

December 2021

heartfulness

advancing in love

A Daily Routine

DAAJI

The Road Less
Traveled

RASHMI BANSAL

Space
Transformers

JEREMY GILLEY

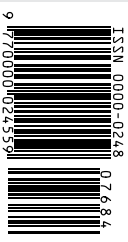
The Eco-saint

**BARBARA
SONVILLA**



Humor & *Creativity*

www.heartfulnessmagazine.com



LIVE
ONLINE
PROGRAM

**Embark on a journey
of personal and
organizational discovery.**

Heartful Adizes Leadership

Learn to apply timeless leadership
principles in your personal and work life.

WINTER 2022 - Voyage begins February 11
Registrations open January 10, 2022

Heartful Adizes Leaders continually refine vital skills and equip themselves and others with practical tools to successfully deal with complex challenges.

Price of the program is... U-priced!

These courses are offered as a gift, trusting the generosity of participants to support the development and sustenance of similar in-depth learning journeys.



**MASTERING-
CHANGE.ORG**



Discover upcoming voyages at

mastering-change.org

Join us in this journey with a like-hearted
community seeking to lead to a better society!

CREATIVE TEAM

Editorial Team — Elizabeth Denley, Mamata Venkat, Vanessa Patel, Kashish Kalwani, Christine Prislant, Animesh Anand, Judith Nelson

Design & Art — Uma Maheswari, Jasmee Mudgal, Ananya Patel, Arati Shedde

Photography — Pankaj Bohra, Bruno Memeint, Rajesh Menon, Mona Mishra, Ivan Samkov

Writers — Ichak Adizes, Daaji, Bruno Memeint, Thomas Mogensen, Ganesh Pai, Vanessa Patel, Barbara Sonvilla, Mamata Venkat

Interviewees — Rashmi Bansal, Jeremy Gilley, Prakash Tyagi

ISSN 2455-7684

CONTRIBUTIONS

contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

ADVERTISING

advertising@heartfulnessmagazine.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions

EDITOR — Neeraj Kumar

PRINTED BY — Sunil Kumar

RK PRINT HOUSE, H.No.11-6-759,
3rd Floor, Anand Complex, Lakdikapul,
Hyderabad, Telangana, 500004, India.

PUBLISHER — Sunil Kumar representing
Heartfulness Education Trust
13-110, Kanha Shanti Vanam,
Kanha Village, Nandigama Mandal,
Ranga Reddy District, Telangana, 509325, India.

Copyright © 2021 Heartfulness Education Trust.
All rights reserved.

heartfulness
advancing in love

SUBSCRIBE TO Heartfulness Magazine



Available in print and digital versions.

Order copies online: single, 12-month
subscription and 24-month subscription:

**subscriptions@
heartfulnessmagazine.com**

Printed copies are also available at selected
stores, airports and newsstands, and at
Heartfulness centers and ashrams.

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

Keeping the Light Alive



Dear readers,

During the last two years, many of us have leaned on creativity and humor for support through periods of uncertainty and tragedy. Some of us have deepened our involvement in existing hobbies, like writing, music, dance, carpentry, and gardening; and we have also learned new ones to keep our minds and hearts engaged. Humor has served as an anchor, as we have come to appreciate those precious joyful moments with family and friends.

In our final edition for 2021, our contributors share the moments of creativity and humor that keep the light alive in their hearts. Jeremy Gilley introduces Space Transformers as a platform for creativity for youth, Thomas Mogensen shares some hilarious moments with Babuji in the early '70s, Mamata Venkat reminds us to find humor in the day-to-day interactions with loved ones, and Dr. Ichak Adizes proposes humor as one of the most attractive qualities in a partner. Rashmi Bansal shares her life's work as an author, overcoming expectations to take the road less traveled, Dr. Prakash Tyagi documents the creative evolution of his NGO GRAVIS, Barbara Sonvilla celebrates the life and creativity of the early eco-saint, Hildegard von Bingen, and Bruno Memeint shares some of his exquisite landscape photographs. Daaji's last article of the series, "The Art of Removing and Creating Habits," offers practical guidance for a daily routine – a perfect way to prepare for New Year's resolutions.

We look forward to having you with us again next year. Thank you for your continued support. In the meantime, enjoy the festive season and Happy New Year!

See you in 2022,
The editorial team

contributors



DAAJI

Daaji 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. Two of his books, *The Heartfulness Way* and *Designing Destiny*, are #1 bestsellers.



PRAKASH TYAGI

Dr. Tyagi is the Executive Director of Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS), an NGO dedicated to working in impoverished rural regions of India, including the Thar Desert in Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Bundelkhand. He is a physician and a public health professional by education, and at GRAVIS he oversees administration, coordinates various programs, develops new projects, and fosters new partnerships.



RASHMI BANSAL

Rashmi is a writer, entrepreneur, and motivational speaker. An author of ten bestselling books on entrepreneurship, Rashmi is the #1 business books author in India. Her books include *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish*, *Connect the Dots*, *I Have a Dream*, *God's Own Kitchen*, *Touch the Sky*, and *We Are Champions*.

JEREMY GILLEY



After a successful career as an actor and filmmaker, Jeremy founded the non-profit organization Peace One Day. Because of his efforts, in 2001 a UN General Assembly resolution was unanimously adopted establishing September 21 as an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence. Today, billions of people have been exposed to the peace message, resulting in millions behaving more peacefully. Jeremy is also an author and has received significant recognition for his inspiring promotion of peace around the world, including the Africa Peace Award, the Lennon-Ono Grant for Peace, the Carnegie-Wateler Peace Prize, the Geneva Cinema Vérité, and many other awards.

BARBARA SONVILLA



Barbara is a long-time Heartfulness practitioner and trainer. She has been a course developer and instructor in art and cultural history at European universities. Barbara has additional training in integrative health and continuous health education. Her passion is to combine ancient wisdom, traditional knowledge, and cutting-edge integrative health science. Through hands-on workshops she inspires and encourages people toward self-empowerment and self-care.

inside



thought in action

I Take Laughter for Granted

Mamata Venkat

22

What Makes a Person Attractive?

Dr. Ichak Adizes

26

focus:

Creativity and
Humor

Space Transformers

Interview with Jeremy Gilley

10

All Things Small and Joyful

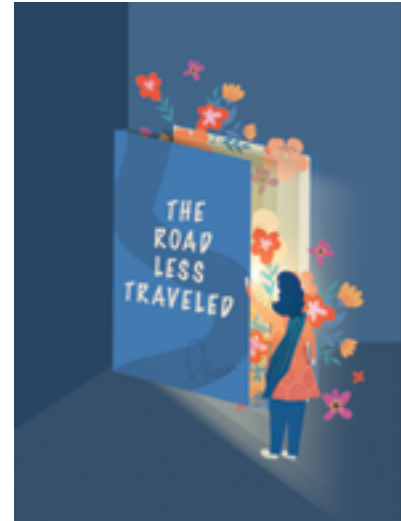
Vanessa Patel

15

Lunch, Dinner, and a Loving Baker Dressed in White

Thomas Mogensen

16



innerview

The Road Less Traveled

Interview with Rashmi Bansal

32





be inspired

Creating a Daily Routine
Daaji

58



it changes everything

Love, Non-violence, and Truth

Interview with Dr. Prakash Tyagi

46

Wisdom from My Father

Ganesh Pai

52



taste of life

**Lights of Iceland
A Photo Essay**

Bruno Memeint

70

Hildegard, the Eco-saint

Barbara Sonvilla

75



Focus:

Creativity and Humor

Every time you find
some humor in a
difficult situation,
you win.

SNOOPY

Photo by MONA MISHRA



SPACE TRANSFORMERS

LIVE

DECEMBER 21



JEREMY GILLEY is a British director and actor, who founded the non-profit organization Peace One Day in 1999. Peace One Day successfully led the campaign that resulted in the unanimous adoption by the United Nations member states of the first-ever annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence, with a fixed calendar date – September 21, the UN International Day of Peace. Since then, Peace One Day has been working to raise awareness and instigate action, resulting in a large-scale decrease of violence annually on Peace Day.

Jeremy's creativity was sparked early in life, and he has spent over twenty years serving humanity. He is passionately committed to peace, sustainability, equality, justice, diversity, inclusion, climate action, and the mobilization of youth. He is the producer and director of four annual global digital experiences – Anti-Racism Live, Climate Action Live, Peace Day Live, and right now he is preparing for Peace One Day's newest event, Space Transformers Live on December 21 an experience for young changemakers. With his signature enthusiasm and humor, he shares his vision for this event with **JUDITH NELSON** of the Heartfulness Institute.

Q: Hello Jeremy. How did Space Transformers come about?

Space Transformers came about because Peace One Day evolved from doing just one experience a year. That one experience is Peace Day, on September 21, unanimously adopted by every member state of the United Nations exactly 20 years ago, and led by Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Chairman of Gatehouse Advisory Partners, Former Chairman of the UNA UK, and Special Advisor to the NGO Forward Thinking. We have been raising awareness to institutionalize it, because when a lot of people know about a day of peace their behavior changes and they are more peaceful.

The marketing and the awareness manifest action, and action decreases violence. It's seriously profound the impact that a day of peace has, especially if you are one of those women or children who had been bullied or abused. The positive impact of that day in our homes, communities, schools, and places of work is phenomenal, incredible. And it's why I work immensely hard every day, because if you tell 10 people, or you tell 10,000 people a day, then a percentage of those people are going to behave very differently on the day of peace. Wow, amazing!

Then we realized that March 21 is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, another day

unanimously adopted by every member state of the UN. So, we approached the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and we now have the good fortune and privilege (which I'm very humbled by) to be the producers of the content in association with them for this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It is a day where raising awareness of diversity, inclusion, equality, and justice, which are so immensely important to humanity's survival, will bring behavioral change.

Now, September 21 and March 21 are on the equinoxes, six months apart, so that left two very

important dates in the calendar – June 21 and December 21, the solstices, marking the change and the end and the beginning of new seasons. Four incredible dates, and on many different levels very interesting moments of transformation into a new energy. So, I thought that we should do things on those two days as well.

Given that we were covering diversity, inclusion, equality, and justice on March 21, and peace and sustainability on September 21, it was obvious that we needed to cover the climate issue, so we created a show on June 21 called Climate Action Live. Basically, if we don't protect resources, one sure thing is going to happen before we heat up or can't eat – we're going to fight over what's left. So, no climate action, no peace. To think that we're going to be evolved and do it differently is a lovely thought, which I'll get up every day and believe in, but history tells us that the way human DNA functions is manifested in what we see today.

I'd like to think that we will evolve, that there will be a shift in the level of consciousness around the fundamental issues that humanity faces, and I want it to happen, but I'm not going to hang on to the idea that it's going to happen. So, as a person who wants to generate content that is constructive and transformative, we are doing Climate Action Live.

That leaves only one area in terms of humanity's survival as far as I'm concerned, and that is the mobilization of youth, to inspire and hear their voices. And that's where Space Transformers comes in. So, on December 21, at the end of the year, all the themes that we have discussed during the year in the other three events – diversity, inclusion, equality, justice, climate action, peace, and sustainability – will be put into an arena for the new generation, the very people who are going to save us (should we be saved). They are the people who are transforming the space around them, for sure.

The phrase itself was something that I read in a letter from Valerie Keller, who works with Paul Polman at Imagine: Business as a force for good. I saw this phrase "Space Transformers" in the letter and thought it was such a beautiful phrase. I was really into the idea of "Let's have a show called Space Transformers just for young people."

Q: How old do you have to be to be part of the event?

You have to be under the age of 30, so I can't be involved [laughs]. Actually, that is a lovely thing, because as I've gotten older, and as Peace One Day has been on the road for the last 22 years, I'm trying more and more to pull myself out of what's going on. I'm much more interested in

generating content now for other people to be space transformers. I really want this next chapter of my life to be about raising the profile of others whose message is so key to humanity's survival that I want to create amazing content about them.

Q: What can young people expect on the day?

I'm really excited that we'll see young people from every continent of the world. We've identified a young man and a young woman who are transforming space within each continent, and we're giving them a voice to tell their stories. I'm going to make those films in the most beautiful way I can. As we hear the stories of those twelve or more Space Transformers, we will also hear from young actors who recreate the words of young people throughout history, and singers who perform and share their beautiful art.

There will also be a series of panel discussions, and we will give Space Transformers Awards to a young woman and a young man somewhere in the world.

It's the first time we've ever attempted anything like this. We've never done a show that focuses purely on young people, and I'm genuinely massively excited about it. If people have got it right, then perhaps we have 250 years left here. Some would

say, "Hey, what a crazy thought," and I don't really know, as I'm not a scientist but an ordinary geezer with no qualifications who's just had an idea and gone on that journey forever. Do you know what I mean? I don't want to get off that train, as Cat Stevens-Yusuf Islam said, the peace train.

So, that's the zone I'm in. If we have a limited time left, if we're not extremely careful it will be because of some major decisions that will happen in the next decade. Why would we think that we are more evolved to make big decisions in these ten years than the leaders who were talking about the same crucial problems thirty years ago? I'll hang on to the hope that they can do it, but if they can't, we'll hear Greta say, "All I'm hearing from leaders is blah, blah, blah." What an amazing thing she did! That speech, that young person! It's her perception of what is happening. I saw her say, "You talk about all these things, blah, blah, blah, but you've completely let us down." She also said, "Are you going to change? It's just words, blah, blah, blah." There was something about the way she delivered that speech that made me go "wow!" And the truth is that we really are at an absolutely critical, crucial moment. If in the next few years, we don't do something fundamentally different, the suffering that's going to come our way will be terrible, irrespective of whether we survive

it or not. And that's the sad reality. It's just what is. I've traveled for 22 years in 133 countries, and I've seen the results of human behavior. I wish I hadn't seen it. It's a very, very serious time, so I'm really into what Space Transformers can do.

Q: Many young people feel like they aren't being heard, so your initiatives are certainly providing them with an opportunity to be heard.

I think that's why I'd like Space Transformers to be a success. I'd like there to be good numbers and I'd like the experience to work. If there is an annual experience at the end of every year, an experience that culminates from thinking through the seasons and reflecting on the year as we prepare for the next season, it is a very exciting thought. I'd like all those experiences to grow, because narrative is everything; storytelling is everything; informing, inspiring, and engaging is everything; it's the best thing we can do.

Q: What can the younger generations teach the older generations?

I think Greta Thunberg summed it up quite nicely with the words, "Blah, blah, blah," didn't she. What a legend, what a woman! My goodness. That's what the young people are teaching the older generation. And let's hope the older generation makes some very crucial decisions at this point. That's very, very important.

We do see some great changes. There are extremely constructive, positive things going on, and things are transforming. The question is whether they can transform fast enough. The academics tell us that the window of opportunity is now. That's the conundrum, that's the issue. Can they do it fast enough? Have they got the courage? Can they look beyond their own borders?



Q: How can people sign up, and will there be any activities leading up to the event?

Four to six weeks before December 21, we'll announce who's going to be there. We hope that many young people will tune in to watch the show live at www.peaceoneday.org or at @PeaceOneDay on Twitter. I hope that we will all watch it together.

It's a moment to hear and reflect, and be inspired to act, leading to engagement. I think the action is going to be people tuning in and listening to young people's voices, so that everyone can support them, and be inspired by them, and then go on their own journey. It's a really beautiful and creative thing to give them a voice and showcase these films for their social media.

I really love the idea of being a broadcaster of great people's thoughts and stories. How beautiful, what an honor.

To be continued....

If there is an annual experience at the end of every year, an experience that culminates from thinking through the seasons and reflecting on the year as we prepare for the next season, it is a very exciting thought. I'd like all those experiences to grow, because narrative is everything; storytelling is everything; informing, inspiring, and engaging is everything; it's the best thing we can do.



22 YEARS OF PEACE ONE DAY

All Things Small and Joyful

VANESSA PATEL enjoys a humorous shared memory with friends, and reminds us of those small yet precious moments of connection and joy that make up a lifetime.

It seems to me that this year has been much about waiting ... waiting for an upturn in the pandemic, hoping for more harmony amongst communities and nations, praying for less suffering of all sentient beings, longing for our Mother Earth to get some respite. It has been frustrating and sad, mainly because looking to change things we cannot control has rarely been rewarding for anyone. This is when I became aware of the unexpected joy of those beautiful little moments that simply happen when we choose to live in the here and now.

Recently, I had a small reunion with my university friends. We hadn't met in many years, and so much had happened since the last time we were together that there were several milestones and hurdles to talk about. While sharing our news, one of my friends brought up an old memory that completely transformed the energy of the conversation.

It was the story of a night in May, after our first-year May Ball. The three of us were not quite ready to call it a night, so at 3 a.m. we decided to take a long walk through the fields to the nearest village. What seemed like an easy walk to start with quickly became a little more complicated when we realized there was a bull living in one of the fields. But instead of feeling scared, we kept going and found the situation so hilarious that I really prayed our giggles would not prove to be the proverbial red rag.

Having safely thwarted the bull, we reached the village only to realize no one was up and nothing was open.

We were too tired to traipse back across the fields, and the first bus wasn't until an hour later, so we laughed our way to the nearest park where we discovered the swings and roundabouts of a children's playground. We killed an hour there, enjoying these childhood thrills with no one around to tell us we were too old to use the playground. When it was time to catch the bus, we happened to pass by a small bakery and had just enough money to buy a hot sticky bun each while ensuring we had enough money for the bus fare to get us home. It was only when we started the journey back that the cold and tiredness started to seep in, but the experience of holding and eating that hot sticky bun really hit the spot. So much was distilled into those few hours – carefree adventure, spontaneity, and no worries about what came next.

Reminiscing about this experience, the same laughter we had shared back then bubbled to the surface. Here was a realization that there are many amazing people who have been a part of my journey. I felt joy in the simplicity of this shared experience, and it reminded me that moments like these have the power to balance the many complexities of life.



Lunch, Dinner, and a Loving Baker Dressed in White

By the end of the 1960s, Westerners were traveling to visit the spiritual teacher, Babuji, in India. Among the first were the Danes, who all fell in love with Babuji and were instrumental in bringing the spiritual practices of Heartfulness to the West. One of these pioneers was **THOMAS MOGENSEN**, who first visited Shahjahanpur in 1971 with his wife and some friends. They filmed their conversations with Babuji, took many photos, and Thomas later wrote two books about these precious experiences. Here is a small vignette from one of his books, written with his signature humor, joy, and tenderness.

A large wooden table and some upright chairs occupy our dining room, situated and set aside solely for us in one of the buildings enclosing an inner kitchen courtyard in Babuji's Shahjahanpur home. The very first time we eat our lunch there, he himself suddenly shows up.

As expected from a good and polite host, he takes his seat at the end of the table. With a few words that food should be nourishing and simple he sinks into silence, looking down in front of himself

in the humblest way you can imagine. As we dine, the situation gets more and more unsettling for our Danish sister, Vibe. She looks distressed from one to the other, then turns to Babuji gently saying, "It's all right, Babuji, you don't need to sit here with us." Without further notice he says, "Thank you," as polite as ever, gets up and leaves.

Babuji takes his food squatting in solitude in a corner of the kitchen courtyard. His meals are served on a large stainless steel plate. Though

the amount of food is not much, he often shares most of it with the cat, the only one sure to join him. Once in a while, someone, usually his granddaughter, Nini, drops by to see if he is all right. She instructs him to eat more, as she knows better than anyone else how a loss of appetite, if allowed to continue, can end up in the danger zone of his ulcer breaking out causing some real bad trouble. All such things are normally kept away from us, but after one of our lunches, Nini approaches us. Explaining how Babuji has not





eaten anything for days, she asks us to please return to the veranda and speak among ourselves about food – any food, our favorite dishes. “You need not speak English,” she says, “and don’t speak to him. Just speak in your own language.”

Returning to the veranda, we find Babuji as we left him, far

gone and curled up in his easy chair. We launch straight into some nice Danish talk about food, practically serving him a dish of the summer’s first new and absolutely delicious cooked potatoes with some nice cool Danish butter, a bit of salt, and a good lot of freshly chopped parsley, when his withdrawn painful condition lifts off.

Surprised, he looks from one to the other as if wondering why he is suddenly taking part in such an odd conversation. Then he gets up and disappears into the kitchen courtyard. Probably the cat is already waiting there for him and his appetite to return.

We ask him once varuv about this ulcer of his, “Why don’t you



just cure it yourself? You can easily do that.”

He smiles and answers, “I don’t like to part with it. We have become good friends, me and my ulcer.”

What’s hidden in this rather intriguing ulcer-thing, you, dear readers, are welcome to ponder over as much as he leaves us to do. Anyway, everyone eats the

same simple food here. The same identical dishes day in and day out and, yes, it becomes a bit boring. Babuji senses it.

“The food I serve you,” he says from his easy chair, making sure that no one from the kitchen happens to turn up, “I call ‘slaughtered vegetables.’”

Now, if no one in the kitchen hears this masterly coined joke, an angel surely does, for one fine morning a local abhyasi appears on the scene. Round in shape and dressed all in white, we nickname him “the Baker.” He always observes the politest conduct and humbly presents his errand in quietly spoken Urdu, making Babuji lean forward, fully attentive. After a while of listening, he takes a good deep puff of the hookah, seems contented with what he is hearing, and turns to us saying, “He has invited you to take food in his house.”

The very next day, the Baker returns for further instructions. Every detail of such a daring excursion must be in place, and with Babuji’s blessing the chosen evening finally arrives. In the dark streets of Shahjahanpur, our good Baker’s glowing white moon illuminated shape leads the way. Meanwhile the thought of something local, a bit of home cooked curry with some pickle on the side, grows on us. And soon we are seated at a dining table much like the one we are used to.

Eagerly watching us, the Baker’s family glue to the walls around us, five foreigners alone at the table. They are so keen and polite that they hardly dare speak a word to us. And now, eager hands place the food on the table in front of us. Down to the smallest detail they are the exact same dishes we have been eating for months now! Yes, sir! This is so absurdly funny that only one person can be behind this pleasant surprise – Babuji himself. This is why he took so much time and care to instruct our loving Baker. He wanted to be dead sure that nothing unusual would happen to us, maybe even down to the dining table itself. Boy, he could serve God on a stainless steel plate, but this is what makes you love him. As soon as we complete our meal, the Baker is ready to take us back home for him to present Babuji with a detailed verbal report of the evening’s events.

By the way, Babuji’s favorite dish was mushroom soup. On their travels to the West, his successor, Chariji, lured him with that when he lost his appetite. “Come on, I think they have mushroom soup for us today.”





thought in action

What did the mystic say
to the sandwich vendor?
Make me one with
everything!

ANON



I take *laughter* for granted

MAMATA VENKAT looks back over the last year, which has been full of tragedy, and finds the moments of light and laughter that bring joy and celebration to life.

Here are a few statistics I recently heard on an episode of the *Hidden Brain* podcast:

On average, children laugh 300 times a day.

It takes adults two and a half months to laugh as much.

Adults stop laughing around the age of 23, once they reach working age.

I'm an adult (theoretically). I laugh a lot, don't I? I think I do. I think I laugh many times a day.

Actually, I don't.

What is stopping me from laughing more?

And why does it take difficult moments to realize how much we take joy, laughter, love, and *people* for granted?

This realization sticks with me harder than ever in a year our family has been hit with several successive months of sudden loss. It has been overwhelming trying to make sense of the grief that we never, ever, expected to experience.

As you slowly start to shake off the shock and heaviness of loss, you

resurface to find that simple things like jokes, humor, and laughter still exist. They are still allowed to exist. And every moment that you get to soak in that joy from laughter feels almost medicinal, a soothing reprieve from the pain that reminds you that, yes, even in the midst of deep, overwhelming sadness, you are still allowed to be happy.

Laughter has been the light we have let in during a year that has often been quite dark. It has come in many forms:

In the staring contests I have over entire weekends with my young cousins, who will giggle at just about anything.

In a story my dad shared shortly after my grandfather's funeral, about the time my grandfather waved merrily to a driver who was giving him the finger because he thought it was a friendly American gesture.

In the heated board and video games that my nephews





I will allow myself to laugh with the innocence of a child, straight from the heart, with abandon and without fear, with gratitude for every person in my world, and full of appreciation for simple humor, joy, and celebration of life.

pull me into, which have me cracking up because of their smack talk.

In the inside jokes shared over the phone amongst friends that keep us satisfied until we can all be together again in person.

In the *Friends* reruns that my niece and I enjoy, which still make us laugh in all the same spots.

In the moments my mom and I dance around the kitchen to our favorite '90s country songs that have us sharing twin snorts because she always forgets the lyrics.

This last year has so painfully and beautifully cracked my heart wide open and has taught me to let the light in and appreciate every moment to its fullest. I can't speak for everyone, but I know I often take the simple things for granted.

Forget the adult statistics; I will never, ever, take laughter for granted again! I will allow myself to laugh with the innocence of a child, straight from the heart, with abandon and without fear, with gratitude for every person in my world, and full of appreciation for simple humor, joy, and celebration of *life*.

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL



heartintune

www.heartintune.org

Use the HeartinTune
app and make
meditation a habit
in your life

Your space,
Your pace.
Meditate on the go!

Download the app today.



Download on the
App Store



GET IT ON
Google Play



What Makes a Person Attractive?

DR ICHAK ADIZES shares his experience on what we find attractive in other people, and the importance of humor in relationships.



If you ask a man what makes a person attractive, you will get a different answer than if you ask a woman. Men, as I understand, usually focus on physical attributes – the legs, the breasts, etc. Women tend to focus on the brain and on a man's ability to support and defend, etc. I have another idea, which I hope both sexes can agree to. And if you predict that it has something to do with integration, you're right.

When a person has it “all together,” that is, they are integrated, none of their energy is wasted. This person *exudes* energy, while a person who is “falling apart” *takes* energy from the people around them. Who is attractive? Those that give you energy, not those who take from you. People who “have it together” are attractive. Those that are “falling apart” are not.

Years ago, I hired a young woman as my assistant, who I felt was rather plain and unattractive. On purpose. I assumed that attractive women would distract me from work. We started working together, and over time I found her to be smart, intelligent, and easily receiving and granting

respect and trust. I frequently sought her opinion and respected it: I found her opinions very valuable. I learned a lot. And I trusted her word. If she said something would be done, it was done.

Over time, I stopped noticing her crooked nose or protruding chin. I now thought she was beautiful, and I was hopelessly attracted to her. Unfortunately for me, she was in a committed relationship. On the other hand, I remember dating a woman who was knockout gorgeous. She had a perfect figure, a face that was hypnotically lovely. She was also well educated and came from a respected family. But I lost interest in her within weeks. My endless enthusiasm ended up in endless disappointment. What happened? She had no self-trust or self-respect. She was not “together.” And because of that, I believe, she had no trust and respect for others – in this case, for me.

She could not make a decision on her own and acted totally dependent on me. But when I decided anything, she did not trust that decision. We had endless debates about what to do and who was right. This kind of person, often called a “high-

Being attractive depends on the flow of personal energy, which is a function of physical, emotional, and spiritual integration – in other words, being healthy in body, mind, and spirit.

maintenance person,” is not integrated. As a result, a lot of their energy is wasted. They usually look tired – *emotionally* tired, not necessarily physically tired. They will tell you in a debate, “Never mind,” or “Fine,” but, as I came to learn, this only means the debate is being postponed, not actually resolved.

Although such people can be physically stunning, they often become unattractive to the people they are with, despite being intelligent, highly educated, powerful, and successful. Being attractive depends on the flow of personal energy, which is a function of physical, emotional, and spiritual integration – in other words, being healthy in body, mind, and spirit.

Now, a personal hypothesis: It appears that humor needs energy; to be funny requires creativity that consumes energy. Thus, it appears to me that people with a healthy sense of humor are more attractive than those who have none. My experience is that if you can make a woman genuinely laugh, she will find you attractive. The same goes for men. What do you think?

Just thinking and feeling,
Dr. Ichak Kalderon Adizes

<https://www.ichakadizes.com/post/what-makes-a-person-attractive>





THE
HAPPIEST
PEOPLE
ARE THOSE
WHO GIVE
MORE

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO BEGIN SHARING

RESTART
REWIRE FOR YOUR SECOND INNINGS



Wiedersehen



Two roads diverged in a
wood, and I –
I took the one less
traveled by,
And that has made all the
difference.

ROBERT FROST



RASHMI BANSAL is an Indian non-fiction writer and entrepreneur. In this exclusive interview, she shares the inspiration behind choosing the life of a writer over the path mapped out for her by her education and background with **KASHISH KALWANI**, and why the title of her first book, *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish*, is still her mantra today.



Q: Welcome Rashmi! How are you doing?

Wonderful! Happy to see you and to do this interview with you.

Q: I'm also happy. I have copies of two of your books right next to me! Could you share your personal journey and how you reached this stage?

Okay, so you want me to summarize my entire life in three minutes? I would put it like this – there was a conventional path for me to follow, which was pretty easy and clear, but somehow I knew it was not the road for me. I went to the Indian Institute of

Management Ahmedabad and did an MBA, like so many other people, but then I decided to go back to my first love, which was writing. I chose to be a writer at the time when writing was not seen as a profession in India. In those days, books were synonymous with Jeffery Archer and Sidney Sheldon. There was no demand for Indian authors. But I knew that this was the place where I would be happy and be able to contribute something. I remember reading a line in a book called *Odyssey*, the story of John Scully (the CEO of Pepsi) and Steve Jobs. Jobs went to Scully in 1985 and persuaded him to leave Pepsi and join Apple, which was an unknown company back then.

He basically said, “Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water or do you want the chance to change the world?”

This line stuck with me. I decided I didn't want to spend my life selling detergent powder and credit cards. I would rather do something meaningful. I never thought I would change the world, but I thought that if I did something that comes naturally to me, that I enjoy, I would definitely contribute something to the world. I had clarity on what I didn't want in my life, and then I put that aside. It was a journey. It didn't happen in a day, but once I took the decision, it was easy and the right thing to do.



Q: You mentioned that you had clarity on what you didn't want in life. Where does the clarity come from?

I went to IIM with an open mind, and I also wanted to live away from my parents for two years. It was a fantastic place, where I met amazing people, but I didn't connect with what they were teaching. I didn't enjoy the subjects and I was unhappy with the prospects. In second year, we had certain courses that were quite unusual for a management institute. One was called "Laboratory in Entrepreneurial Motivation," which was offered by an entrepreneur, Sunil Handa.

He told us, "Look, there are other options in life. You can start your own company; you can create your own path." That was a message I needed to hear.

In another course, called "Exploring Roles and Identity," we went to a beach resort near Valsad and spent five days sitting under the trees. We were asked to reflect and contemplate on our life and choices, and what hurdles were blocking us or holding us back. At the end of it, I realized I couldn't go on doing things to please other people. I was a bright student in school, and my father was a scientist. Everybody in my colony chose a career in science. It was very clear what path I was supposed to take, but I realized I didn't enjoy science and math. Though I was uncomfortable, I still wanted to please my father. Finally, I realized that I had to live life on my terms and for myself; I couldn't keep putting put one foot in one boat and one in another. People advised me to write as a hobby, but I knew

if I did that I would wither away. All my creative juices would be sucked out. That was my assessment. Finally I took a stand. Not everyone was happy and could understand why I did it, but many years later they came around and said, "You decided what was best for you and it was the right choice."

Q: I'm sure it must have been tough.

Actually, when I took the decision, I felt very light and free. That meant it was the right decision. Prior to that I had a dilemma, but once I decided I knew it was the right thing for me. People asked if it was difficult and I replied, "No, actually it would've been difficult to do the other thing."

Am I am are Am I am are
Am I am are Am I am are
Am I am are Am I am are
Am I am are Am I am are
Am I am are Am I am are

Q: I had a similar experience after class 12 when I was figuring out what courses I wanted to pursue in college. I asked my spiritual guide, "How to know if I am choosing the right career?" He gave a classic one-line answer: "Well, you'll know if you're in the wrong one." What you shared about feeling light and carefree really resonates with me.

In the moments when you were struggling, or when you felt so clear in the moment, how did you practice self-acceptance and compassion toward yourself? How did it connect with your inner needs at each moment?

Actually, you identified a spiritual journey much earlier than I did. I was not aware of all these terms but I was very clear about one thing: Money is not so important to me. I'm not saying money is bad, but I don't need a lot of money to be happy. My first job was with the *Times of India* before I started my own company publishing a youth magazine called *JAM – Just Another Magazine*. At every point I have looked for richness of experience rather than richness of bank balance. I found that if I pursued money then I had to compromise on the experience part. That's been a guiding principle for me. Money does come – I'm not saying it's a bad thing, or that I have issues with it – but the pursuit of money is not my main goal.

Q: How did your writing journey begin? When did you realize, "This is for me"?

I started writing when I was a student at Sophia College in Mumbai. In my second year, just for fun, I wanted to see my name in the *Times of India* newspaper. So, I tried to get my articles published and they came back with rejection slips, not once, twice, or thrice, but a fourth and a fifth time. Then I said, "Am I really no good as a writer? Should I continue?" Something in me said, "Keep trying," and my forty-first article was published. That was the start of my professional writing journey. I freelanced for many newspapers and magazines while I was a student, and after that I worked with the *Times of India*, where I had a unique job both as a writer and a manager.

Then I started my own magazine, to give a platform to young people so that they could express themselves, and not have to try forty times to get published! It became very popular, and then, at some point, I became more of a manager of other people's writing, because as an editor and publisher I had to keep finding new writers and mentoring them, editing their work. Also, I felt that I was growing older, so I shouldn't be writing for a student magazine.

I also went through a period of depression after my daughter was born. I didn't know there was something called postpartum depression – today, we have much more information – and I started feeling, “I'm not good, I can't do anything.” To come out of that, I had to discover myself as a writer, because I was not writing. I had

started a magazine because I was a writer, but I was not writing much anymore.

So, I started freelancing for other newspapers, magazines, and online platforms, and I wrote for *Business World* for some years where I was a consulting editor. I could express myself. Writing is an important tool for me to connect with my inner being, even though I'm not always writing about personal things. The act of writing puts me in a state of flow, which is a higher state, where I am bigger than my “self.” I am accessing something that is not just me.

Sometimes I start with one idea, but then feel I'm being guided by a higher power. When I teach people to write in workshops, I tell them that they have to put in the effort, they need discipline, and they

have to be open to being guided by something bigger than themselves.

It's as if you're receiving some kind of transmission. You have to tune in; it's not just going to come automatically. The work has to be done, your hand has to type on the keyboard, but if it goes in a direction that is different from what you thought, let it flow that way, because that's the magic of any art form. We connect with the higher power that I don't want to put a name to. There is something bigger than me, which can even be called the Universal Mind.

Coming back to writing, it was important for me to regain my balance and my zest for life, and I remember meeting somebody who told me, “You should write a book.” I said, “No, I have nothing to write,” but just four



years later, I published the book *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish*, which did very well.

Q: That's wonderful!

We all have a lot of hidden potential that sometimes we are unaware of.

Q: Thank you for sharing that. I really resonate with what you say about keeping going and being guided. When I relate this to my meditation practice, I failed terribly at first. I read an article where you said to stick to an idea till the very end. How do you stick to things till the very end? Youth want to have everything in the moment: Instant gratification, instant happiness, instant money. But these things take time, so I wish to know how you handled this.

When you want to write a book, you may have a lot of different ideas, but you can't write five at a time. You have to choose one and totally immerse yourself in it. The moment you do that, a lot of new doors open for you.

When I decided to write *Follow Every Rainbow*, I wanted to write a book about women entrepreneurs, and I had some criteria. My main criterion was that they should be women who had children and had brought up a family, because otherwise, in terms of availability and competence, I don't think there is any difference between men and women. Women have this additional responsibility, and it doesn't stop when children are six months or six years. My mom still worries about me, right? It's a lifelong commitment. I felt it was the primary reason why many women cut back on their

own ambitions and scaled back their dreams. Initially I found it difficult to locate women who had really grown businesses, but once I got into it, wherever I turned I started seeing women's stories and I would approach them. I became a magnet for those stories, and I could do that because I was focused on that one book. If I had not been focused, then maybe I would not have noticed the same things. I think once you realize that, then you know the power of focus. Everyone wants things quickly, but over time you realize that life is not a race. I think everyone today is going to have at least two or three careers in their lifetime, because most of us are living till ninety years of age and are we going to do the same thing our whole lives? Even if there are three or four different things we want to pursue, we don't have to do all of





them at the same time. We can keep a few things on hold for a little later in life. We constantly need to rejuvenate and reinvent ourselves.

I think reinvention is very important. Maybe in the past it wasn't, as people did the same job and retired with an HMT watch, but now that doesn't happen. So, we need to have different interests to keep us going, and I don't think it's ever too late to learn something new. In the Rainbow book, a few of the entrepreneurs started later in life. One was forty-nine.

It's all in the mind. If you think you can do it, you can. Maybe she spent the first half of her life devoted to her family, and when her children grew up, she said, "Okay, now it's my time."

*Q: There was a line in **Follow Every Rainbow** where you wrote, "Tomorrow will hold the fragrance of feminine values of courage and transparency and grace," and that really touched me. As a woman, in addition to the responsibility of having a family and children, it's such a gift to be able to nurture, have your own principles and values, and go out to seize the world! Why do you think it is important to keep dreams alive?*

Because if you have no dreams, there is nothing to wake up to in the morning and aspire to. If you look at it in the larger context of the entire universe, there are millions of stars and galaxies, and if you zoom in on Kashish or Rashmi, we're specks in a vast ocean and we're meaningless.

How does it matter whether we exist or not?

It only matters because of the stories we tell ourselves. We create and write our own stories. Now, we can choose to look at life as just life, with no meaning to it, or we can attach some meaning to it. We can find something that makes it worth a little more than routine things. It's our choice as human beings. Maybe animals are much simpler, they just have their routine life. Sometimes I envy the dog with very simple needs and no complications, that doesn't get upset and stay upset for three days! But human beings have a choice of the kind of life they want to lead, by the stories they tell themselves about who they are, what they are here for, and the way they want to live life.



Q: You've authored many books. Do you have a favorite or one you recommend everyone to read first?

Yes, I like *Connect the Dots*. That's the one closest to my heart.

Q: What are you currently reading?

I just got a book from someone who used to work with me. It is called *Susegad*. Have you heard of the book *Ikigai*?

Q: Yes.

It's something like that about the Goan way of life. It's written by Clyde D'Souza, who used to work with me at *JAM*. He sent the book to me yesterday.

Sometimes I envy the dog with very simple needs and no complications, that doesn't get upset and stay upset for three days! But human beings have a choice of the kind of life they want to lead, by the stories they tell themselves about who they are, what they are here for, and the way they want to live life.

Q: Nice! Who has been your biggest teacher and how did they impact your life?

From a distance, I would say Steve Jobs. I never met him, but just by reading his book, watching a couple of videos, and following the path of his life, I felt quite inspired. Of course, it doesn't mean I would like to always be like him, but I was definitely impacted by certain things, certain ways of thinking. In fact, the titles of the first two books I wrote were taken from a speech given by Steve Jobs.

Q: Wonderful! What is something you do for happiness?

I like to travel. I like to go to a new place where I don't know anyone or anything and walk around the city and observe people. Right now, it is not possible!

Q: How do you celebrate success and how do you handle failure?

Actually, I don't know if I've really celebrated success that well – I should celebrate it more. I don't feel an attachment because today it's there and tomorrow it's not. I have reached a stage where I can accept compliments, thank people, and feel that I deserve it, because at one point I was not in that frame of mind.

Failure, yes, I've had failure. I had to shut down my company in 2010 after fifteen years, because I felt that nobody would read a printed magazine in future. It became a loss-making enterprise, so it folded. That was really hard, because there were so many other people who had put their lives into it. It was almost like my first baby, and I

am who I am today because of it. I wrote *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish* because I was an entrepreneur and I had been in touch with young people for so long as an editor of the magazine. I was able to write a book that was not preachy; basically focused on storytelling. So, it was integral to my life journey. Although it did not give me the financial returns I wanted, and it could not sustain me, if you ask me, "Would you go back and do something else?" the answer is no.

I think all the difficult moments, also when I was depressed, made me much more empathetic. I could write the book, *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish*, because I had seen difficult times. I could connect with people, understand them, become a better listener, see a little below the surface. Before that, I think



I think all the difficult moments, also when I was depressed, made me much more empathetic. I could write the book, *Stay Hungry Stay Foolish*, because I had seen difficult times. I could connect with people, understand them, become a better listener, see a little below the surface. Before that, I think I was quite full of myself, and I had views that I don't subscribe to anymore. I became aware of the potential of the mind, and I was drawn to different things. I learned Reiki, and I did things I would never have done if I had not been in a low phase of life.

When a low phase comes, I explore new things, and that is how I came to a spiritual path.



Outer success is meaningless until I have harmony within, and an endless encounter of self-love.

Self-love can be depleted, so I still need to work on that. That's the realization most people have as they grow older – while outward achievements are good, you also have to turn inward.

I was quite full of myself, and I had views that I don't subscribe to anymore. I became aware of the potential of the mind, and I was drawn to different things. I learned Reiki, and I did things I would never have done if I had not been in a low phase of life.

When a low phase comes, I explore new things, and that is how I came to a spiritual path.

Q: What is the essence of life for you, or is it something you're figuring out?

I think it keeps changing with time. Earlier, it was about creating my own path. Right

now, it's about looking inward and focusing on self-love and acceptance, which I still need to work on. Outer success is one thing, but to have that calm center, which is glowing with love, I don't think I have reached that place yet. Outer success is meaningless until I have harmony within, and an endless encounter of self-love. Self-love can be depleted, so I still need to work on that. That's the realization most people have as they grow older – while outward achievements are good, you also have to turn inward.

I want to do different kinds of writing. I started writing fiction

during Covid because I wanted a challenge. I started writing short stories, and teaching other people how to write short stories, and I publish them weekly on my website www.rashmibansal.in. In fiction, you enter the inner world of the characters a lot more. In non-fiction, characters are defined mostly through the actions they take, but in fiction you get into the minds of the characters, and you know the contradictions that exist. To do that, I need to explore my own contradictions first.

Q: Finally, is there any life mantra you'd like to share with

SELF LOVE



our readers, aspiring writers, entrepreneurs, and those on a journey of self?

“Stay hungry, stay foolish.”

It encapsulates everything, because you have a deep desire to keep growing, learning, and enhancing yourself. It applies to an entrepreneur, it applies to a company, and it applies to personal growth. Don’t be satisfied with everything you’ve learnt, seen, and done; that’s what keeps you going.

Foolish because today you may have a foolish dream – you may want to write a screenplay, or a web series for Netflix, but you

don’t know how you are going to do it, you don’t have the answer, the path is not clear. You only know that you are foolish enough to believe it’s possible. Then, one step at a time, you move toward the goal. Don’t underestimate yourself and be open to learn and try new things.

I have written eleven books, and even if I write ten more, I want a new challenge. I want to go where people are. The audience on Netflix is 1000 times more than the audience for books, so I have to reinvent myself and my way of doing things.

Keep going on the path that challenges you and makes you

uncomfortable, because that’s when you rise up and find in yourself some hidden *shakti* or power that you didn’t know existed. In short, “stay hungry, stay foolish.” Don’t ever think, “I’m at the top of the mountain and it’s the end of my journey.”

Thank you so much, Rashmi. I absolutely loved this. It was wonderful to connect with you.

Illustrations by
JASMEE MUDGAL





it changes everything

The truth is
inconvenient.

PEMA CHÖDRÖN

Photo by ERICK BUTLER

Love, Non-violence, and Truth

DR. PRAKASH TYAGI is the Executive Director of Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS), an NGO dedicated to working in impoverished rural regions of India, including the Thar Desert, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Bundelkhand. In part 1 of this interview with **KASHISH KALWANI**, he speaks about applying the Gandhian principles of love, non-violence, and truth to support communities in need.

Q: Thank you sir, for having this conversation with us. You have been on a long and inspiring journey with GRAVIS. Could you tell us more about it?

GRAVIS is a pioneering organization that was founded in 1983 in the Thar Desert. The vision was for constructive rural development on the Gandhian lines of philosophy, and at the time there were no organizations working on integrated rural development in a holistic way in that area. Since then, GRAVIS has grown extensively. It's currently one of the leading organizations in the region and nationally, with some global recognition.

The Thar Desert is the driest part of India, with severe water scarcity, food shortages, and poverty. Since the beginning, GRAVIS has been involved in drought mitigation, finding common feasible solutions in consultation with the local people. We took up various projects and formed multiple partnerships to mitigate the effects of drought. Later, GRAVIS expanded into other areas of human development, including healthcare, education, and rural livelihood.

The core of GRAVIS' work has been active community involvement, and that includes consulting with the community to

find solutions, taking their advice, and developing future projects and programs. We ensure that they are fully involved in many ways. GRAVIS has led to the formation of more than 3000 community-based organizations (CBOs), and many of them are sustainable, self-reliant, confident, working on their own, leveraging government resources, and developing their own agenda and priorities. That helps in sustaining the initiatives we have taken up.

We have been extending our work regularly every year, and currently we reach about 1.5 million people.





GRAVIS has three defining aspects. The first is our technical expertise in two core areas:

1. Drought mitigation, at the ground level as well as in documenting and research. We share this information to facilitate learning and exchange across the whole of South Asia. The Thar Desert is the largest desert in the world in terms of population and housing, so that makes GRAVIS a leading drought mitigation organization.

2. Healthcare: We provide medical services, as well as an integrated public health approach, including education, training, and capacity building of health workers and communities on general health, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, sexually transmitted diseases, and non-communicable diseases. Tuberculosis has been a challenge in many communities and GRAVIS was one of the first organizations to highlight the

threat of occupational lung diseases and mining diseases like silicosis.

The second aspect is our philosophy. We work in areas where the need is the greatest. We don't really go to areas where programs are being implemented by other organizations, as we want to ensure that our resources are taken to the people most in need. So, most of our projects are in very remote underdeveloped areas.



Also at the philosophical level, linking it with the Gandhian model of rural development, it is important to work for societies and communities that are inclusive, favoring gender equality and harmony at all levels. This is needed for decision-making in the distribution of resources, and for making sure that there are no disputes and no divisions within the communities.

The third aspect is community participation. We make sure that people are with us. Oftentimes we call community-based organizations, because they are the real power, they are the stakeholders of everything we do. That is how I would want GRAVIS to be known.

Q: Thank you, Sir. When I volunteered with GRAVIS, I noticed how the buildings at the field site were named after the Gandhian values of *prema* (love), *ahimsa* (non-violence), and *satya* (truth). That really stood out for me. Do you have any particular memories that stand out for you in the years spent with GRAVIS?

There are many memories, and so much has happened in the last thirty-seven years, but my family involvement is extremely important because that is how GRAVIS came into existence. My parents decided to do something

in an area that was extremely underdeveloped at that point of time. It was the late 1970s and I remember coming to Jodhpur when I was six years old. The conditions were very difficult, and Jodhpur was a very insignificant place. It would have been very easy for my parents to live elsewhere, but they took the decision that life was going to be spent for a cause in an area where there was a significant need. That's how GRAVIS was founded.

Another memory I have is that the organization grew through limitations and hardship, and that think tanks don't come overnight. GRAVIS didn't have a vehicle for years, although now it is different. It took years for GRAVIS to build its capacity and resources, and to become expert enough to understand the community's needs. I think it requires a lot of dedication. It also requires the patience to spend time with people.

In this era of the Internet, everything seems to be so fast, but that's not real life. In real life you need time, and time cannot be replaced by anything else. What you can do in X amount of time, you cannot do in Y amount of time by accelerating work horizons. My memories are the memories of those hardships, of the struggles I grew up seeing.

The core of GRAVIS' work has been active community involvement, and that includes consulting with the community to find solutions, taking their advice, and developing future projects and programs.



For nearly ten years I traveled from a village to Jodhpur every day in a bus to attend school. It was a 12-hour-a-day process from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. All of this is important, because that's how organizations become strong in their values and beliefs, and how they make connections to communities.

GRAVIS faced very severe resistance in 1989-1990, when the whole country was burning. At that time, our centers were attacked and destroyed, because we worked with the lower castes, the so-called Dalits, and we were given a message that it was time to go home and not to spoil the community equations and dynamics. But we sustained and we fought back, literally from a point where nothing was left. Everything was destroyed, everyone was beaten, and then the organization reemerged. That's a strong memory.

A more recent memory is my own personal decision to stay with GRAVIS. I didn't plan it that way, but with my father's demise there was a vacuum of leadership, so I traveled back from the U.S. to India ten years ago.

The most significant memories are meeting the social activists, the people who really believed in an India and a world free of discrimination, free of injustice. I remember meeting Jayaprakash

Narayan, I remember meeting Kripalani, I remember meeting Vinoba. It was quite a thing to do because they are big names.

Last and not least – the love of the people has always been visible. In the rural areas, we receive so much affection, so much love, and that's what makes the difference.

Q: Yes, indeed. What are some practical tools that we can incorporate into our lifestyle to be more conscious of the way we are living and more involved in community initiatives?

I wouldn't know. I'm a very unorganized man, I must admit. Everyone has their own way of doing things. If you ask me, at a very personal level, being on time is extremely important and it helps me measure if what I'm doing is fruitful or not. At the end of every 24-hour cycle, I make a calculation of what I did today and how I spent my time. It's important to be accountable to myself about how my time was spent. I don't know if it's practical or more philosophical, but to me it's important.

The second thing is to do something new every day. And that "new" could be anything. It could be writing about something new or singing a new song.

Q: Doing something new is such a creative tool! Finally, is there

anything you'd like to share with our readers?

Mahatma Gandhi said, "My life is my message." Every life is a message, and every life is capable of leaving a message. It doesn't have to be like Mahatma Gandhi's life; it could be Kashish's life or anyone else's life. It's up to you to make that message whatever you want it to look like. And your entire life works for that message, so it can't be created overnight.

Q: What is your life's message?

I am still in the process of finding that out! I haven't gone through much of my life – I still have a few years left. It doesn't have to be gigantic, it doesn't have to be global, and it doesn't have to be noble. It can be anything, as long as you have a message. "My life is my message" is my advice to the younger generation, or any generation.

Q: Thank you for taking the time to share your story and message with us.

Thank you.

To be continued

Photos by RAJESH MENON

WISDOM FROM MY FATHER

GANESH PAI shares memories of his father and the lessons learned from his father's behavior, presence, and attitude of forgiveness.



The tempo¹ was ready to depart. It was a short 30-minute journey from Bhatkal to Uppunda, a sleepy village in coastal Karnataka, India. My father, sister, and I were traveling together. Since we were first in, we quickly found seats. Pretty soon, the tempo was jam-packed; even an ant could not have entered. As the journey started, the conductor started collecting fares, and as he neared our seats, he asked me to stand up and let an adult sit in my place. I was about to get up when my father tapped me on the shoulder to indicate that I should stay seated right there. The conductor told my father, "Sir, you will have to pay full fare for your two kids." So he handed over two notes without batting an eyelid, and my sister and I traveled comfortably that day.

We may not have been rich, but he made us feel rich that day. That's my father for you. I have many such beautiful memories

from my childhood about my father, watching him up close and being inspired by his outstanding qualities. Let me share a few memories from my childhood that have left an indelible mark on my memory.

Growing up, I was a big fan of cricket. Not a difficult choice to make in a cricket-frenzied nation. One of my uncles had gifted me a cricket bat and I looked for every opportunity to wield my new willow. My brother and I would play cricket in the living room on the first floor of our home, and our mother's warning not to play there would fall on deaf ears. My father had also advised us to stop playing inside. It was a Sunday afternoon when my brother and I decided to have our bilateral series. Things were looking good until the ball smashed against a beautiful chandelier hanging on the ceiling.

To say I was nervous will not do justice to how scared I felt that day. I had no idea how to deal

with the mess I had created. My fate hung in as much imbalance as the chandelier on the ceiling. When my father came home for lunch, my mother did the honor of breaking the bad news. In my mind, I was pretty sure that I was about to get a tight slap. My father heard my mother, gave me a deep look with his penetrating eyes, and left without uttering a word. He was upset. However, in that instant, he had forgiven me. His love for me outweighed his liking for a materialistic possession. I can never forget his act of kindness.

My father had a rock solid routine. He would have been a perfect brand ambassador for a Swiss watch. His clockwork started at 8 a.m. when he left for the restaurant, where he worked as the Manager. At 8:30 a.m. he was in the market, purchasing vegetables and groceries. At 9:30 a.m., he was at the bank. Since he was always one of the first customers, he wrapped up his work fast. From there, he completed any other

¹ A small van

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING



He was forgiving,
but never gullible.
He was prudent
with his time and
money, but not a
miser. He was
centered even
when surrounded
by a cyclone.
Intuitively, he
seemed to know
that he was
much greater
than any
situation he
would ever face.

work. Finally, he dropped the bag of vegetables and groceries he purchased for our home and then returned to the restaurant.

With this well-planned schedule, he never needed to step out again. He believed in the economy of efforts. He would advise us to plan our activities to accomplish the most with the minimum amount of time. He would urge us not to go out four times to complete four different tasks. Instead, step out once and complete four tasks in one shot. He believed in return on time as much as return on capital. He may not have read productivity classics like *Getting Things Done* or *Eat That Frog*, but he could have given any productivity guru a run for their money.

I admire my father's emotional stability. I remember an incident on a late summer evening when I was around ten years old, and we had a short circuit at home. There were sparks coming out of the power meter and my mother and I were shocked.

I ran to see my father in his restaurant and told him, "Bappa, there is a fire at home."

Without panicking even for a moment, he patiently heard me and quickly concluded that it

wasn't something serious. Then he coolly said, "I see. It should not have happened. I will send an electrician. Don't worry, I will see you and Mom at home later."

I was shell-shocked to see his calm demeanor in the face of what looked like a disaster to me. His calmness gave me a sense of assurance, and I instantly felt relieved. Personally, it was like watching James Bond effortlessly conquering a high-stake crisis.

When I look at how my father led his life, I notice that he did not operate out of 101 philosophies. He had just a few, and he followed them irrespective of the situation around him. He was forgiving, but never gullible. He was prudent with his time and money, but not a miser. He was centered even when surrounded by a cyclone. Intuitively, he seemed to know that he was much greater than any situation he would ever face.

Illustrations by ARATI SHEDDE





be inspired

Habit is stronger
than reason.

GEORGE
SANTAYANA

Photo by IVAN SAMKOV

Creating a Daily Routine

THE ART OF REMOVING AND CREATING HABITS

Part 12

Throughout 2021, [DAAJI](#) has been exploring habits, and how to change them from the perspective and wisdom of Yoga. Through this journey, he has offered tips to help us reset our compass to a lifestyle of integrity and happiness, and in this final article he takes it to the very practical level of the habits we cultivate in our daily routine to lead a life of inspired purpose, offering us a positive way forward.



The secret of your success is
found in your daily routine.

—John C. Maxwell

Thousands of years ago, the great sage Patanjali presented the *Yamas* and *Niyamas* as the first two of the eight elements of Yoga. The principles behind these two elements are very simple:

“*Yama* is the giving up of unwanted things from the heart, whereas *Niyama* is the filling up of the required qualities in the heart.”

In other words, *Yama* is the removal of habits that lead us away from our ideal, and *Niyama* is the cultivation of habits that take us toward our ideal. Intuitively, we all know what ideal we are striving for, but we struggle to live up to it.

Why do we struggle to create evolutionary habits?

We struggle because knowing is not enough, and intelligence is not enough – not even emotional intelligence or ethical intelligence. Intelligence is only one aspect of forming habits. It is by “living”

the principles in daily life that intelligence can manifest. Stephen Covey once said, “Habit is the intersection of knowledge (what to do), skill (how to do), and desire (want to do).”

Changing habits may start with conscious awareness, but it also requires the “how to” and the “want to” that Covey speaks about. I would say that it also requires something even more fundamental than these three things, because we can still run into obstacles even when we have the “what, how, and want.” These obstacles are the pre-programmed subconscious patterns buried deep within our psyche, which influence our feelings and our belief systems. They undermine our self-confidence and our desire to transform ourselves. That is why it is so vital to work at the inner level through daily meditative practices, with a great deal of self-acceptance.

The next stage is to externalize those inner changes, in order to “live” the values and ethics in daily life. It is here that the work is done on all aspects of behavior, both seen and unseen.

The secret of self-transformation

So, the secret of self-transformation is to start at the subconscious level, removing the mental and emotional complexities we carry. Gradually, the layers of the various personas drop off, and we are liberated from their bondage. We let go of the beliefs that no longer serve us, and the ego no longer identifies with those beliefs. Gradually we move from a narrow-minded perspective to an expanded consciousness.

This comes about through a combination of inner meditative practices and outer lifestyle changes. The meditative practices refine the mind, so that it becomes purer, lighter, and untethered. The lifestyle changes allow that purity and lightness to become embodied.

Below is an outline of daily habits that can help us all refine our lifestyle in an evolutionary direction.

Habit 1: Rise early to meditate, connect with your center and regulate your mind

Rise early and meditate at the same time every day, preferably finishing before sunrise. Have a separate place for meditation and develop the habit of sitting in one posture, with limbs turned inward and back upright but not rigid. Prepare yourself beforehand by attending to purity of the body and the mind.

There is much more to meditation than managing thoughts. My spiritual Guide, Babuji, used to say that “Meditation really means the mind becomes accustomed to the Center itself instead of wandering elsewhere. Meditation on the heart is prescribed for that purpose.”

The thinking function deepens and expands into feeling, and then expands further inward to include the subtlest and lightest states possible, guided by the heart.

The intellect deepens into intelligence, then intuition and wisdom – progressing from subtle to subtler to subtlest, tapping into universal consciousness so that wisdom flows into us from beyond.

The ego is reoriented from “I” to “we.” Just this step alone would transform our world! It is then further refined toward generosity of the heart, cooperation, greater humility and acceptance, and finally to the subtlest states of identity.

As these three mental functions are transformed, consciousness expands toward its infinite state, untethered, and in osmosis with universal consciousness.

The ego is reoriented from “I” to “we.” Just this step alone would transform our world! It is then further refined toward generosity of the heart, cooperation, greater humility and acceptance, and finally to the subtlest states of identity.





Habit 2: Reaffirm your goal every day

If transformation happened through meditation alone, you would soar in no time, but generally it takes time to trust the feelings and wisdom of the heart, to become dependent on something higher, and to dismantle the likes and dislikes that have formed through your programmed belief systems. To give focus to the changes you want to bring in your life, it helps to remind yourself of your goal every day. You can do this before morning meditation through the Heartfulness practice of Inner Connect, which takes you into your heart and creates a vacuum for love to flow without obstacles.

As you move toward lightness and freedom, you will experience the real aliveness of living in the heart, connecting with the universal Being.

Habit 3: Be loving

Remove violence, aggression, and anything that hurts other living beings. This is your starting point for becoming human. Peace doesn't happen just by talking about it or writing about it. Peace is your inner nature, and it comes when your lower consciousness gives way to higher consciousness within.

By violence, I don't only mean physical violence, but also emotional violence, passive aggressive behavior, revenge, and even the cold shoulder. Anything that hurts another being is included in this orbit of violence.

The heart is the balancing midpoint in your system and the seat of the soul, so when you meditate on the heart, you center yourself and transcend the reactivity that happens at lower levels of consciousness. Here are a few behavioral maxims that help with this habit:

Treat all beings as your brothers and sisters, no matter how different they are from you. Unity in diversity is a law of Nature.

Learn to accept miseries and remove any expectation that things will be the way you want them to be.

Mold your living to such a high level that it evokes love and gentleness in others. Even if they are not touched by you, the loving peaceful vibration that you radiate will contribute goodness to the world, whereas resentment will only pollute the atmosphere around you.

When you are feeling wronged by someone, try not to feel resentful or want to get even with them. Injustice will be there, sometimes even from those you love the most, and when it happens it can be devastating. But does it help to retaliate? This was the great lesson of Jesus Christ, who lived a life of compassion, lovingly accepting betrayal from both his enemies and his closest associates.

The daily practice of Cleaning helps to remove any of these complexities from your system, so that gradually over time you will come to love all beings. And if you do something to hurt anyone else, even unintentionally, at bedtime go into your heart and feel regret, with the intention not to repeat it.

Also, mold your living to such a high level that it evokes love and gentleness in others. Even if they are not touched by you, the loving peaceful vibration that you radiate will contribute goodness to the world, whereas resentment will only pollute the atmosphere around you.

Habit 4: Be pure, simple, and authentic

Remove the falseness, hypocrisy, and multiple personas you carry around as masks for different occasions. Their removal leads to truthfulness and authenticity so that your true colors shine through in whatever you think, feel, say, and do.

You have your own perception of reality because of the complexities that have accumulated in your consciousness. In contrast, authenticity has a childlike innocence and integrity, leading to a state of flow, health, well-being, harmony, and integration. Many of your masks are unconscious, hence the need for inner practices that reintegrate

you from the Center of your being to the outermost aspects of your personality and behavior.

To my heart, purity is the essence of inner transformation. What are the qualities that result from mental purity? Patanjali defines four of them: the first is happiness, the second is concentration, the third is mastery of the senses, and the fourth is the preparation for Self-Realization, which is not possible without this preparation. It requires discipline and intense interest, as well as the support of a capable Guide.

As you become progressively purer and lighter you will start to see changes in your lifestyle. The food you eat, the clothes you wear, and the habits you cultivate slowly adjust to your level of purity. There is a complete transformation when purity permeates every level of your being from the inside out. The words “plainness” and “simplicity” describe the result. The outcome of all yogic practice is this ultimate simplicity.

As you refine yourself you will uncover your human potential. It is your trajectory toward a simple life, with great awareness, great sensitivity, and great flexibility. It is wrapped in love, starting with self-love, self-compassion, and self-awareness, and culminates in becoming love itself. It is the natural result of meditative inner practices.

Habit 5: Don't steal, don't be possessive, and be a giver rather than a taker

To steal is to take something without permission, or legal or moral right. We steal money, possessions, nature's bounty, and environmental resources. We also steal other people's thoughts and ideas, and

their hearts. Taking more than is rightfully ours is also stealing, including hoarding resources for the future. We steal other people's identities when we aspire to be like them to the extent that we are no longer authentic. FOMO relies on stolen identities.

But not stealing is just the beginning. A higher level of this habit is generosity and a giving nature. When you are empathetic, compassionate, and loving, your presence is of greater value. When you give more than you receive, you start to resonate with Nature.





As you let go of possessiveness, the circumference of your giving expands until eventually your heart becomes a generator of generosity, giving to all who are in need.

Through the Heartfulness practices, a natural etiquette of care emerges as universal love develops for everyone and everything. Once you are in this state, you are no longer buffeted by the ups and downs of the outside world, fame, or fortune. You are content and happy with whatever the universe provides. As you let go of possessiveness, the circumference of your giving expands until eventually your heart becomes a generator of generosity, giving to all who are in need.

Habit 6: Be moderate

This habit requires you to moderate your senses and sensual tendencies. Given that life on Earth requires you to interact with the world through your senses, it is involved in everything that you think, feel, and do, other than when you are in deep sleep.

Moderating your senses has a direct effect on your level of happiness and sadness, because this spectrum of emotions is within the sensory realm. Happiness is indirectly proportionate to the number of desires you have, and the intensity of those desires. Desires are created by the pull of your senses, and by how much you allow sensuality to develop unchecked. Through the senses you attach yourself to the world of matter, and the things you like and dislike. Through the senses you create impressions, and you are pulled into greater and greater entanglement and complexity.

When you have a constant inner connection with your Center, your attitude shifts from sensuality to sensitivity. You become aware of your inner states, and in common language this is called listening to the heart and acting upon the guidance of the heart.

As well as developing inner sensitivity, you also become acutely aware of external things, including the needs of others, and the atmosphere and environment in which you move. Compassion is a natural outcome and sensitivity becomes an asset to refine yourself on this journey of continuous improvement.

Habit 7: Be happy

Contentment arises out of purity and moderation. When all the complexities in your system are removed, consciousness is purified, allowing the soul to shine forth. The soul is the source of true inner contentment, and happiness is the result. It is an inner state having nothing to do with the pleasures and pains of worldly existence. You are a truly happy person when you are happy under all circumstances.

Contentment is how you feel when there is complete and natural acceptance. It doesn't mean that you don't want things to change, but it gives you a neutral starting point from which to move forward. In that moment, you are simply present. The more contented you are, the more peace and happiness you radiate to others. Contentment is infectious, creating an atmosphere. As more and more of us radiate inner contentment, humanity will be transformed.

Habit 8: Become self-aware

Self-study requires you to turn your attention inward to learn about yourself. It has been the cornerstone of psychology from ancient times to the present day, in both the East and the West. Self-study goes hand in hand with meditative

Contentment arises out of purity and moderation. When all the complexities in your system are removed, consciousness is purified, allowing the soul to shine forth. The soul is the source of true inner contentment, and happiness is the result. It is an inner state having nothing to do with the pleasures and pains of worldly existence. You are a truly happy person when you are happy under all circumstances.

practices and is one of the key pillars of emotional intelligence.

The most direct ways to learn about yourself are through meditation, the practice of Cleaning, introspection, and journal writing.

In meditation you notice the thoughts, feelings, and vibrations within your mind. As you witness them, gradually you learn how they arise, what motivates

them, where they lead, and many other things. When you do this without attachment or desire, you discover that the vibrations no longer generate turbulence or entanglement. They simply pass.

Through meditation, you dive into deeper dimensions of yourself. Self-study does not stay at the surface level of thoughts and emotions. You journey into layers of your being that you cannot access through conversation or a more analytic approach to self-discovery. After meditation, when you take the time to absorb the condition you have received, self-study is enhanced at all levels, not just the mental level. The condition enlivens every atom of your being so that you embody the effects of meditation, and so that it is absorbed at subtler and subtler levels.



After meditation, when you take the time to absorb the condition you have received, self-study is enhanced at all levels, not just the mental level. The condition enlivens every atom of your being so that you embody the effects of meditation, and so that it is absorbed at subtler and subtler levels.

Journaling then develops this self-awareness further, allowing you to explore it and study it in different ways. You can revisit it and see patterns over time, which is difficult to do otherwise, because the mind is always adapting and changing.

Heartfulness Cleaning purifies your mind of the turbulence, impurities, and complexities that distort your perception, and so self-study develops clarity. The heart is the key to self-study! It allows you to observe yourself with self-compassion and self-acceptance. The Light from your Center shines outward, illuminating every aspect of your character. Darkness disappears and what is left is a sense of wonder at exploring your inner universe.

Self-study requires complete honesty – honestly feeling yourself and your inner panorama. When you look at yourself from all angles, with love, the

unloading of unwanted ego and desires happens naturally.

Habit 9: Be open to the great unknown

The last is the most mysterious of habits – to accept and surrender to the universal divine principle known as God. This ultimate state of acceptance allows you to feel held, protected, and supported. With it comes a carefree willingness to hand over the reins of life to the infinite Being that is bigger than you. You are a small part of the whole, and you can choose to be in osmosis with the whole rather than seeing yourself as separate.

In this state, you naturally feel insignificant and approach life with an attitude of continuous improvement, experiencing the sacred in all existence. It is liberating. And it is the ultimate habit. You remain in constant osmosis with the Source while awake or asleep, aware or unaware, active or passive. This habit is known as constant remembrance, and once you learn to rest there,

The last is the most mysterious of habits – to accept and surrender to the universal divine principle known as God. This ultimate state of acceptance allows you to feel held, protected, and supported.

you are free of the entanglements caused by all the mental and emotional complexities and impurities that otherwise distort existence. You are free.

This is the habit that is described by all the great mystical poets like Rumi, Kabir, Mirabai, and the Western romantics. It is here that you step into the great unknown, to explore the real purpose of human existence. When you remind yourself of this goal every day, you will surely reach there eventually.





taste of life



The earth
sustains
humanity.

HILDEGARD
VON BINGEN

Photo by BRUNO MEMEINT



LIGHTS *of* ICELAND

A PHOTO ESSAY

In these landscapes, which are so surreal they are almost like paintings, **BRUNO MEMEINT** captures the stark beauty of Iceland, a land known for its harsh climate and astounding ephemeral light.



The island of ten thousand waterfalls is the land of volcanoes, geysers, the largest glacier in Europe, and extraordinary landscapes. It is a land of Vikings, with severe climatic conditions in the long winter months.

The practice of Heartfulness Meditation over the past decade has changed my view of nature, influencing my photographs. How was I going to discover and approach this country, a paradise for photographers, but unknown to me? I relied on my heart, knowing that it would guide me throughout my stay, as it does in my daily life.

How was I going to discover and approach this country, a paradise for photographers, but unknown to me? I relied on my heart, knowing that it would guide me throughout my stay, as it does in my daily life.







The answer was the light, so particular and ephemeral, that sculpts the unique landscapes, bringing to them an almost supernatural side.

The answer was the light, so particular and ephemeral, that sculpts the unique landscapes, bringing to them an almost supernatural side.

As much as I felt the spiritual energy during my various stays in India, in Iceland it is the telluric energy that dominates. It's a bit like traveling back in time, with volcanoes and lava flows, geysers, and black sand on the beaches. But there is also the hope of light that illuminates the darkness. At least that's what I tried to express in my pictures.

Photographs by BRUNO MEMEINT

Hildegard

AN ECO-SAINT

BARBARA SONVILLA writes about the divine feminine and the global awakening of women. She celebrates women telling their stories and taking action to bring alive a collective awareness of the need to respect and protect Mother Earth, nurture life in all its aspects, and hold it sacred. Here she presents Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179), one of the early Christian eco-saints, and her love for Mother Earth.

Humanity, take a good look at yourself.
Inside, you've got Heaven and Earth,
and all of creation.
You're a world – everything is hidden in you.

— *Hildegard von Bingen*

When I was still a student of art and cultural history, I came across the wonderful illustrations accompanying the book *Scivias* (meaning “Know the Ways”), by Hildegard. I was mesmerized and wanted to know more about the author. I discovered a giant of a woman, an original thinker and mystic, who considered herself “the feather on the breath of God.”

During her lifetime, Hildegard was already famous throughout medieval Europe as a seeress, a writer, a philosopher, a mystic, a healer, a herbalist, and



Photo Courtesy:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard_von_Bingen._Line_engraving_by_W._Marshall._Wellcome_V0002761.jpg

TASTE OF LIFE

a health counselor. Today, she is widely known for her sublime choral music. Her pioneering and practical works on biology, botany, and medicine, and her scholarly writings on theology, reveal a remarkable personality with compelling teaching abilities, equipped with fearlessness in dealing with church elders and leaders. In 2012, Hildegard was canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XVI, becoming the fourth woman to receive such an honor in the Catholic Church.

What drew me to Hildegard the most was that she was one of the “creation-centered” mystics of the West. She considered everything to be interconnected with everything else. In her own words:



Photo Courtesy:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard_von_Bingen._Line_engraving_by_W._Marshall._Wellcome_V0002761.jpg

“Holy persons draw to themselves all that is earthly ...

The Earth is at the same time mother,
She is mother of all that is natural,
mother of all that is human.
She is the mother of all,
for contained in her
are the seeds of all.”

As was the custom of the time, as the tenth child of a noble family, Hildegard was dedicated to the church. Having had visions of what she called “reflections of the living Light” from early childhood, she was reluctant to share these visions, which came to her as inner experiences while her eyes were open and all her senses routinely engaged. Only at the age of 43, after seeking and receiving the blessing from Pope Eugene III, Hildegard started writing down her visions and thoughts in her first book, *Scivias*, including images of these visions.

In her writings, as well as in nearly 400 letters, Hildegard was quite outspoken, determined, and bold, yet always ready to help, educate, and uplift the correspondent. She loved to mix genres, including music and poetry. People would come to seek help and advice from her, and from this her two works on the origins and treatment of diseases and naturopathy emerged.

As an abbess, she asked the nuns in her charge to pay close attention to nature and its rhythms, as they hold the secrets to our physical well-being and aliveness of our inner world. Hildegard urged them to become partners with the natural world, saying:

“Humankind, full of all creative possibilities, is God’s work. Humankind alone is called to assist God. Humankind is called to co-create. With nature’s help, humankind can set into creation all that is necessary and life-sustaining.”

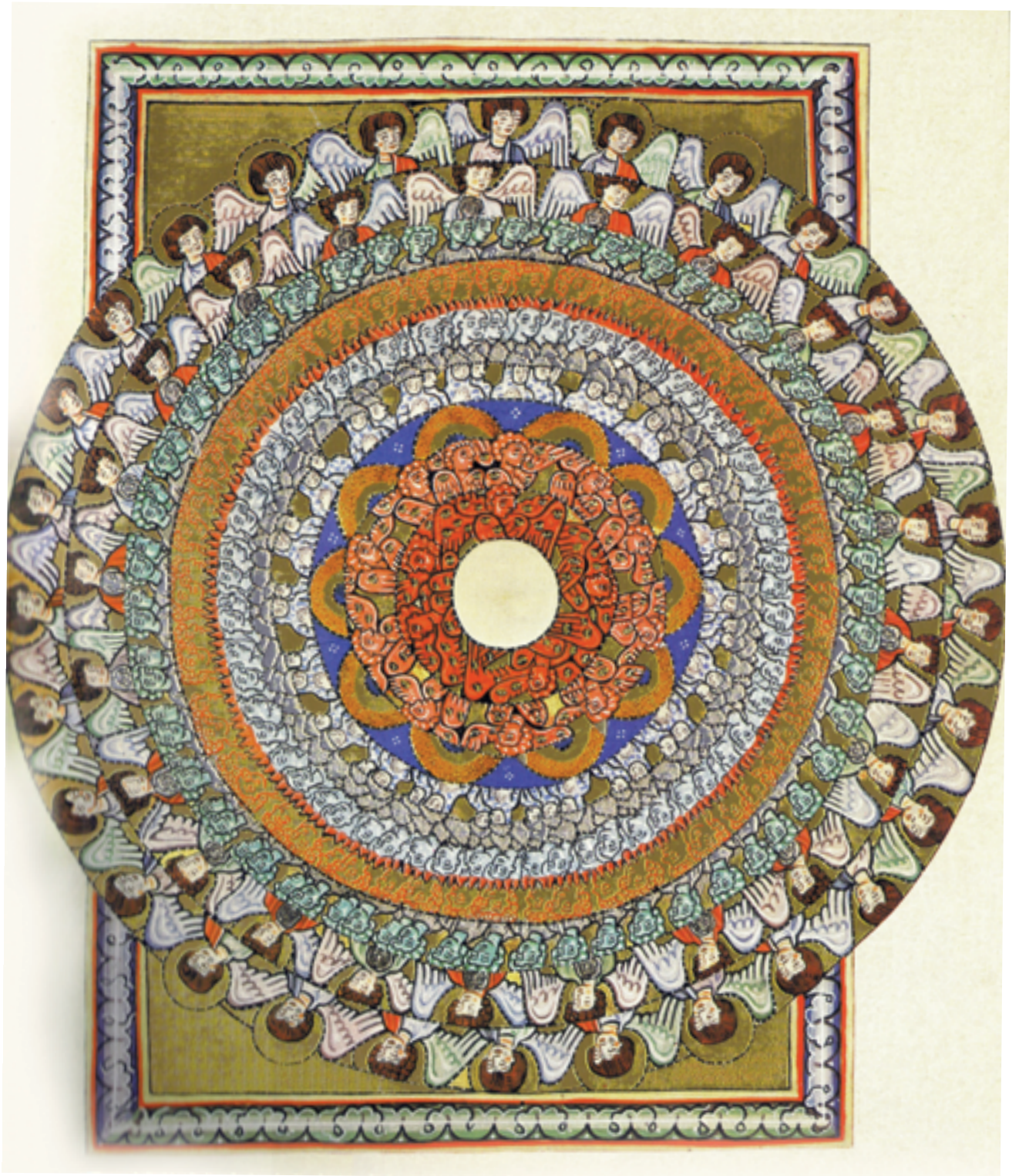




Photo Courtesy:
https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_des_Hildegardis-Codex_%E2%80%94_fertility-birth_in_Scivias_%E2%80%94_c._1185.jpg

Viriditas, the divine healing power of Nature

One of the most recognizable contributions of Hildegard, her leitmotif, and the thread running through all her writings, is the concept of *viriditas*.

The origin of “*viriditas*” may be the union of two Latin words meaning “green” and “truth.” The definition is both literal, as in “green” and “growth,” and metaphorical, as in “freshness” and “vitality.” The term is difficult to translate, and it has rich and poetic connotations. I simply fell in love with the word. It represents the life force at work in all creation. For Hildegard, this green energy is love pulsing through the entire universe. It is the creative principle itself, sustaining her soul and her work.

Hildegard saw *viriditas* as animating every living being, inherent in everything, including humans. Much like gardens, farmlands, and forests need cultivation, Hildegard saw *viriditas* as something also to be cultivated in our bodies and our souls. For her, a healthy human body is “green,” our blood possessing special greening power, and the life force, the soul, being “green.” It is the very same greenness that connects us all together as humanity. It shines forth, giving us the common purpose of creating a joyful, peaceful, and productive life. It is the strength within us manifesting as a strong and healthy life.

“O most honored Viriditas, You who roots in the Sun;
 You who lights up, in shining serenity, within a wheel
 that earthly excellence fails to comprehend.

You are enfolded
 in the weaving of divine mysteries.

You redden like the dawn
 and you burn: flame of the Sun.”

For Hildegard, green was not just a color – it was the universal life force. “Creation is the song of God,” she said, and *viriditas* its breath. If we could wish to describe a flavor that comes with this greenness, it would be the joy of being alive. Hildegard defines joy as an “awareness of God’s secrets.”¹

As the Voice of the Living Light revealed to her:

“I am the breeze that nurtures all things green. I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits. I adorn all the Earth. I am the rain coming from the dew that causes the grass to laugh with the joy of life.”

How is this vital greenness sustained?

“The soul is the greening life force of the flesh, for the body grows and prospers through her, just as the Earth becomes fruitful when it is moistened. The soul humidifies the body so it does not dry out, just like the rain which soaks into the Earth.”

This belief in *viriditas* led her to become an herbalist also. She wrote extensively on the importance of selecting foods with curative properties, and in accordance with the Hippocratic tradition, she prioritized preventive medicine and remedies based on plants. As an example, she considered fennel to be a plant with truly holistic health benefits. It was one of her primary healing foods after surgery, for convalescence and immune building. In her own words:

“Fennel does not harm the body in any way. In whatever way it is eaten, it makes people happy and gives warmth, a good skin color, and promotes good digestion ... it reduces the evil mucus and suppresses the foul odor of the breath.

The soul is the greening life force of the flesh, for the body grows and prospers through her, just as the Earth becomes fruitful when it is moistened. The soul humidifies the body so it does not dry out, just like the rain which soaks into the Earth

Hildegard thought that when the soul, body, and mind are equally strong, the four life juices (humors) and elements are balanced. This allows the organism to work optimally and operate harmoniously. Because of our connectivity with the universe, Hildegard believed the soul to be the source of everything and thus essential in achieving harmony. For her, what we now call the autonomic nervous system is the connecting language between the body and the soul. Hildegard described in detail how lifestyle affects that communication. The balance is easily disturbed through incorrect eating and drinking habits, but also through thoughts, emotions, and living against the principles of a virtuous and pious life.

To be continued.

¹ Butcher, C.A., 2007. *St. Hildegard of Bingen. A Spiritual Reader*. Paraclete Press.



heartintune

Master the habit of meditation

The Heart-In-Tune app offers daily practices to awaken the potential for a joyful existence.

Download app at
→ heartintune.org

HEARTSAPP



Log in to your heart.
Meditate with a trainer. Observe.
Transform.

Download at
→ heartsapp.org

info@heartsapp.org



MEDITATION MASTERCLASS

3 masterclasses

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

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

→ heartfulness.org/masterclass



योग

Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Yoga.

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

DEGREE IN OM

Heartfulness Yoga
Teacher Training Course

→ heartfulness.org/yoga-trainers

in.wellness@heartfulness.org



#1 BESTSELLER

DESIGNING DESTINY

by DAAJI

How meditative practices lead to changes in lifestyle, both personal and in relationships, which lead to greater freedom in designing our destiny.

Available at designingdestiny.com, on Amazon, and at all leading bookstores.

→ designingdestiny.com



#1 BESTSELLER

THE HEARTFULNESS WAY

by DAAJI

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

→ Available through heartfulnessway.com, at major bookstores and on Amazon.

FIND YOUR
COMMUNITY



Find a trainer or
meditation center
near you!

→ <https://heartfulness.org/en/connect-with-us/>



CONSCIOUS LIVING
IN STOCK

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

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

→ hfnlife.com

*Study
buddy*

YOU-NIVERSITY

Meditation & The Evolution of Consciousness

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

A Heartfulness and
Udemy Video Series.
Register today.

→ daaji.org/udemy

The Mega Conservation project

Nurturing Biodiversity and Ecological Sustainability

heartfulness
purity weaves destiny
Green

2013 / 2020



The Rainforest Project



The Deccan Plateau Project



The Food Forest Project



The Yatra Garden

Contribute to this cause at
heartfulness.org/en/green

An environmental initiative committed to nurturing biodiversity, indigenous and critically endangered species. An ex-situ conservation site, which envisions a space where humankind and nature co-exist in harmony.

Special Gifts

for Your Special Ones from Heartyculture

Signature Blends
Tea Gift Box



Diffuser with
Essential oils



Honey
Gift Box



DISCOVER THE JOY
of Heartful
SERVICES & SOLUTIONS



www.htcinc.com



www.caretech.com



www.ciber.com

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

Reimagine technology to accelerate your business