nada* comes from different parts of our body.

The Indian system of *Nada* is from our *nabhi*, the navel. When you listen to someone's voice, you are receiving that voice, that energy, and cleansing your own self with it. Your voice takes a form with your *riyaz*, your practice, your energy. That is why when you speak to people, you find some energies are positive and some are negative.

And because storytelling itself is an oral tradition, I believe *Nada Yoga* is a sublime part of it. It means that the sound which comes from me has to be with the right mindset, with positivity, with the right lifestyle. My own *riyaz* has to be solid, because when it is expressed through the voice, there are at least 20 pairs of ears listening. The voice is flowing into their body and doing something to the listener.

**Q: You have practically covered almost all parts of India with your storytelling performances. Do you have any plans of taking your stories abroad?**

I want to cover the country more, because I think this country itself is so large. I have travelled abroad in my professional life when I was working with an IT giant. But as far as storytelling is concerned, this country itself is enough. If in the process I have to go outside, it's okay, but the number of children in India itself is humongous.

I can be myself here. When I was in Srinagar in Kashmir, it was amazing to see the children there laugh aloud. I find joy in that. There is enough work to be done here as a storyteller, I feel, and I am happy with that. I think it's an ocean.

I've started to also look at the lullabies of our land. Lullabies are such important oral traditions, which don't have words. In a recent session I tried this lullaby that I'd learnt for the



first time, and the children said, “Can you sing it again? We want to lie on your lap and sleep.” And they slept! One child was lying on my lap while I was singing. It was really beautiful.

**Q: Is there any single underlying message that you carry through your stories?**

If at all anything, I would like my stories to inspire children to just love being in this world, instead of saying, “Why am I born into this world?” Children should be allowed to celebrate life. Everything is a celebration. Today is a celebration; this moment is a celebration.

And for the adults my message is that no one is perfect. That’s something I have accepted a long time back. I find the perfect in the imperfect. Who has not been guilty? We are human beings, and the idea of presenting ourselves into this world is maybe just to understand this and come back. Imperfection is something very beautiful.

**Q: That’s very motivating. What does the art of storytelling mean to you personally?**

It’s my mode to fulfill my spiritual, emotional and financial needs. Some people do three different things in life to satisfy these three needs, and I used to do that once upon a time. But today my spiritual, emotional and financial – everything is storytelling. I don’t bring in anything and I don’t take back anything. I am there for today and in that sense I am not cluttering the world.

**Q: That brings us to the last question: As a storyteller, what does “Once upon a time” mean to you?**

“Once upon a time” for me is simply going into your own self, away from everything else. It’s detoxing in a different way, because in that one hour, how many people are actually thinking of something else? It’s just my space, my spiritual space. I go completely gaga, and I don’t know what’s happening on any side. When I say or hear “Once upon a time”, it’s a different form of meditation in that space. And when so many people come together in that space, it’s a journey that can happen only once in a lifetime.

**Q: Thank you so much Vikram, and I wish you all the very best.**





ART: KATHLEEN SCARBORO

CREATING A  
Safe Future  
for Our Children

KATHLEEN SCARBORO tells her own personal story  
about being the best grandma she can be.

Becoming a grandmother revolutionized my existence. It was a chance to be the loving parent I wish I had been when my son was young. When my son was little, I knew I wasn't as mentally available for him as I should have been. I lacked patience and was worried about too many other things like money, constantly looking for work – all the pressures of daily life. I was an anxious, guilt-ridden young mother.

Coming to a spiritual path and slowly divesting myself of my mental burdens made life become more and more palatable. Gradually life seemed to be less of a battle. I came to realize that I had made things unnecessarily complicated for myself. I was on a slow but sure path towards inner balance.

It took about 20 years of spiritual practice to completely change my mental attitude and feel grateful for the joy each day could bring.

So when Alice came along in 2012, I was given the opportunity to be the best grandma I could. Even during the first week of her existence I was the one who could get her to sleep. She was one of those babies who would fiercely fight to stay awake, so I would empty my mind and walk and dance with her until she slid into sleep.

For Alice, I know my presence is totally reassuring. Even when she was only one and her parents left her alone with me for a couple of weeks, we had a great time. She did not cry once.

Why are meditators reassuring? I think it is because they have made peace with death. We can only reassure others if we are at peace with ourselves and feel safe. And we can only really feel safe if we are not afraid of leaving this world at any moment. We also feel safe and confident because we have taken responsibility for our lives and

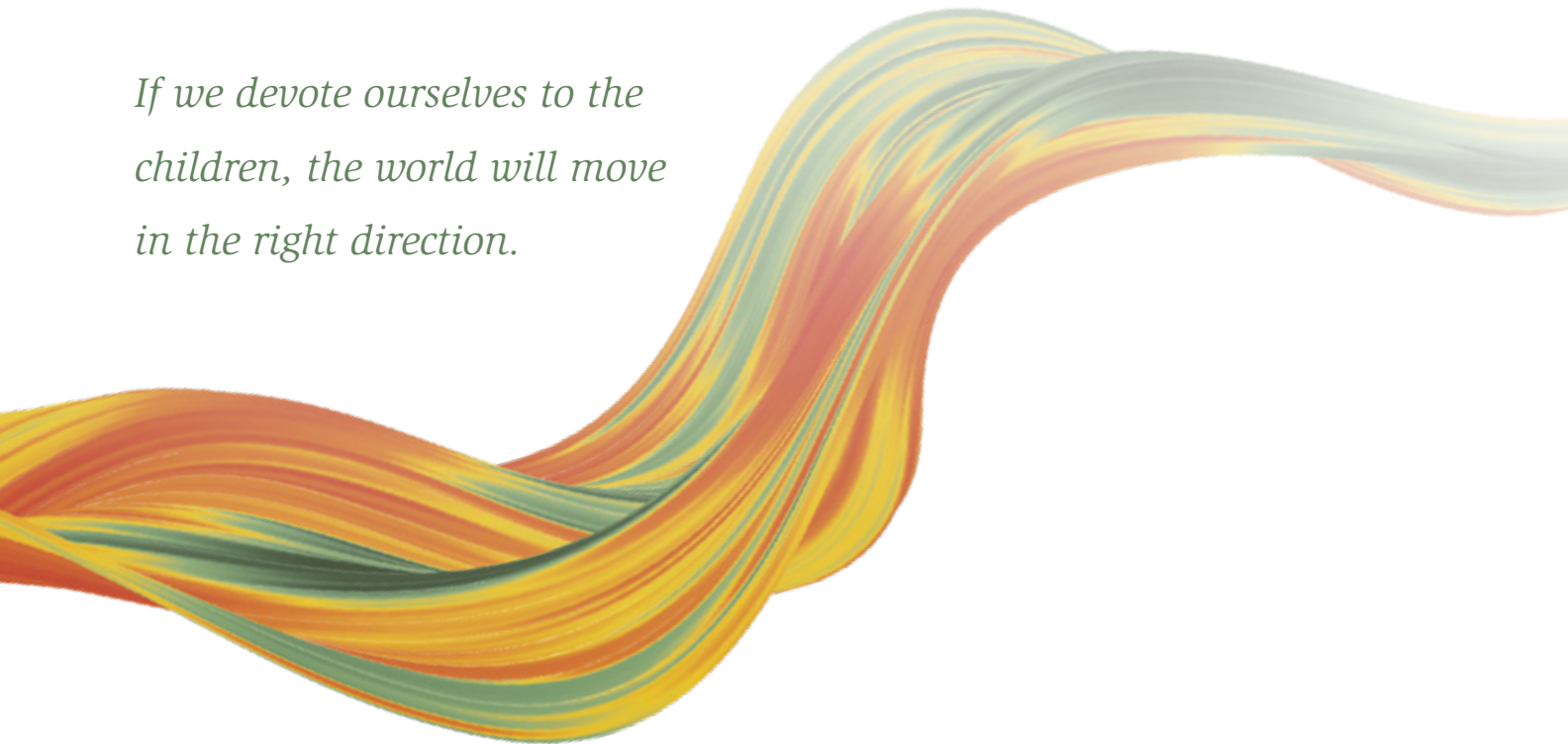
believe things happen to us for good reasons and for our benefit. So we don't think that we are in danger and our children profit from our attitude. We show them that they can be bold because life is not threatening.

Alice will have to face many difficulties, as all of us do, but I think the unconditional love and solidarity of her parents and grandparents will give her the confidence to always feel like she can cope with whatever life brings her way. She knows we all think the world of her and feel

blessed to be her family. All we want from her is for her to be totally herself.

Wouldn't it be a different world if all children who came here were surrounded with helpful, caring, devoted, happy adults? Diogenes said, "The foundation of every state is the education of its youth." If we devote ourselves to the children, the world will move in the right direction.

*If we devote ourselves to the children, the world will move in the right direction.*





# Heartfulness Yogasanas

## NAVASANA



Lie flat on your back with legs straight and together.

Arms by the side of your body with palms facing downwards.

Breathe in deeply and retain the breath inside.

Simultaneously raise your legs, arms and shoulders off the ground.

Ensure that your arms and legs remain straight.

Point your arms towards your feet.

Stretch and tense your whole body, feel the tensing of every muscle.

Try to hold this raised position for as long as possible, while retaining your breath.

Come back to the floor.

Relax in *Shavasana*.

### BENEFITS

- Very good *asana* for relaxing the muscles and joint of the body.

- Brings immediate relief to people suffering from nervousness and tension.

# Spirit of Humanity Forum:

RESETTING THE COMPASS TOWARDS CORE HUMAN VALUES

*Reykjavik, Iceland, 30 May to 1 June 2019:*

Heartfulness was a partner in the fourth Spirit of Humanity (SoH) Forum, which took place in Iceland. A small team of Heartfulness trainers offered a taste of Heartfulness Meditation, interviewed participants and helped with the Forum's social media outreach.



Panel with Boris Cyrulnik

The SoH Forum is a global platform where world leaders gather, share views and experiences, and meet in a positive, supportive and harmonious atmosphere, promoting a spiritual approach to global problems. The main theme of this year's event was 'Discovering Harmony in a World of Difference'. Iceland's Prime Minister, Katrin Jakobsdottir, opened the event with a passionate speech about Iceland's history of conflict resolution and its place in promoting peace in today's world. She mentioned the 1986 talks between President Ronald Reagan of the US and the Soviet Union's General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev, which took place in Reykjavik, Iceland's capital. These talks are now viewed as the turning point in ending the Cold War between the two countries.

Iceland is a beautiful, clean and welcoming country. Although the climate is harsh and the winter nights interminable, its people are very warm, open and generous. The country has no military presence and over the past three decades it has continued to promote peace. There is a Peace Centre founded by the University of Iceland and the City of Reykjavik, and Iceland has been voted the most peaceful



Heartfulness Media Team with Mary Gordon



Reykjavik school children



country in the world. It also ranks highly as one of the world's happiest countries.

At the opening event of the Forum, local children from the city's junior schools shared a project they had been working on and which featured their three wishes:

To have peace all over the world.  
That all children know their rights.  
That all children have education.

It was clear that children, family life and peace are very important to Icelanders, perhaps explaining why the country ranks so highly in the happiest countries' list.

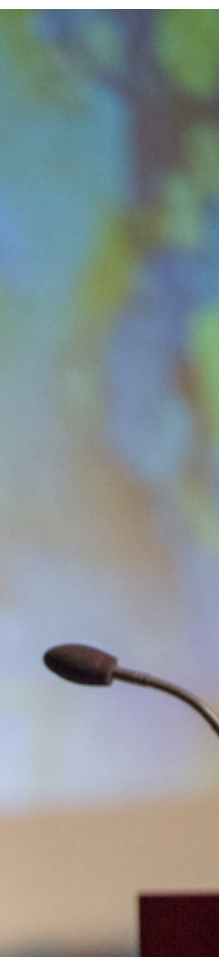
This year's SoH Forum attracted over 200 participants and included many interesting and eminent speakers such as Bob Boisture, President and CEO of the Fetzer Institute; Dr Boris Cyrulnik, the world renowned ethologist, neurologist and psychiatrist; Christiana Figueres, former Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Climate Change; and Sister Jayanthi, European Director of the Brahma Kumaris.

Some of the questions discussed during the Forum included:

- What relational practices can we foster to deepen interconnectedness, and how might our spiritual resilience help sustain generative relationships and harmony?
- How might leaders be, to actively nurture spiritual qualities in individuals, communities and institutions? Which stories can we share to inspire our actions to transcend difference?



Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir's opening message



Heartfulness Workshop



Interacting with the Heartfulness Media Team



Sister Jayanti and Bob Boisture during a pause

July 2019

- In what way can spirituality help shift social institutions and systems towards greater harmony and peace?

Speaking about the Forum, Bob Boisture explained, “Everything we do creates the global culture ... the most important thing that global leaders have to do is go deep inside ... to allow us to engage each other from an awesome place of wholeness and love.”

The Forum also focused strongly on environmental issues and what is needed to stop the destruction of our natural environment. Sister Jayanti spoke about the need for spiritual values, moderation and a change of consciousness. She emphasised that “Sacred values have been forgotten and consumer values have taken over ... a bit of renunciation is important.”

Director of the SoH Forum, Johanna Vilhjalmsdottir, summed up their purpose and importance in today’s world: “This is a platform for leaders all over the world to explore core human values and governance, and how personal transformation can lead to global transformation. What is the world mirroring? It’s mirroring our consciousness. So where do we need to start? We need to start with our consciousness.”

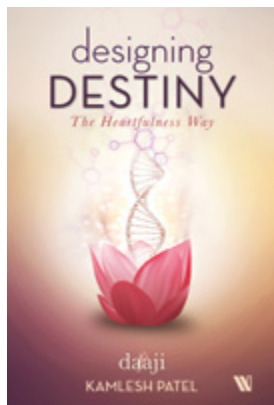
The event certainly provided a joyful and productive space for many groups and organizations sharing similar values. There was a collaborative and harmonious atmosphere, and the Forum has much to offer the world in setting an example of problem-solving from a spiritual perspective.

Interviews and talks from the event will be available in forthcoming editions of Heartfulness Magazine.

<https://www.sohforum.org/reykjavik-2019/>



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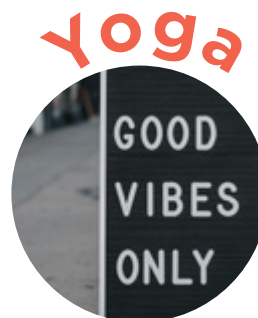


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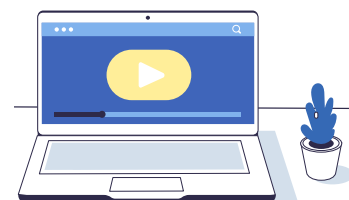
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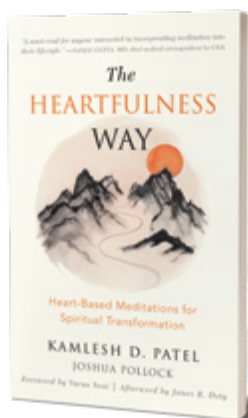
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