

July 2020

heartfulness

purity | weaves destiny

Our Human Story
BRUCE LIPTON

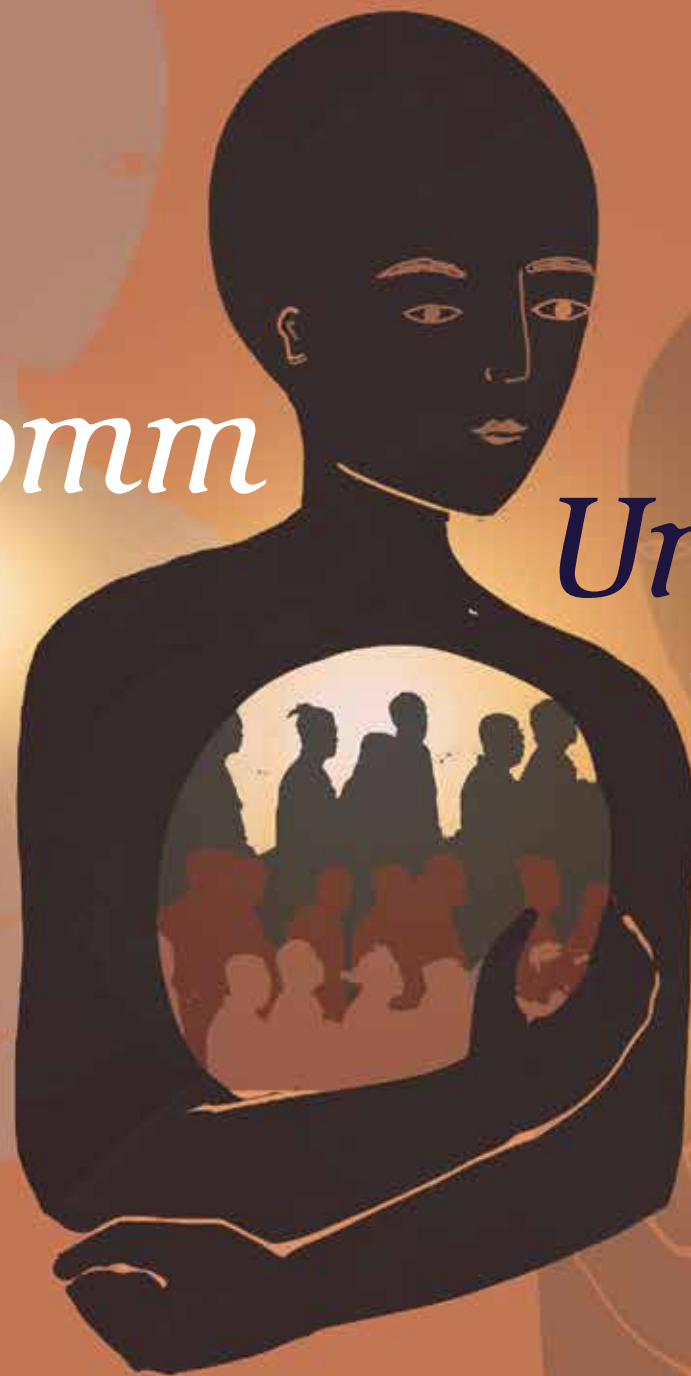
Experience
Connection
MIRABAI BUSH

Sacred Space
PETER REDING

comm


Unity

- DAAJI



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HUMAN AWAKENING

Dear readers,

A new consciousness is emerging around the world as we prepare this edition for print. Our human story is transitioning. With all the changes wrought by the coronavirus, and the response to recent awareness of race, we are adjusting to a new normal, and the foundation keeps on shifting so fast it is hard to keep up. One thing is becoming clear – we are moving into a new era of the heart, of inner connection with ourselves, and heart-to-heart connection with others. And because the heart is the realm of “we,” not “I”, our collective consciousness is shifting from “me to we.”

To inspire us in this shift towards one universal family, towards commUnity, we hear from Daaji, Bruce Lipton, Mirabai Bush, Ichak Adizes, Peter Reding, Ruby Carmen, Hari Venkatesan and Ravi Venkatesan. We also feature the beautiful artwork of Narendra Kini, who expresses the same vision perhaps even more accessibly in paint. Our contributors rouse us with their solutions for a better life and a better world.

Right now we stand at a crossroads, and we each get to choose our destiny, either by what we do or do not do. Are we ready for the teachings of love offered by the great sages and thought leaders of the past and present? Are we ready to let go of hatred and embrace universal brotherhood? In the words of Bell Hooks, “When we love we can let our hearts speak.”

Happy reading,
The editors

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Peter is a pioneer in the field of professional life coaching, and is the co-founder of the Coach for Life Institute. He has been the co-creator of many coaching and learning models during the last 30 years and has trained over 3,500 people to be professional coaches, all over the world. He is the 2005 recipient of the ICF's Global Peace Award, and was one of their first Master Certified Coaches.

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Mirabai teaches contemplative practices and develops programs based on contemplative principles and values for organizations. Her spiritual studies include two years in India with Neemkaroli Baba; with Buddhist teachers Shri S.N. Goenka, Anagarika Munindra, and IMS guiding teachers; with Pir Vilayat Khan and Tibetan Buddhist lamas Kalu Rinpoche, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Gelek Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche; and intensive practice in Iyengar yoga and Aikido under Kanai Sensei.

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Dr. Ichak Adizes is widely acknowledged as one of the world's leading management experts. He has received 21 honorary doctorates and is the author of 27 books that have been translated into 36 languages. Dr. Adizes is recognized by Leadership Excellence Journal as one of the top thirty thought leaders of America.

thought in action

focus:

Our Human Story

Raising Consciousness -
Part 2

Interview with Bruce Lipton

10

One Human Family

Ruby Carmen

19



The Heartful Strategist
- Part 5

Ravi Venkatesan

26

Just Thinking And Feeling:
Surrendering to Whom?

Ichak Adizes

30



innerview

The Heart Is Where We
Experience Connection

Interview with Mirabai Bush

36



inside

it changes everything

Transforming Awareness -
Part 2

Interview with Peter Reding

46

Sleep Over It

Hari Venkatesan

55



be inspired

A User's Guide to Living -
Part 7

Kamlesh Patel

60



what's up

78

taste of life

The Fountain Within

Art Essay by Narendra Kini

72







focus

OUR HUMAN STORY

At the center of
our being we are all
connected with the
same Reality.

DAAJI

Raising CONSCIOUSNESS

PART 2

In April 2020, **BRUCE LIPTON** spoke with **UDAY KUMAR** about the transition our planet is going through right now, and what we need to do to raise our consciousness to the next level. In part 2, he goes into more detail about epigenetics, consciousness, and how we remain pre-programmed until we evolve our consciousness through meditation. It is our programs more than anything external that hack our attention.

BL: Now let's relate this back to our human story.

We're made up of 50 trillion cells. You, me, we are skin-covered petri dishes. It's not a plastic dish, it's a skin dish, inside which you've got 50 trillion cells! You have the original culture medium.

Here's the point: Does it make a difference in the fate of the cell if it's in the plastic petri dish, or in the skin covered dish? The fate of the cells is controlled by the environment, whether it's in the plastic dish or the skin covered dish. Your genetic activity is not controlled by genes turning on and off, it's controlled by the chemistry of the blood, which is the culture medium, just the same as it is in the culture dish.

So, now we take the big blow-away steps that changed my life. The chemistry of the blood controls the genetics of the cell.

So, who's the chemist? Who controls the chemistry of the blood? The answer is: The brain is the chemist! Next question: What chemicals should the brain put into the blood? The answer: Whatever image is in your mind will be translated by the brain into complimentary chemistry.

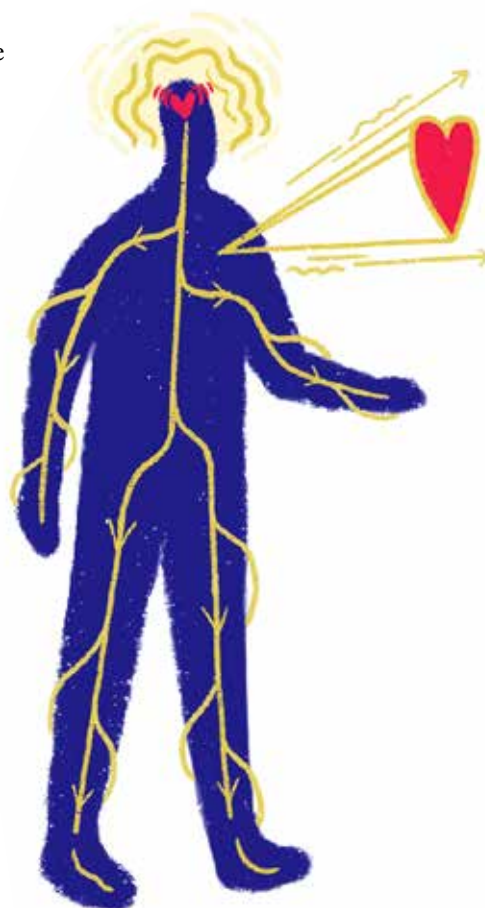
There's a chemistry of love; if you're experiencing love in your life, you release dopamine for pleasure, vasopressin makes you more attractive so your partner stays with you, oxytocin bonds you to your lover, and growth hormone is released when you're in love. So, the blood has all these things that happened just from my picture of love, and the chemistry is going through. Growth hormone promotes vitality and growth, so when people fall in love they're so healthy – it's chemistry, the chemistry of love.



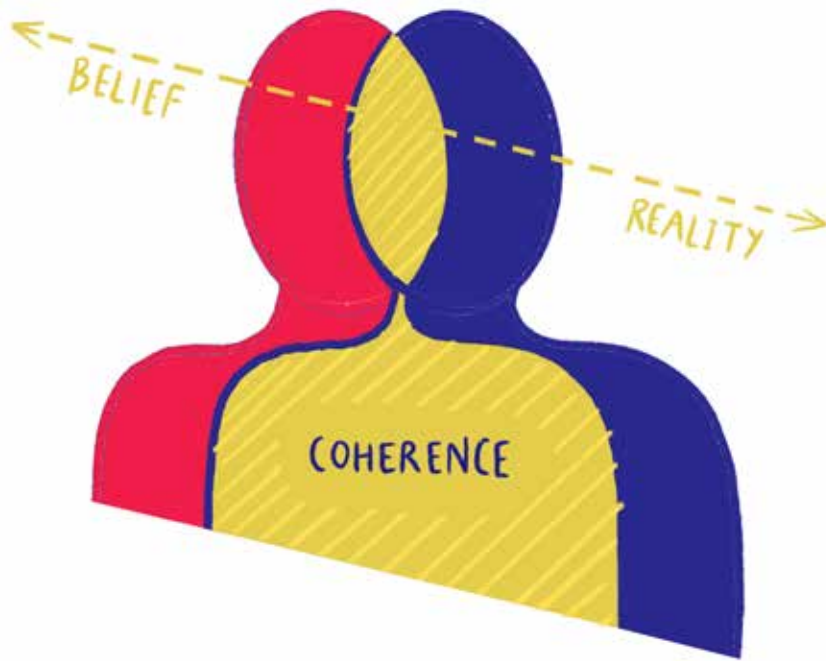
And if you go to the opposite side, the chemistry of fear does not release any of that. In fear, stress hormones are released, and hormones called cytokines which control the immune system are released. So now, the chemistry of the culture medium is completely different if I'm in love and if I'm in fear. The chemistry is what controls the genetics, and you control the chemistry, because your thoughts are manifesting the chemistry that controls genes.

Now, all of a sudden, you're not a victim of your genes, you're the master of your genes, because your consciousness is going to manipulate those genes to manifest what's in your consciousness. So if you're afraid of the flu, what's going to happen? Well, you're going to open up your immune system to get the flu, because you're preparing for what?

The function of the mind is to create coherence between your belief and your reality. If I have a belief that I'm going to get the flu, the function of the mind is to do everything to ensure that I get the flu. If I'm programmed to believe that I'm going to die in three months because I have cancer, the function of the mind is to shut me down so that my truth will manifest in three months and I will die.



I said to myself, "Do you understand what's going on here?"



Your life
is manifested
by your
consciousness.

Your consciousness is manifesting your genetics and your behavior, and I want to add one more piece to it, epigenetics. Genetic control is what people are programmed to believe in, which means this character, say breast cancer, is under genetic control and not in your hands. Epigenetics is the new science, epigenetic control. Sounds like the same one, but what's 'epi'? It means above. Epigenetic control is control above the genes – that's all the difference in the world.

If the genes are in control I'm a victim, but if the control is above the genes then I'm the master. So, epigenetics takes us from the

victim of heredity to the master of our current existence. First of all, the environment, the blood is controlling genetics. Now, what's above that? The brain because the brain is making the chemistry. And what's above that? Consciousness.

Your life is manifested by your consciousness.

The most valid science on the planet is quantum physics. There is no other science that has been tested more, verified more; it's the most truthful. If you're going to question science, don't question quantum physics first. This is the emphasis of why I say this. The first principle of quantum physics is that consciousness is creating your life experience. Biology, epigenetics, quantum physics all say the same thing; biology and physics come together at this point.

And the relevance is to understand where's your consciousness. If you think it's passive, that it's just coming in and out, then you've got it all wrong. Your consciousness is the master of your genes. Your life becomes the vision in your consciousness. Your thoughts are creating your world. This is what I wrote *The Biology of Belief* about; as individuals, you and I, we are creating our life experiences with our consciousness. But we also have a lot of shared consciousness, a lot of shared belief, and that's what led to my second book, *Spontaneous Evolution*. If a lot of us have the same programming,

My thoughts are not contained in my head. My thoughts are broadcast into the field, so I'm creating a field of consciousness around my head.

then each head is a tuning fork and consciousness is broadcast. This is the important part. People think their thoughts are in their head, and we can read this with an EEG. But now there's a new device called the Magneto Encephalogram and where the probe is not in your head, it's held away from the head.

What does this mean? **My thoughts are not contained in my head.** My thoughts are broadcast into the field, so I'm creating a field of consciousness around my head. And I love this quote by Albert Einstein, "The field is the sole governing agency of the particle." The field is the invisible energy around us, the particle is the expression of energy as matter, not real matter, it's an energy because everything is energy in quantum physics. The field (invisible energy) is the sole governing agency of that particle. Your thoughts are a field, and it's

shaping this particle called the body. That's quantum physics.

The body is like a vehicle: There's a steering wheel, and the mind is driving the vehicle. Now, there are two parts to the mind, and they don't have the same function and they don't learn in the same way – the conscious mind and the subconscious mind. The subconscious mind is programmed. Some of it is instinct, like when a ball comes at your face and you blink, but mostly it's learned. You learned how to walk by the age of two, that's a program; but once you learned it, it's in your subconscious and for as long as you live you'll be able to walk without thinking about it, unless you break it all up. The programs concern how we live, even how we move, all of our actions. The child in a family of a musician will learn the music, because that's the environment they were in when they were programmed. It's downloading

– while the parents were talking music, playing music, the child was like a video camera, recording. Children grow up like their parents – wow, what a coincidence! – because that's where we got the program.

So, I get off the ground using a program in the first seven years, and I have a vehicle with a driving wheel, but I have two minds. The subconscious is programmed mind, and I get driver education. How you learn how to drive a car from someone and you download that program, is exactly like you were taught by them. At age seven, consciousness kicks in – what's different? The subconscious mind is habits and programs; the conscious mind is creativity. Now, you can imagine, you have imagination. And if you take this imagination and drive the vehicle with it, you can create your imagination. In the creative mind, I get to put my hands on the wheel

If we are not in control of our consciousness, we are victims of our subconscious programming. Exercises that re-empower conscious thinking are exercises to take back power over our life.

and drive. Towards what? Your imagination, wishes and desires. So your conscious mind, when driving, is going to take you to your wishes and desires. Whereas the subconscious mind is going to take you to the destination according to the program.

And here comes the crux of the problem, and this is why meditation comes into the picture. First of all, you have to realize this: The conscious mind, when it's driving the vehicle, is taking you to your wishes and desires, but the conscious mind can think. When the conscious mind is thinking it's not looking out; a thinking mind is looking in. So, if I ask you, "Tell me what you're doing on Friday." Well, if you're going to answer that question and it's not written right there in front of you, where are you going to get the answer? You're going to go think about it. And when you are thinking you're looking in.

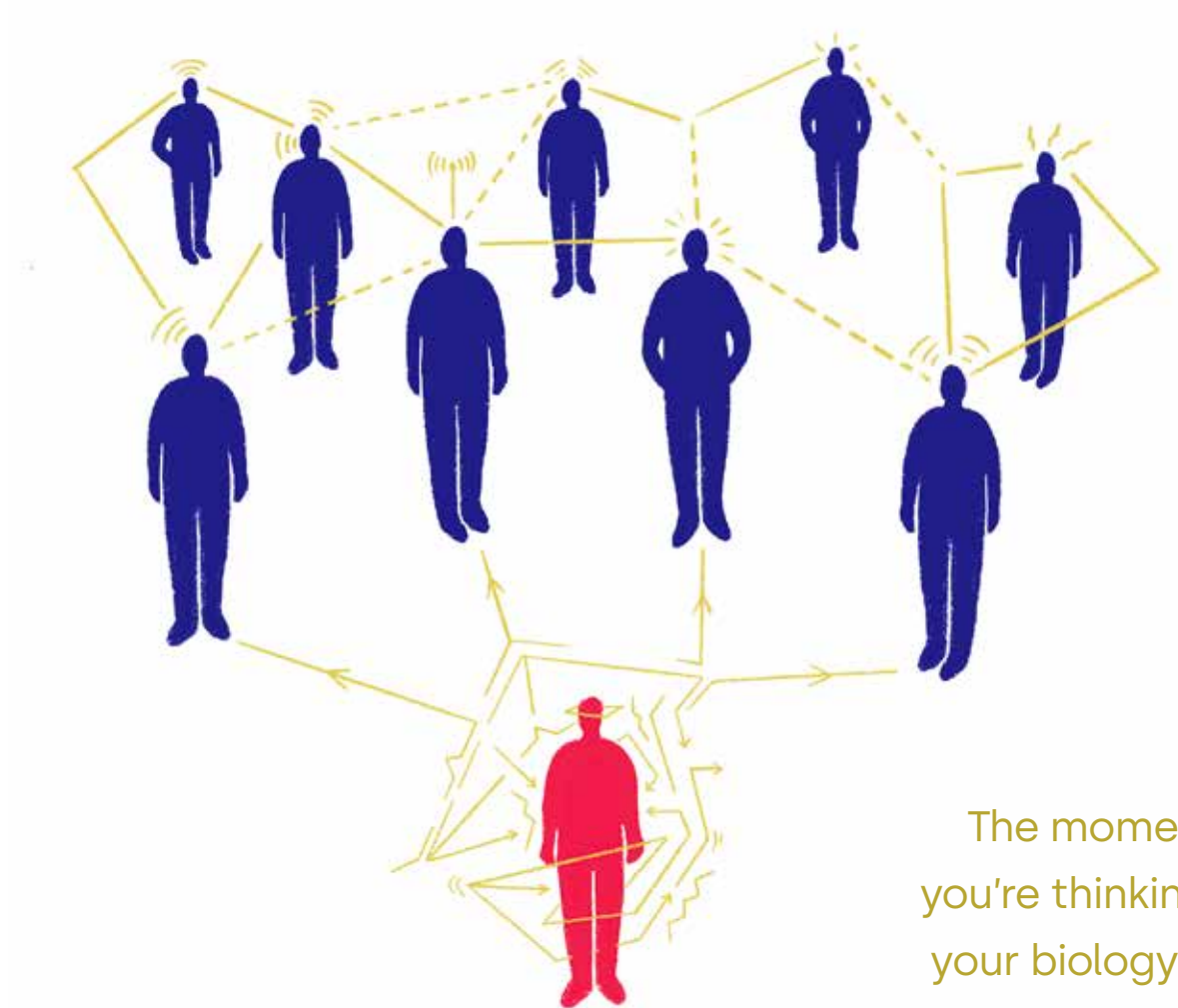
Now, the moment you're thinking, you're not paying attention. What if I'm walking down the street or driving a car and I'm not thinking? Am I going to crash the car or walk into a tree? When the conscious mind is busy thinking, the subconscious mind is on autopilot. Whatever you're doing is now going to be taken over by the subconscious mind. You know how to walk, you know how to drive the car, you know how to talk, and do your job, because these are habits. The subconscious

mind is more powerful. If you're going to crash the car, the subconscious mind will take over. It's more powerful and faster; the conscious mind is too slow. So, the subconscious mind may function better than the conscious mind when driving.

And now the issue is this: You are engaging in subconscious behavior, but your conscious mind is not observing them because it is looking inside at a thought. So, while you're thinking, you won't consciously see your behavior because you are still thinking. So the moment you're thinking, your biology is run by the subconscious autopilot. And while you're doing that you won't see your behavior because your attention is not looking out, it's looking in.

Q: It won't be aware.

Right. This is the same story I've shared over the last thirty-two years in lectures, because it's so profoundly simple. I tell the audience that somewhere in your life you had a friend and you knew your friend's behavior very, very well, and you happened to know your friend's parents, too. One day you see that your friend has the exact same behavior as their parent, so you want to tell your friend, "Hey Bill, you're just like your dad." I say, back away from Bill because when he hears this he'll say, "How can you compare me to my dad? I'm nothing like him!" He'll get mad. And everyone



laughs because everyone's had that experience. This is why the story is so profound. Everyone else can see that Bill behaves like his dad, except Bill.

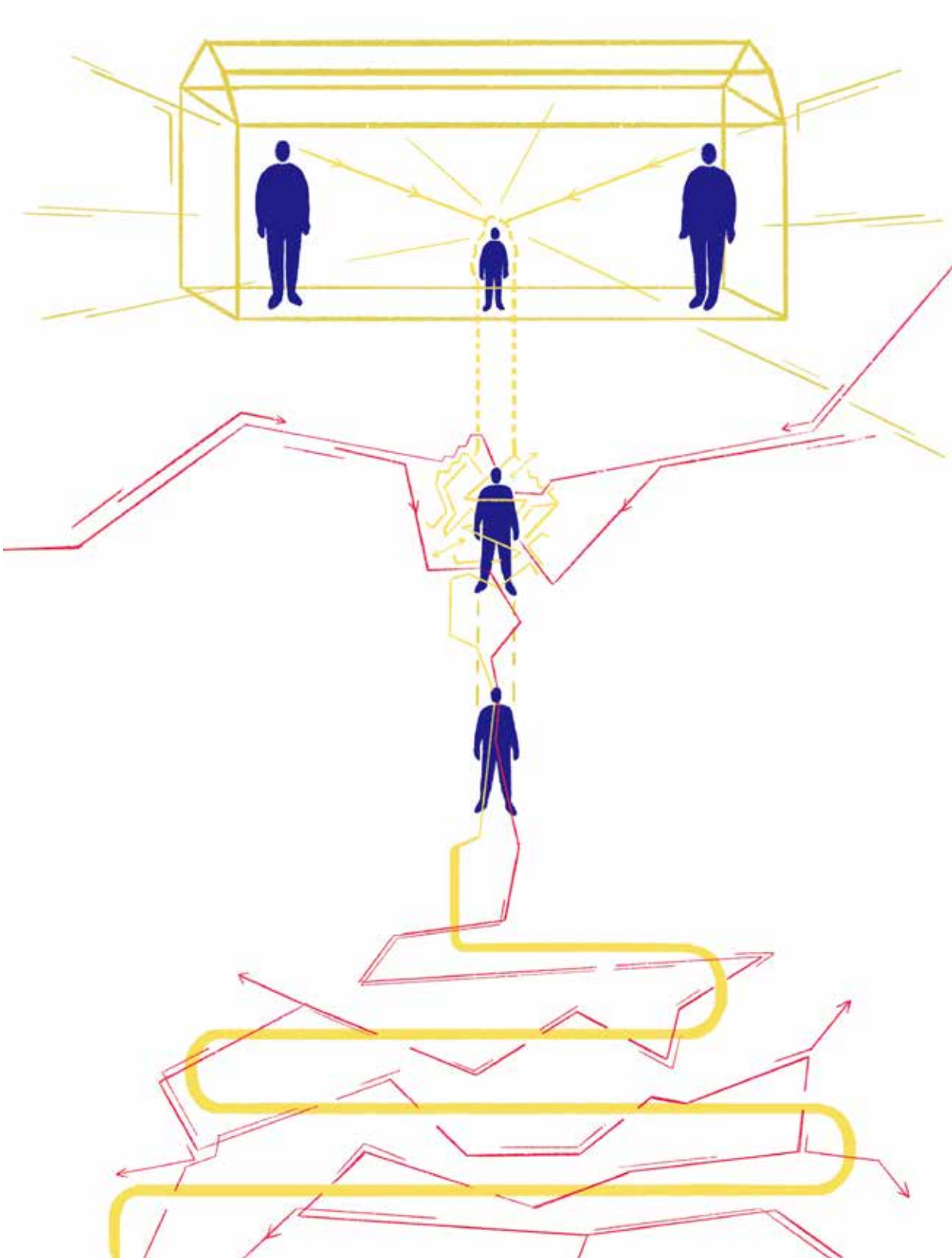
Q: I love that!

Well, what's the meaning of this? The answer's simple. Bill is thinking, and when he's thinking, he lets go of the control. The autopilot steps in, and where was that programmed from? His dad. So, whatever he's going to do in autopilot mode is a direct play

from the dad's program. But why can't he see it? Because why is he playing it? He's playing it because he's not paying attention. He can't see his own behavior, because he's not looking at it when it's playing.

Well, that is 95% of the day for the average person. 95% of the day they're running on programs, and they do not see it, they only see the result. Why is that important? If I have a bad program, I come home at the end of the day and my life sucks. And if I didn't see the program, like Bill, and I didn't

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What we have to do is recognize the fact that we're not running our own life 95% of the time, we're running on a program.

see that I was sabotaging myself, I'm going to say, "Who sabotaged me?" In our minds we blame other people – I wanted to be successful, but when I let go of the program my father's behavior took over, he has a crap program and I come home at the end of the day, none of it works and I'm thinking, "I wanted to be successful but I'm a victim of the world." This is 100% wrong. We manifested that. But we did it unconsciously in the way Bill did it; we didn't see the behavior, we sabotaged ourselves. We see the result and it's not what we want, and then we blame other people.

What we have to do is recognize the fact that we're not running our own life 95% of the time; we're running on a program. The Jesuits, for 400 years, told their followers, "Give me your child until they are seven years old and I will show you the man." That is the classic phrase from the Catholic Church. For 400 years they had been repeating it, with no one paying attention to what that meant. Well, now we know that it's during the first seven years that programming occurs, and the program is going to run 95% of our lives. We know that. So, you are going to make a life that matches your program. The man that will evolve will be the man that comes from that program.

So, the Jesuits knew that if they got the first seven years of

programming, the rest of your life will be what they programmed into you. And they controlled the population, with fear of death, fear of hell, and so people said, "Teach me what I need to know not to go to hell!" That's when the program went in, that's when the power got lost, and those people can't connect with God because only the guy in the black suit can connect with God.

Q: The victim kicks in, to your earlier point.

You've been programmed, and this is the world. This idea of programming hasn't been lost. It's even better today, people are getting programmed better today than they ever were before.

Q: Look at the media, it's even worse.

Look at an infant carrying an iPad.

Q: I'm glad you brought up that point. You are quite a figure in the Heartfulness community, by the way. Our Guide, Daaji, very often mentions your experiments in his talks, about your findings in epigenetics. In fact, I didn't know about epigenetics until he spoke about it, and I started reading up on your work. And interestingly, he tied it to some of the rituals practiced in ancient India. For instance, if you're a young pregnant woman you go to your parents' home, so that the

Meditation techniques and the programs you're involved with are fundamental programs of exercising your consciousness, which by definition emphasize your power over life.

fetus then grows in the right environment.

Exactly! Ancient people knew this, and when the controls started to come in, when people realized, "I can program you," the game changed. It became a power game, where the powerful people programmed the less powerful people. There's a book called *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* by Robert Kiyosaki and Sharon Lechter, and everything that we just talked about is the basis of that book. If you came from a rich family, as a kid, you unconsciously downloaded how to be successful, as compared to a poor kid who downloads every reason why they're not successful, and they perpetuate it. That's epigenetics. *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* is epigenetics.

So, we come full circle, and therefore, if we are not in control of our consciousness, we are victims of our subconscious programming. Exercises that re-empower conscious thinking are exercises to take back power over our life. From a quantum physics point of view, our experiences are all based on consciousness; from a biological point of view, our experiences are programming our health, our genetics, and our behavior. There's agreement there and that's the coolest part. We must take back control of our consciousness. People don't even know they're using it; they still think in their

minds that they're controlling their lives with their thoughts. So, when life doesn't work out, they say, "It wasn't me because my thoughts were successful, and look, I'm not successful and I am now the victim." To that I say, "It's because you're unaware of where your consciousness is. Consciousness is not controlling 95% of your life; your program is." So, meditation techniques and the programs you're involved with are fundamental programs of exercising your consciousness, which by definition emphasize your power over life. If you're not conscious, you are the program.

To be continued.



Human Family

IN EXTRAORDINARY TIMES

All around the world, we are in lockdown in a bid to slow down the spread of the COVID-19 virus. And we are coming to terms with this collective experience. In this article, **RUBY CARMEN** shares some insights, inspirations and suggestions for coping well in this extraordinary time.



Tips for coping

DEVELOP STRUCTURE AND ROUTINE

In lockdown, many of us have been given the gift of time. In a recent article published in the *New York Times*, astronaut Scott Kelly offers some excellent advice on putting structure and routine into your day, including fixing a time to get up and go to bed. Having structure is helpful for well-being and can offer a sense of purpose for both adults and children. There is an element of security and safety in routine. Where possible, create some boundaries of work space and home space, and allow yourself and your children time off.



JOY AND PLAY

Allow time for joy and play. This feature of the human condition has manifested in the exponential growth of online kindness groups springing up like flowers, and the outpouring of multiform and multimedia creative outlets and ways of expression – online singing and music making, art classes, ukulele playing classes, and meditation sessions across the globe. New possibilities continue to arise, as human beings endeavor to express themselves and connect with each other.



COMMUNICATE AND CONNECT

Share stories. This is an opportunity to connect deeply with our loved ones. If we are not with them, video calls are indeed a gift. In the absence of technology, children can write letters, and send drawings to their grandparents, cousins, uncles and aunts.

Limit talking about the lockdown and the virus. In particular, avoid talking about it in worried, anxious ways in the presence of young children, who in turn will model anxious adult behavior.



ACCEPT AND ACKNOWLEDGE

Work towards accepting how you truly feel. On the days you feel sad, angry or frustrated, sit with those feelings for a little while. Give yourself a hug. And when you are ready, let go. Diary writing or journaling is another option, in particular on the difficult days where you feel you have had enough. Both our physical and mental well-being need to be prioritized, especially under our current circumstances.

BE INSPIRED

Look for inspiration in each day. Take time to observe the exceptional courage, bravery and self-sacrifice of others: Nurses, doctors, paramedics, those who deliver food, serve in stores, pharmacists, and those who continue to keep communal spaces clean. The heart fills up with gratitude that cannot be truly expressed in words. The Italian children who drew pictures of rainbows with the caption “Everything will be alright,” the opera singers on balconies who are so touching and truly inspirational. Imagine all these acts of human kindness that we have witnessed, and those that are hidden. We are sharing a collective experience of hope for our human family, realizing the innate goodness of the human heart.

COMMUNITY

Plug into your local and global communities. There are neighborhood WhatsApp groups, online coffee meetings, parent support groups etc. The list is endless. Forums exist to help and support the needy in our communities. Depending on our skills we can offer practical support to others.

One example, provided by the Heartfulness community, of which I am a part, gives me a unique sense of unity and oneness. Daily and weekly, we are sitting in our homes meditating together virtually.

It is wondrous to witness the human ability to adapt and find creative solutions, thriving under difficult and restricted circumstances. To instill a sense of meaning, we can look to create more structure in our daily lives, allowing time for joyful, playful activities. We may also recognize the importance of communication and our ability to connect in whatever forms are available to us. Perhaps, above all else, we can





exercise greater acceptance of how we feel from day to day, and allow ourselves time to process it. This could be through diary writing, the experience of silence, or the practice of meditation. Find inspiration in each day and reach out to local and global communities. We are one human family living in extraordinary times.

OTHER RESOURCES:

<https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/coronavirus/helping-parents-and-kids-stay-cool-and-collected-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

Guided visualisations and relaxation for children
<https://www.heartfulness.uk/primaryschools/>

www.heartfulness.org and
www.heartfulnessinstitute.org

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/opinion/scott-kelly-coronavirus-isolation.html>





thought in action

There is no instinct
like that of the
heart.

LORD BYRON

THE HEARTFUL STRATEGIST

PART 5

In the earlier articles of this series, **RAVI VENKATESAN** introduced the Heartful Strategist framework. He covered how consciousness is limited by certain vicious cycles of negative emotions. He also looked at examples of shifts that can be made to allow consciousness to expand through broadening our perspective and “thinking” for the benefit of broader and broader circles of influence. In this article he explores tendencies and thought patterns, and how specific practices can help with shifting these. As background, you can read parts [3](#) and [4](#) of this series again.

In part 3, we looked at how consciousness has an active part and an unconscious part, that in turn can be viewed as two parts, subconsciousness and superconsciousness. What is interesting is that while we focus on the active consciousness, a lot of what influences us is in the subconsciousness. To understand this better, think about the tendencies that we observe in ourselves, our family, our colleagues etc. Given the same situation and inputs, people respond very differently.

Take, for example, the current COVID-19 crisis, and the responses of world and regional leaders. They range from leaders who are optimistic and do not take extreme measures to lock things down,



to leaders that are locking everything down for as long as they can. The decisions made by these leaders, given the same inputs, should not be puzzling. Whether it is the CEO of a company or a parent, everyone responds to situations based on their tendencies. These tendencies have their source in our thought patterns. Here is an exercise to assess your own thought patterns:

- **At the end of the day**, sit calmly in a quiet location with your eyes closed. Let the day replay in front of you, from morning till now. Make yourself an “outside” impartial witness of your own reactions and responses through the day, not in terms of actions you took, but in terms of the thoughts that you had, which in many cases would have preceded your actions.
- **Check if these thoughts** were driven by fear, envy, anger, compassion, altruism, ambition, love etc. Also assess if your mind generated a multiplicity of thoughts that built one on top of the other, creating stories about what might happen, and eventually none of those imagined events actually happened.

The more hyperactive your mind, the more complex and interwoven the network of such thoughts. Some are responses to external stimuli, but many come from within. What is the source of how we respond to external stimuli, as well as these thoughts and ideas that come from within? What is the source of our thought patterns? Why do the tendencies of one person’s mind differ from another?

To understand the mystery of thought patterns, let’s take a day-in-the-life view. We wake up and start interacting with the world primarily through the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. We are like a video camera that is recording everything all the time, except that while a camera only records through sight and sound, we record through smell, taste, and touch as well. What

happens to all this information? It is stored in us as memories and impressions. The difference is that memories are simply factual information. For example, if I have a meeting with my boss to discuss a promotion, the facts related to this meeting are recorded as a memory. This initially goes into my short-term memory and later moves to long-term memory. If I have an argument with my boss during this meeting, then it will leave a strong impression on me. This emotional aspect of the interaction is stored in my mind, or more precisely my heart-mind vibrational field as an impression. You can think of these impressions literally like impressions in the sand. Look at the two pictures below. One shows a beach with a lot of impressions made on the sand, and another that has been combed clean.



The more hyperactive your mind, the more complex and interwoven the network of such thoughts.

THOUGHT IN ACTION

Over time these impressions become heavier and sink into the subconscious. The store of these past impressions is the source of our thought patterns, emotional reactions, and behavioral tendencies. So, to change our thought patterns, we need to eliminate these past impressions and feed positive suggestions to our subconscious mind that can shift these patterns.

- ▶ Deep within our subconscious is a store of all past impressions
- ▶ When conducive circumstances arise, these impressions lead to thought patterns that precede actions
- ▶ To make a shift in our thought patterns we can feed suggestions to our subconscious

There is a very powerful Heartfulness meditative technique that is specifically geared towards removing these past impressions. It is called Heartfulness Cleaning, and you can learn how to do it by listening to the guided practice and following along.

For the next few weeks, try doing this practice every evening. Also, repeat the exercise in this article to observe your thought patterns every night. Observe any changes and note them down. In subsequent articles we'll introduce a couple of other practices that are specifically geared towards expansion of consciousness. Over time, these practices can create a powerful shift in thought patterns and our overall consciousness.





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A person is shown from the waist up, with their arms raised in a gesture of surrender or praise. They are silhouetted against a bright, yellowish-white sky. Numerous small, stylized birds in shades of blue and yellow are scattered across the sky, some appearing to fly towards the person. The overall mood is one of hope and spiritual freedom.

JUST THINKING AND FEELING

SURRENDERING TO WHOM?

DR ICHAK K. ADIZES challenges us all to learn to listen to what feels right and wrong in the heart. He encourages us to find God's will within ourselves.

It is a corner stone of many religions and spiritual practices to prescribe surrendering to God or His representative. For instance, in the Catholic religion it is the Pope. His decision is final and to be adhered to. In India, there is a proliferation of gurus who claim that they know God's will, and people follow their decisions religiously.

There is a benefit in surrendering to the wishes of a guru. Once you surrender, you emancipate yourself from the terror the ego imposes on you. You surrender to the Master who will make the decisions for you. The danger is that you subordinate your will to someone else, and retreat from being an adult and taking responsibility for your actions. Furthermore, what if the person we surrender to is corrupt, like the guru of Jonestown, who ordered all his disciples to commit suicide, and they did? Is that what we want?

The true Master to surrender to is God. I believe all religions share this prescription. But what does it mean to surrender to God's will? And what is that will? To whom to surrender if not to a human Guru? Some interpret it to follow religiously the "manual," whether it is the Koran or the Torah or the New Testament.

That is blind surrendering to the written word, and the danger is that some people go through the motions, follow the rituals, but not the spirit. Some of the most corrupt people can be the most "religious"; they attend church or the mosque or the ashram, but do not practice the spirit.

So how can we surrender to God?

To "hear" God's will, do not follow blindly the "manual," the book of instructions of the organized religion. Do not think what it is. Just let the heart tell you what feels right or not.

Just let the heart tell you what feels right or not.

Some people think that their thoughts are theirs. They truly represent them.

I suggest our thoughts are not just ours. We absorb what the media tells us is right, what our peers tell us is wrong, we pick up thoughts on the street, we pick up thoughts derived from experiences good and bad starting with our childhood, from our dreams about the future, and from who knows where else. So, not all our thoughts are just ours. What is genuinely ours is not easy to carve out by thinking. That is why many people wonder, even for a lifetime, "Who am I, really?" and "What do I really want?"

I suggest that what we *feel* in our heart is uniquely ours. That is who we really are. And through the heart we connect to God, to whom we should surrender.

When we meditate and listen to the heart, we get an answer to problems we did not know the answer to. For this, we need to block the interrupting noise of our thoughts.

And what is that voice that is whispering to us from the heart when we are calm enough and willing to listen? What is it telling us? It tells us which decision *feels* right and which *feels* wrong. Your heart knows. You know.

Never disempower yourself. We need to unite with the Guru, with the human Master. We might choose to practice the rituals of a religion, but not at the cost of nullifying ourselves or, worse, not



Never disempower yourself. We need to unite with the Guru, with the human Master. We might choose to practice the rituals of a religion, but not at the cost of nullifying ourselves or, worse, not listening to God's will communicated directly to us through the heart when we meditate.

listening to God's will communicated directly to us through the heart when we meditate.

Bottom line: Listen to your heart. When in doubt, let whomever you trust interpret the absolute values of God and help you understand His will. In the process, grow spiritually, but never ever do anything your heart tells you not to do.

I think organized religion has failed us, and many gurus are false spiritual leaders. The true portal to God is not the prayer books nor the guru's darshan. It is time we decentralized religion and each person finds for himself or herself God's will by meditating through the heart. Try Heartfulness. <https://gum.co/uBhXl>. I do.

Just thinking and feeling it,
Ichak Kalderon Adizes

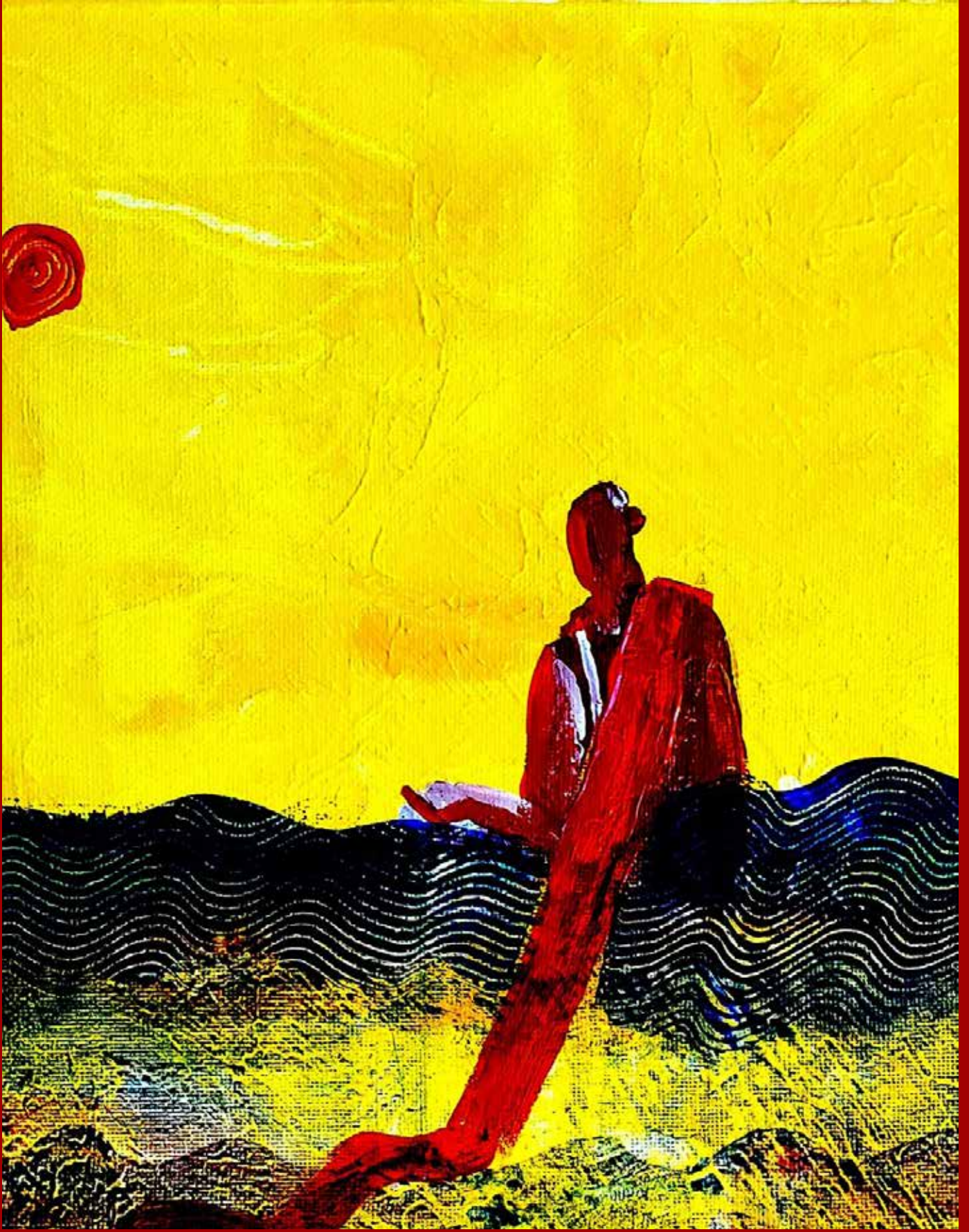


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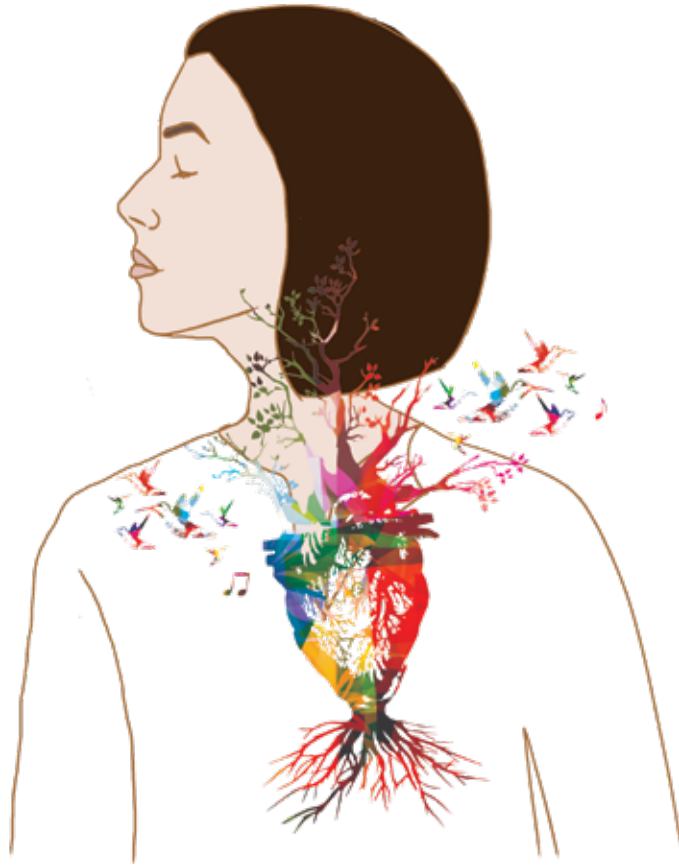
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our own hearts to discover
what is true isn't just a
matter of honesty but also of
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PEMA CHÖDRON

interview



The Heart Is Where We Experience Connection

MIRABAI BUSH is the author of *Working with Mindfulness*, co-creator of Google's "Search Inside Yourself" program, co-founder of the Centre for Contemplative Mind in Society and a founding board member of the Seva Foundation. Some of her other literary works include *Contemplation Nation*, *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education* and *Walking Each Other Home*, co-authored with Ram Dass. Here she speaks with **PUERNIMA RAMAKRISHNAN** as part of the GLOW Webinar series, on her journey and evolution during the last 50 years, and on the role of her teacher in that transformation.

Q: Thank you so much for joining us today, Mirabai. It's an honor and privilege to host you on the GLOW webinar.

Hello, and thank you so much Purnima for inviting me. And I'm happy to be talking about Heartfulness, especially because I see so many people learning Mindfulness and maybe overlooking the heart a little bit.

Q: These days there are more and more people who are not affiliated with a religion and are seeking something spiritual. According to you, what is spirituality? And how do you think it is different from religion?

As I understand it, spirituality is the search and discovery of truth, the nature of reality. It is the relation of you as an individual to the greater whole, the understanding of what exists in you, what its nature is, what its implications are for your life, and how you are a part of the whole. I think that you can make that journey, that discovery, within an organized religion or you can do it on your own.

It's interesting that when we started The Centre for Contemplative Mind in Society, we were going to take practices like Mindfulness, compassion and Yoga, into secular settings in the United States in 1995, when no one was doing it yet. We interviewed 40 teachers of contemplative practice within institutions and religions, and asked them what's the danger of taking spiritual practices out of organized religion. Almost everyone, from a whole range of religious backgrounds, said in different ways that the practices themselves have their own integrity. So if you're on your own path outside religion, or if you're discovering new practices at work, or with a group of other people, they have integrity and they will help you on the path of transformation, but the danger is that you lose community.

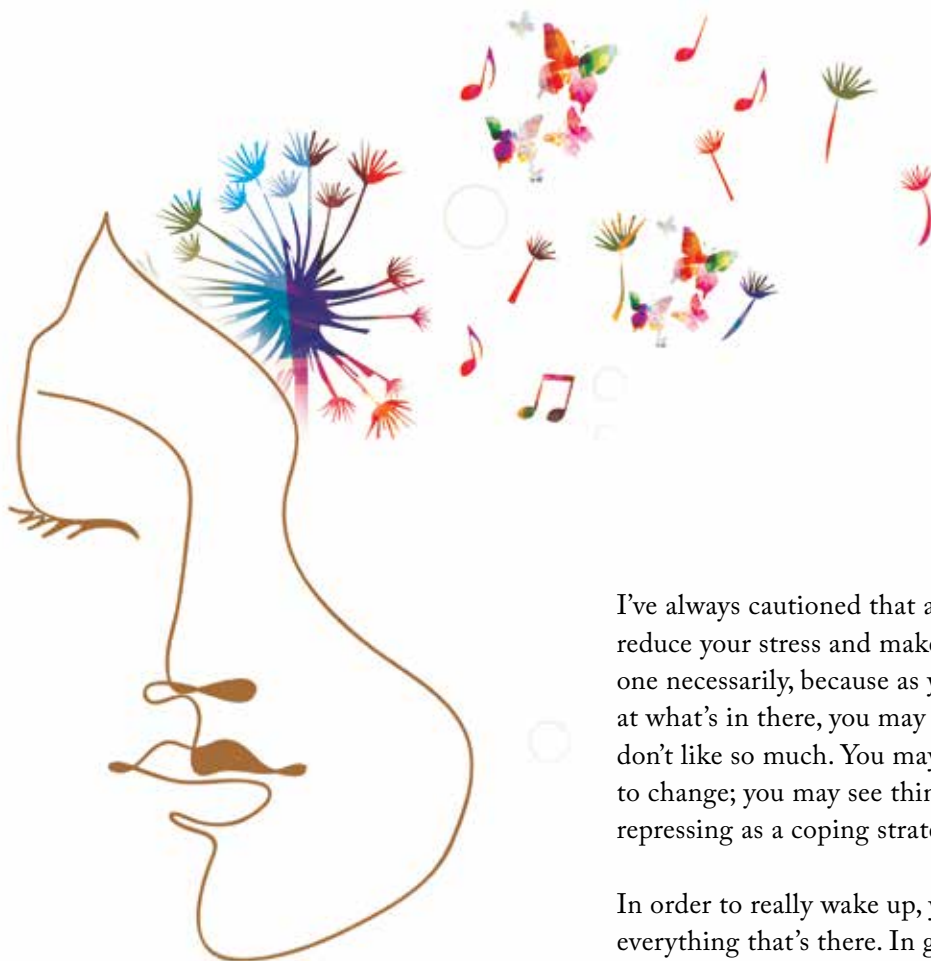
Spirituality is the search and discovery of truth, the nature of reality. It is the relation of you as an individual to the greater whole, the understanding of what exists in you, what its nature is, what its implications are for your life, and how you are a part of the whole.

In every religious tradition there is a strength, you know, *sangha* or *satsangh* or fellowship. And when you explore spirituality by yourself, unless you have a group of others you're exploring it with, the danger is that you can learn less, you can learn less truthfully, and you can go off in a way that will lead you astray. And then you won't feel supported and cared for by the others around you.

I started off in religion. I was in the Catholic religion and after that I explored many others and have felt at home in others, but my essential path is spiritual while appreciating the value of religion.

Q: Spiritual practices and techniques serve as a tool for our personal transformation. But how exactly does a spiritual practice transform us?

Well, different practices do different things. I'm familiar with meditation of various kinds, the movement practices of Yoga, Tai Chi and Qi Gong, and the practices of study. Generally most of these practices begin by quieting us down and helping us tune in and listen to our own bodies.



A lot of the time we're going through life not paying much attention to our own bodies, and within the body are many messages to us. We can learn a lot by what we're feeling within our body. For example, emotions begin at physical experience. If we pay attention to that, then we learn not to act without thought on the negative emotions. We learn that when positive, caring, loving emotions are arising, to pay attention and give them space and cultivate them. So these practices begin by helping us tune into our bodies. They reduce stress.

I've always cautioned that a spiritual path doesn't reduce your stress and make you happier on day one necessarily, because as you begin to look at what's in there, you may see things that you don't like so much. You may see things you want to change; you may see things that you've been repressing as a coping strategy.

In order to really wake up, you need to see everything that's there. In general when you sit and do these practices, stress reduces. Scientists have done a lot of research and can measure cortisol in the body. The cortisol drops, while doing even 15 minutes of basic practices like the Heartfulness practices, the Mindfulness practices and Yoga. Any of us who have done those practices know that experience – you start feeling better.

Then you begin to trust yourself more as you come to know what's there in your mind and in your body. It's not that you'll always like what you discover, but as long as you can see it and know it, you can make better decisions. That develops trust in yourself. I think of it as a radical self-confidence. It doesn't mean you think you're always right, but

I saw the possibility of what it can be to be human; he expanded it so much for me. I had a small idea of who I was, and what I could be, and I thought I'd gotten through life and I can get a little bit better than what I am. But he so expanded the possibility of this wide open, loving heart, and wise mind, that it just made me much more excited about life and much happier to be here.

you are in touch with what it is you feel you know, and you can then express what you don't know.

I think it also develops a welcoming of experience of the life of others, because there's less fear that you must protect yourself. You know that as experiences come, and you see them for what they are, you can respond through knowing yourself. And having developed this caring, loving, compassionate way of being in the world, you can be much more welcoming to every moment as it comes. Finally, these practices help us just to become fuller human beings, discover what it means to be human.

When I met my teacher, my Guru, in India, it wasn't anything he said that specifically taught me. I saw the possibility of what it can be to be human; he expanded it so much for me. I had a small idea of who I was, and what I could be, and I thought I'd gotten through life and I can get a little bit better than what I am. But he so expanded the possibility of this wide open, loving heart, and

wise mind, that it just made me much more excited about life and much happier to be here.

So those are the reasons I practice, from what I've glimpsed and not yet totally realized from doing practice.

Q: Do you see any intersect between the sacred and the secular, or do you see it as a conflict? Do you see the practice helping you to move towards the sacred? How do you envision these two aspects of our manifestation – sacredness and secularism?

It's a great question, thank you. Well, I've actually spent a lot of time thinking about this, because I did this work in the Center for Contemplative Mind. We brought these practices, which are about cultivating and recognizing the sacred, into secular settings of our workplaces, with lawyers and judges, business executives, journalists, the army, social justice activists, philanthropists, and many other kinds of people, all of whom think of their work

lives and their professional lives as separate from their religious, spiritual or sacred lives.

By introducing practices into these settings, we helped people integrate their lives better, to recognize that these false separations do not exist. We brought recognized meaning in the work that they were doing, and helped them remember why they originally chose to be a public interest lawyer or a CEO of a corporation. There are good reasons, deep reasons, to do these things, which often people forget while they're in their busy-ness. We also hoped that these practices would help people slow down enough, and take care of themselves enough, and cultivate enough loving kindness and

compassion, so that their lives were happier and that they could relate to people better.

The practices helped people to be more present in the moment – to let go of everything that's not about this moment. It doesn't mean not making plans. You might be making plans for the future, but you're doing it in this moment. It doesn't mean never benefiting from our experience of the past, but being with it in this moment, not getting lost in regretting the past or feeling anxious about the future.

Bringing these spiritual practices into everyday work really helped melt the barriers between the



secular and the sacred. In very secular settings we were helping people remember what's meaningful about their lives and in that way helping them recognize that everything they do is sacred.

You are here, you have this precious human life, and everything you do in it is sacred, but we just forget that. It is sacred in the sense that you are connected to everything that exists, and what you do is important. It's important to honor that, and to honor our connections, especially with each other and with your understanding of the divine.

So sometimes we transformed secular spaces into sacred spaces. We acted it out. We'd move into a kind of a retreat, and we would add a candle and flowers, and maybe pictures of something that would evoke connections for people. We'd ask people to take off their shoes when they entered the room, which people in this country don't usually do. We would ask them to be in silence for parts of the time so that they could more easily remember the sacred. And of course it would change things. They could see what that silent space usually evoked. So that was educational for a lot of people.

Q: It's interesting that you said spiritual practice helps a person to be more in the moment, in the current situation, and that it doesn't mean that they don't make plans for the future. It just means to be more aware of the now. Being connected with everything else in the universe – that too makes sense. Thank you so much for that beautiful explanation about the sacred and secular not just meeting, but being one and the same.

As I listen to you speak, I feel that I have to say that so much of this was awakened in me when I went to India. I went for two weeks and I ended up staying for two years! I studied with many great teachers and offered myself many contemplative

spaces. And it was such a gift. Anyhow, listening to your voice is making me happy.

Q: So you were speaking about your guide in India, with whom you spent some time. What is the role of a spiritual guide in human transformation, and how does a guide help us grow spiritually?

Well, I had the privilege of being with a great teacher, Neem Karoli Baba, in northern India. When I went, I wasn't looking for a teacher; I didn't know enough to look for a teacher. I went to India on a kind of a vague search in 1970, at a time when the United States was in a lot of turmoil. I traveled around the world trying to find a way of being that seemed saner to me. I met him, I won't say by chance, because we don't believe these things are really by chance. I first learnt meditation in a Burmese Buddhist monastery, and then I met my teacher.

It is so helpful when you're practicing to at least have a guide. In a certain Buddhist tradition they say you don't need a guru, what you need is a

It is sacred in the sense that you are connected to everything that exists, and what you do is important. It's important to honor that, and to honor our connections, especially with each other and with your understanding of the divine.

A good teacher will help you to see it, not once, but over and over again: if you look within you'll find it. They are the person ahead of you, who can not only tell you to do it but inspire you to do it.

spiritual friend, someone who is ahead of you on the path, who can help you go through whatever you're waking up to and can guide you with that.

Once, when I came back to this country, I studied with Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche who was a Tibetan lama.

And people would ask him, "Rinpoche, what do you need a guru for? You just told us that it's all within you. If it's all within you, what do you need a guru for?"

He said, "Well, you need a guru to tell you that it's all within you."

A good teacher will help you to see it, not once, but over and over again: If you look within you'll find it. They are the person ahead of you, who can not only *tell* you to do it but *inspire* you to do it. You may say, "This is a good thing to do, because look at this person, whom I love to be around. How loving he or she is, and how wise! I want to be like that, because I want to lead a life that relieves suffering in myself and others, a life that increases happiness in all of us, a life of kindness."

So that is my feeling about teachers.

When I went to India, I was in the 4th year of my PhD, and I was with really great teachers at my school in the US. But it was a different relationship, as you know, from the relationship you have with your spiritual teacher. While my teachers at school were experts in their subjects, and could teach me a lot, sometimes they weren't particularly really ethical, moral, kind, or loving people. They just happened to know a lot about something. But in India, I discovered from Neem Karoli Baba, and from other teachers too, what it meant to be human, to be part of this great mysterious whole. It was really quite a new experience for me.

When I first met Neem Karoli Baba, I was actually traveling with my friend Ram Dass. He died recently, and he's very much in my heart and mind today. He had been with Neem Karoli Baba before, and wrote a book called *Be Here Now* that arrived at absolutely the right time in this country. He sold 200 million copies of the book, because people were so hungry to hear just what we are talking about today: How these practices and teachers can change our lives.

So Baba was by the side of the road when we saw him. The bus came to a stop and I kind of stumbled off. I was an intellectual graduate. I had grown up in New York. I was a Westerner. I was also in the middle of the Women's Liberation Movement. I had never bowed to anyone *ever*. Yet I saw him and there was not even a thought – I was down. Why? Because in that moment I understood how present he was, and how he didn't want anything. He was just living and demonstrating for the rest of us what we might be able to grow into.

As you can tell, I could go on for a long time, but let's go to the next question.

Q: What is the ultimate transforming potential in a human being?

Do you mean what can we become?

Q: Yes, and what is the seed of that which we can become?

What we can become is, in some way, not so different from what we are right at this moment. And in another way, it is really different. It's just becoming fully who we are. We have everything that we need to become fully who we are.

Sometimes you sit down and you have all kinds of things on, and the world seems troubled and difficult, maybe over something small or something really big. And then you just sit for a while. The world hasn't changed, and it's not that there isn't a lot you may want to do to make a change in the world, to make it a better place to be – both in yourself and outside. But the way in which you perceive it and the way in which you perceive yourself within it has changed.

And then you experience your loving heart awakening, you experience your mind quieting, so that it has more insight into the nature of the situation. And you're there and you know what to do. You know how to be, because we already do know it. It's really just remembering and waking up to it.

In Zen they say we're already enlightened, we just need to remember that. And you experience that in a small way when you do these practices, when you do Heartfulness, Mindfulness, all of it. You experience that unconditional space of love within yourself. And that's it. That space of love is the same as awareness, consciousness. We are *all* connected through love.

Maharaj ji [Neem Karoli Baba] said very little to us. He wasn't a philosopher, and he didn't even teach us practice. He just said a few things, like, "Love everyone, serve everyone." How do you do that? I mean I've been trying to figure out what

that means for about 50 years. By loving everyone, by opening your heart to everyone, then you know the truth. And you're there in that space of unconditional love, unconditional awareness, truth, beauty and so on. It's both really simple and we've been given a life to figure it out, to practice it out, you know, experience it.

Q: Thank you so much, Mirabai. It has been a very wonderful session and my utmost gratitude to you. If you have any closing thoughts, closing comments, please share them now.

I just want to thank you, and thanks to everyone. We just did Heartfulness Meditation together. I think it's so amazing that we can sit together around the world, at the same time, remembering how we're connected to each other. It's very wonderful.

The very word "Heartfulness" is so important. It's not just in our minds, it's not just in our bodies, but the heart is really where we experience that connection with each other. That is what's going to help us survive as a species and evolve. So thanks to the whole organization for doing the good work that you do.

Watch the full [interview](#).



it changes everything

Your sacred space is
where you can
find yourself
again and again.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL





Part 2

Transforming Awareness:

Being a Life Coach



In October 2019, PETER J. REDING spoke with VICTOR KANNAN about being a pioneer in the field of professional Life Coaching. In part 2, they speak about the importance of sacred space, inner connection, and revitalizing the sacred in secular spaces through awareness.

Q: You also talk about sacred space. I love this where you say that sacred space allows us to reconnect with our brilliant and resourceful nature. You talk about sacred self, and quite a bit about the Creator, God, God-given talent, and things like that. Obviously, you are heeding quite a bit of spiritual philosophy and spiritual orientation in coaching people.

Thank you. Yes, 100%.

Q: And I've always heard that businesses are secular minded. So how do you differentiate the connotation related to religion getting mixed up with spirituality, and bring the idea of spirituality in a secular market place? Or is it that they don't care because they all believe in God?

We were told, quite frankly, about 25 years ago, when we

started Coach for Life, that if you present yourself as a spiritual coach training, you'll not get business from the secular world. Here, in the United States, we have a separation of Church and State, even in our Constitution, right? So, school systems can't include prayer, because it needs to be separated.

30 to 40 years ago, I spent a lot of time in the world of very large corporations that leave this stuff at home, not just spirituality, but also emotional things. You know ... "We don't want to hear you complaining," "We don't want to hear you whining," "We don't want to hear the issues you're having in your lives, whether your kids, your parents, your husband, whatever. Handle that at home." "We're not paying you to be emotional. We just want you to come in and do the work."

Well, that was ridiculous, because human beings are innately emotional; they can't help it. It's part of being human. I would also propose that most of the world believes in some form of Divine Presence. They have all kinds of different names for it, they practice and honor it differently, they use different language for it, but the core, the bottom line, in all the spiritual traditions of the world is that there is a guiding force that's there 24/7, 365 days of the year. And when I'm quiet enough and listen, it will serve me.

We don't talk about religion and we don't talk about religious practices, but we do talk very seriously about being connected with your Creator. You may call it different things – your spirit, your God, your Deity or your deities. Are you connected to that part of your beingness? Now, there are some people who don't come to our training

because that sounds ... They say, “I want executive coaching. How do we get more effectiveness in results and performance? You know, that’s all I’m interested in. I’m not interested in anything beyond what I can see.” And there are other people who intentionally come to us because they’ve been separated from their sense of honoring themselves spiritually in their work. So they want to have that connection: “How can I do my work, as a coach, as a CXO, as a parent, as a community leader, as an NGO executive, with that sense of spirituality, honoring the ecumenical? We have Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and how can we honor all of them so that we can work together?”

So, if I am in search of who I am, and I go back to the source of that, I can go two different ways. I can go to my heredity, right? Where did my great grandparents come from, what language did they speak, what culture were they in, and when did they migrate to the United States? You know, am I a third generation, fourth generation or fifth generation American? That describes my DNA. Fantastic. That’s the human part of me. But if I stop there, I haven’t gotten to the inside of me, my soul, that is infinite. There wasn’t a beginning and there’s not going to be an end; that part will continue, I believe, after my death, after I

shed my body. So if I don’t deal with that part of humanity in life, then I’m stuck with the “who I am” being defined by externals.

Going back to the secularism of business, or broader, the world, it has been incredibly generative for people to be reconnected. With that transformation back to themselves, they have a new lease on life. They see things differently, quite literally. They start having a true North, a compass, a guidance system that they can rely on a hundred percent of the time, when they have that inner connection with their Creator. It’s amazing.

Q: So, is inner connection with the Creator the same as sacred space within?

Yes, I believe so. The sacred space that I referred to is as a human being. My coaching contract is four pages long, but the essence of it is: I will hold sacred space for you to do the work that you are ready to do. What we’re talking about is the inner work. There are external issues, but the sacred space is: I’m not going to judge you. I’m not going to tell you what to do. Even if you ask me for advice, I’m going to most likely turn it back to you and say, I don’t know what’s best for you in this situation. What is coming



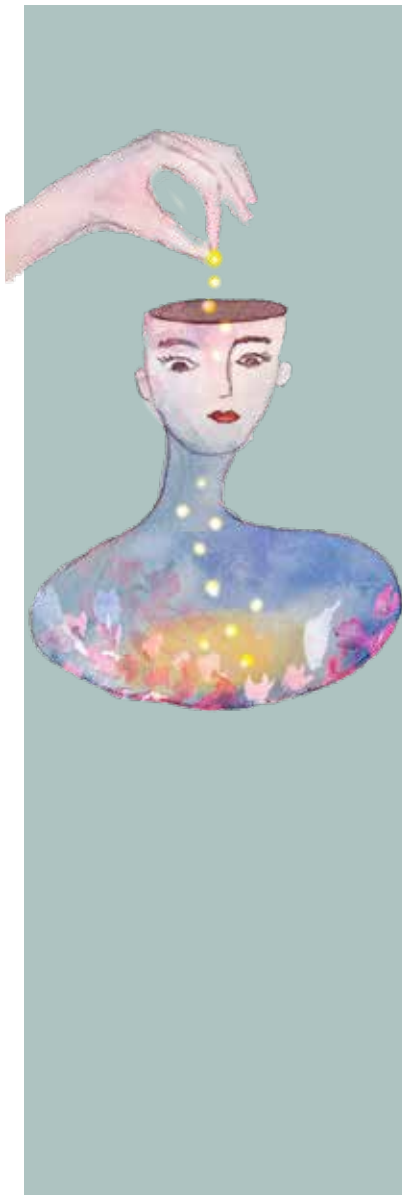
up from inside of you that you already know on how you want to handle this?

So the sacred space is incredibly rare in the world that has been accustomed to an advice addiction. Advice addiction works in two different ways: One is when I'm addicted to getting advice, so that I can do what you want me to do, so I don't screw up and you'll like me, or promote me, or consider me for the next job; two is when I give advice, and I'm addicted to doing so because it makes me feel good that I'm passing along my knowledge and wisdom to others who don't know what they're doing.

And that continues throughout life, as a kid, as a student, as a young worker, as a mid-level manager, as an executive. The sacred space in coaching is very different. It's starting to break that co-dependence to say: I'm holding this space for you to figure this out, and I honor the fact that you may choose something that I don't think is right for you, without telling you that. Because there's going to be a life lesson in there that I personally don't know, that you need to go through to get to your own clarity. Does that make sense?

Q: Yes, it does. I mean you're holding a space where they feel safe and they can go

back into finding who they are, discover their authentic self, and develop the courage to make the choice and to feel good about it. That unleashes the energy for them to be successful in terms of executing what they discovered in themselves.



The last point is spectacular, Victor. The last point that you just shared is that there is an ownership of that choice. Good, bad or indifferent, they decided.

Coming back to an executive, corporate, "We've got to get stuff done" mentality, the person in coaching who comes up with their own solution has a 95% chance of following through on that. If instead I tell them what to do, or an executive in their company says, "Okay, so Victor I want you to do this, this and this, and come back in three days from now and let us know what you've done," the chances of them doing exactly 1, 2 and 3 over the course of time are maybe down to 45 to 50%. They'll try it, do it half-heartedly, and maybe if they see some other shiny thing in the meantime, they are going to do that instead. When someone has ownership of it, even if I don't think it's going to work, or it's the harder way to do it, they have the commitment and ownership to be successful. Spectacular!

Q: I have an observation to make here, and then I will ask a question. One of our spiritual teachers wrote a long time ago: Don't offer advice unless asked for. So when you're talking about the advice addiction being a problem for both the giver and receiver, especially when one is above, one is below, the below says,

"Tell me what to do," and the above says, "I'm telling you what to do," that's not getting the best out of people. That's an observation from a spiritual teacher's perspective: Don't offer advice unless asked for.

The question is: Peter, there are two authentic selves in a relationship, right? The boss and the employee. What if they don't align? What if there's an authentic conflict here? How do you resolve this? What is your professional advice?

It comes back to compassion. I love you, but I can't live with you. I love you, but I can't work with you. I love you, but ... Please continue to be your most awesome, magnificent, amazing true self – that's my greatest goal for mankind. It doesn't mean I am the right person to be with that other person, or to do work with them, or to raise a family with them, or to have children with them, or to whatever with them.

And, there is enough love to wish them well, to wish them success, to wish them happiness in their life, but it may not include me. That's how I would handle that, and I've experienced that. Again, it takes courage from both parties to say: We've gone as far as we can, and it's time for us to go our separate paths so that you can honor yourself, and I want that for you. They'll say

the same thing for me. Again, in familial terms, in corporate terms, in civic terms, in religious terms, or all of the above.

Q: Peter, how does one go from authentic self to building an authentic team with several individuals? If you want to do anything, whether it is in a corporate board room, or building a website, you need a team to work together. So, how do you go from authentic self-building to authentic team building? What are the things to watch for, what are the



things to celebrate, and what are the things to avoid?

Well, I think there has to be a common denominator of honoring the individuals. I think there also has to be a group gathering that says: What does our group authenticity look like? It's one of those things that corporations do all the time in terms of mission, vision, values, purpose, UVP – Unique Value Proposition. Why do people come to us versus our competitors? So, there's an attempt to do that.

Dozens of times over the course of my career, in various organizations, and at various times of an organization's growth, it has been my experience that it is 90% external: This is how we want to show up for our client; this is how we want to be perceived by our competitors; this is how we want to be perceived by the general public, etc. There are always elements of the inner part of the organization, the heart and soul of the organization, what they are driven by, what is their passion, and I'm starting to see more of that actually, which I think is great.

When an organization has been able to find its authentic self, it will attract the people who are attracted to that inner passion. "I love going to work

because I know that the people in this community ..." This is autobiographical, and I'm going back now forty years. "I love working for this company, and selling the products, and bringing these products into the hospital. I'll go home at 3 o'clock in the morning after doing in-service for three shifts with nurses, to teach them how to use this equipment properly in critical care areas. I feel really good about that, because I knew this community was safer because people were able to have access to that equipment when they went to that hospital."

If the organization is driven from an inner passion it will, yes. It's in their words on their website, or in the quarterly reports, but even deeper than that they live it. You see the founder doing things that founders don't do. They're there to console their employees after disasters happen, that they've been impacted by, whether it's a natural disaster or another kind of disaster. The founder will celebrate those times when an employee went the extra mile to fulfill the purpose of the organization.

It does not have to be 100% alignment. Then it would be like one person, with one brain, and all the different talents and viewpoints would not get into the mix. From a practical standpoint, I shoot for 80%

When an organization has been able to find its authentic self, it will attract the people who are attracted to that inner passion.



alignment within a group.

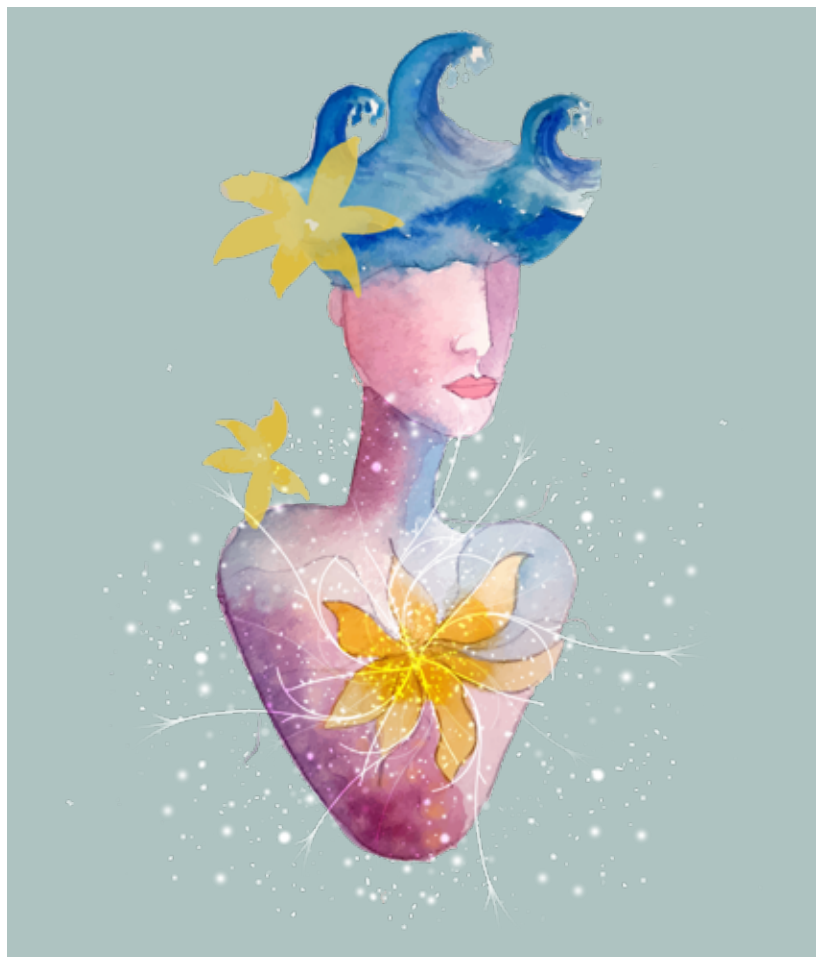
Whether it's a project team, or a development team, or an accounting team, or a marketing team, or what have you, 80% is awesome. I think there will always be 20% of, "I really don't like doing expense reports." "Well, get over it, that's just part of the deal." If I have 80% satisfaction while contributing to the passion of that work, I'm a happy guy. I think there are happy team members as well.

Q: Thank you. Do you meditate, Peter?

I do. Not formally as others have talked about meditation, but I meditate every day. I take quiet time in the morning before I get up. I allow the thoughts of whatever my waking state is – sometimes it's project oriented, sometimes it's a new idea, sometimes I'll ask a question of Spirit when I'm wrestling with a topic, a situation, I'm opening myself up to guidance, I'm open to inspiration and guidance ... from odd things. It could be from a road sign I see, or it could be from another person who shared something. Before this conversation, I picked up a book, to prop up my computer, and it's the book *I Am That*.

I'll read a quote: "The real you is timeless and beyond birth and death. The body will survive as long as it is needed. It is not

"The real you is timeless and beyond birth and death. The body will survive as long as it is needed. It is not important that it should live long." So I get inspiration from all over the place when I'm open to it.





important that it should live long.” So I get inspiration from all over the place when I’m open to it. I intentionally open myself up to that at the beginning of each day, intentionally and consciously.

Q: Nice. If you could leave a thought with our readers, that will help them find meaning in their lives, what would it be?

Find out who you really are. It’s one of the things that is my next chapter in life, I think. The last third of my life is dedicated to sharing with at least a billion people the simple methodology, no charge methodology, self-administered methodology for them to get to know who they really. Or at least the beginning of that inner journey. People take selfies, right. Why not take a core selfie? It’s a snapshot

of who you really are deep down, and you can do that at CoreSelfie.com. There are some exercises you can do. It’s free, you can download it. I would love to have a billion people go to that site.

Q: You know Heartfulness is also free. It offers methods to relax, meditate, rejuvenate, and also deeply connect with one’s own Self and balance the material needs with the spiritual purpose. We work upon elevating our own

consciousness and really begin to have a joyful existence, without limit.

I really agree with that. Yes, it takes consciousness, or you can say awareness, it takes time and energy, and it has to be elevated to a priority inside. If I’m not feeling fulfilled, then what can I do about it? It’s not more money, it’s not more work, it’s not more projects. Martin Luther had a book inscribed with, “I’m so busy today, I’d better take another hour on my

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knees,” which is again this idea of quieting the external monkey mind, meditating, opening up to that inner guidance, that divine guidance.

So this is not new information. It’s just supporting individuals in this noisy, multitasking, 365 x 24/7 world. Make the space. It’ll pay you 100-fold in dividends, may be 1,000-fold.

Q: Peter, thank you so much and I wish you all the very best for today and every day of your life.

Thank you Victor. I honor your work, and your organization’s work, and Heartfulness, and on behalf of the planet, thank you!

Sleep Over It

HARI VENKATESAN takes the approach of self-compassion towards self-improvement and managing emotions. Here he shares some tips from his own experience.





The pace of life has greatly increased with the advent of smartphones and wireless high-speed internet. Along with the convenience that these means bring, they also bring heightened expectations in terms of efficiency. We are expected to respond to messages and mails within hours, and sometimes even minutes. As human beings get used to this fast pace of life, it is all too easy to make mistakes.

There is an ancient Chinese saying that says, “Hold on just a little and the winds and waves die down; take one step back and you are no longer in a corner.” In this age of 3-in-1 coffee, fast food, and instant messaging, one virtue that we are fast losing is patience: patience in the face of trials and tribulations, and patience in the face of our own emotions.

Let us take the latter first. For example, you receive an unreasonable email about work, or someone makes a snide remark about you. You are compelled from inside to hit back instantly, and the matter quickly escalates. It is

precisely at the moment when you are in the grip of emotions such as anger, rage, disappointment, frustration, and really feel justified to react sharply. Let a night pass and see how you feel about the whole thing the next morning. Very often, you will thank yourself for not having been too quick to react, and might actually see things differently. This might not seem possible at times, but even then, it would be well to make it a rule to never speak or act until the heart is calm. Heartfulness Meditation makes this possible naturally by making us aware even before we are about to act on impulse and presenting us with a choice to alter course.

Just like an arrow speeds forth, words spoken cannot be recalled. As for those sent out in retort and reaction, chances are that they

will do no more than challenge the ego of the receiver. The result cannot be anything other than two egos clashing and trying to prove the other wrong. When this happens, even if we see some point in the arguments the other makes, our egos will simply not permit us to admit it, making the conversation wholly useless. Especially when it comes to close relationships, awkward as it may be, it is much better to cut such a conversation short politely and let a night pass, with the promise to revisit it again. Once the grip of emotions is loosened, we will be in a much better state to forgive and understand. Heartfulness Cleaning helps enormously in pressing that inner reset button that makes this possible.

When we feel depressed, frustrated, or disappointed about things, it is equally necessary to remember that if there is anything permanent in the universe it is change. This also means that whatever we face is equally destined to change. It is important not to give into the feeling of despondency, and focus our energies instead on what we can do. A lot of the time, problems are enormously magnified because of the amount of attention we give them.

Is it not better to focus energies on what we can do rather than wasting time on thinking about possible outcomes or mentally

struggling with resentment and frustration? It is precisely these that tire us and enhance the struggle.

In place of this tiring struggle of the mind, a much more positive vibratory input would be prayer. This does not refer to a formalized religious ritual, but to an appeal to the wisdom of the higher Self within to bring forth a wider vision of things. Since we have done our best, all we need to do is await the result. If there is more to be done, we can go ahead, but just remember to remove the struggle from the heart. It is this struggle that attenuates focus, weakens efforts, and tires us. The state where we simply focus on doing our best, and let things fall where they do, comes naturally as a result of prayer-meditation.

As for how to be sure you did your best, accept that all you did yesterday was the best you could do yesterday. If there are a few hours remaining today, see what you can do to address the problems you face. But once the day is over, consider that you did your best today.

Whenever you really feel like hitting back, reacting, or you feel like the world around you is going dark with little hope or relief in sight, sleep over it. You will not feel the same tomorrow.





be inspired

In union
there is strength.

AESOP

A User's Guide to Living

- Part 7 -

commUnity



DAAJI continues his series on everyday living, introducing the sixth universal principle of the User's Guide, which is to know everyone as our brethren and treat them as such. As a starting point, this sixth principle helps us to overcome prejudice, and develop mutual love and respect with all beings. As we take it further, it unfolds into a state of unity and oneness that is a reflection of the original Source.

Within five elements are ten universal principles:

The Practice

- 1 Create a daily morning meditation practice scientifically
- 2 Fill your heart with love before starting meditation and before sleeping
- 3 Fix your goal and do not rest until you attain it

Essential values

- 4 Live simply to be in tune with Nature
- 5 Be truthful & accept challenges as being for your betterment

Behavior Being to Doing

- 6 Know everyone as one, treating them equally & harmoniously
- 7 Do not seek revenge for the wrongs done by others, instead always be grateful
- 8 Honor the resources you are given as sacred, with an attitude of purity, including food and money

Leadership

- 9 Become a role model by inspiring love and sacredness in others. Accept the richness of their diversity, while also accepting that we are all one

Continuous Improvement

- 10 Introspect daily before bedtime, so as to correct your faults and avoid making the same mistake twice

Principle 6:

**Know all people as thy brethren
and treat them as such.**



The principle of universal brotherhood is fundamental to all religions and spiritual traditions of the world. In practice, however, what do we see? Sectarianism, prejudice and even outright hatred, a world torn apart by violence, and a deep mistrust between nations and various factions within nations. We are faced with a human race fractured by deep divisions, based on religion and race, even in the so-called civilized countries. You only have to read the news about what is currently happening with the “Black Lives Matter” and “Me Too” movements, or what happens in the name of the caste system in India, to know that we are far from universal brotherhood after thousands of years of religious teachings.

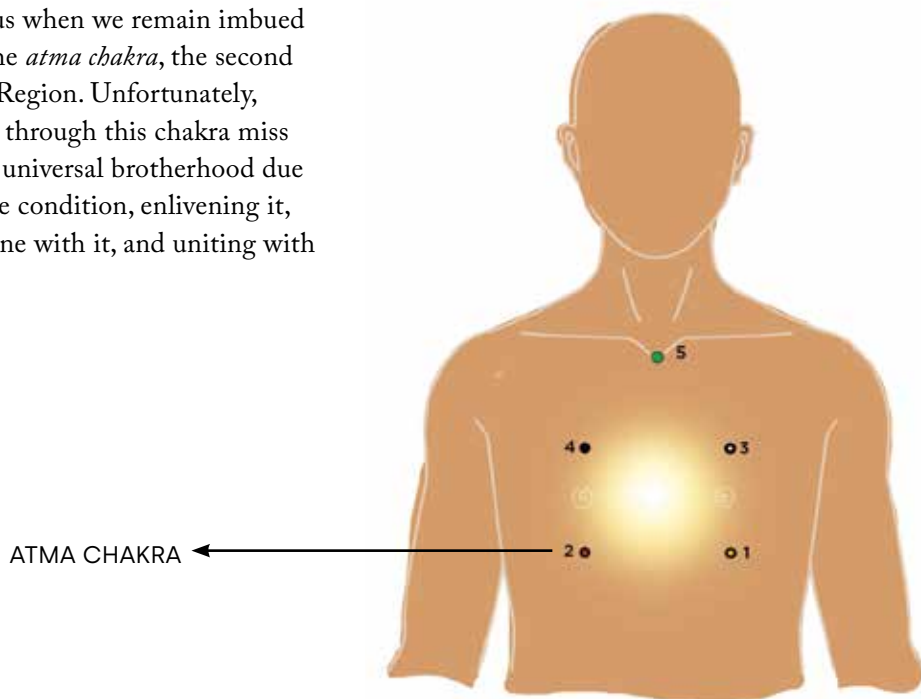
From time to time, great teachers and leaders have appeared in different parts of the world in order to bring the message of peace and love. More often than not, their pleas for universal peace and brotherhood have fallen on deaf ears. Many of them have been rejected, persecuted, and even crucified. How many deaths have there been due to COVID-19, which has shut down the globe? As of 12 June 2020, there have been 423,000 deaths around the world. Now, ask yourself, how many Jews were killed by the Nazis? How many people were killed by Stalin, Idi Amin, Mussolini, and during the border migration on the eve of 15 August 1947 between India and Pakistan? Then there are the ethnic wars in Rwanda, the Congo etc. When you add up the deaths resulting from calamities due to hatred, the statistics surpass the meager deaths due to an invisible virus. This pandemic is drawing so much of our attention, but the hatred-based calamities? Perhaps we all have some level of this deeply-buried hatred for something or the other which prevents an all-out removal of hatred.

It is against this backdrop that we need a fresh perspective on universal brotherhood, and in Heartfulness it emanates from the authority of a deeply experiential understanding of Reality.

The principle is actually very simple. Babuji writes, "All things descending from the origin should be treated as coming from the same source." To bring home this point, he uses the analogy of a mother and her children: "Just as children born of the same mother are related to each other in one and the same way, so also are all bound together by the same common ties of brotherliness and are related to each other in the same way." So simple!

When you try to hurt someone who has the same Godly soul in him – your soul and his are actually the same – now ask yourself, who is hurting whom? The same souls only look different because they have different personas arising out of *karma*. This awareness dawns upon us when we remain imbued in the deeper pools of the *atma chakra*, the second point within the Heart Region. Unfortunately, many of those who pass through this chakra miss out on the awareness of universal brotherhood due to a lack of acquiring the condition, enlivening it, imbibing it, becoming one with it, and uniting with it ([AEIOU](#)).

"Just as children born of the same mother are related to each other in one and the same way, so also are all bound together by the same common ties of brotherliness and are related to each other in the same way." - Babuji



THE FIVE CHAKRAS OF THE HEART REGION

When we do experience and adopt this universal principle of unity, we get to first base. We cannot be devotees of God without embracing it, because it is fundamental to existence – in fact it is pure science.

We are all connected

The Heartfulness vision of universal brotherhood comes from this science – from the repeatable experience that at the center of our being we are all connected with the same Reality. This is the common Source from which everything was set in motion at the time of creation. At this level, there is no separation, and that center exists in every cell and every atom in the universe.

This is also recognized by modern western science. Scientists claim that some 13.7 billion years ago, just before the Big Bang occurred, there existed an infinitesimal point called a singularity. It was so small that it had no dimensions. The universe as we know it today came into being from that Big Bang.

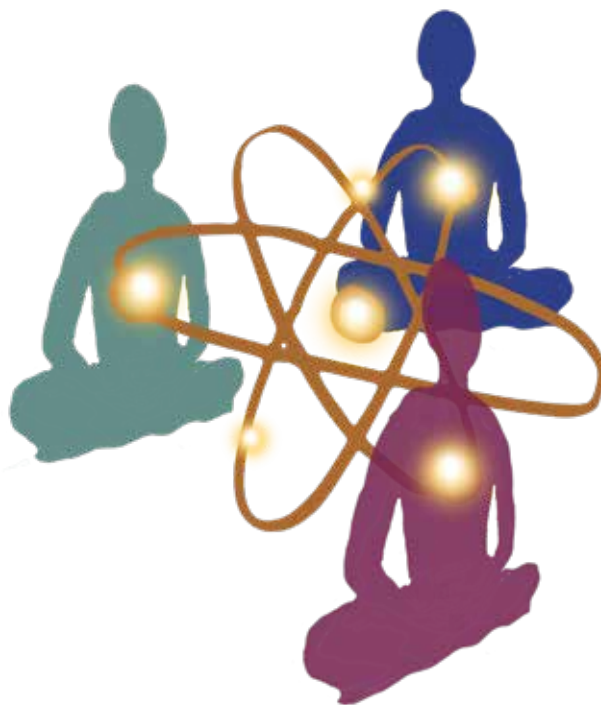
Eventually, the first atoms were formed. The atom is the building block of everything animate and inanimate.

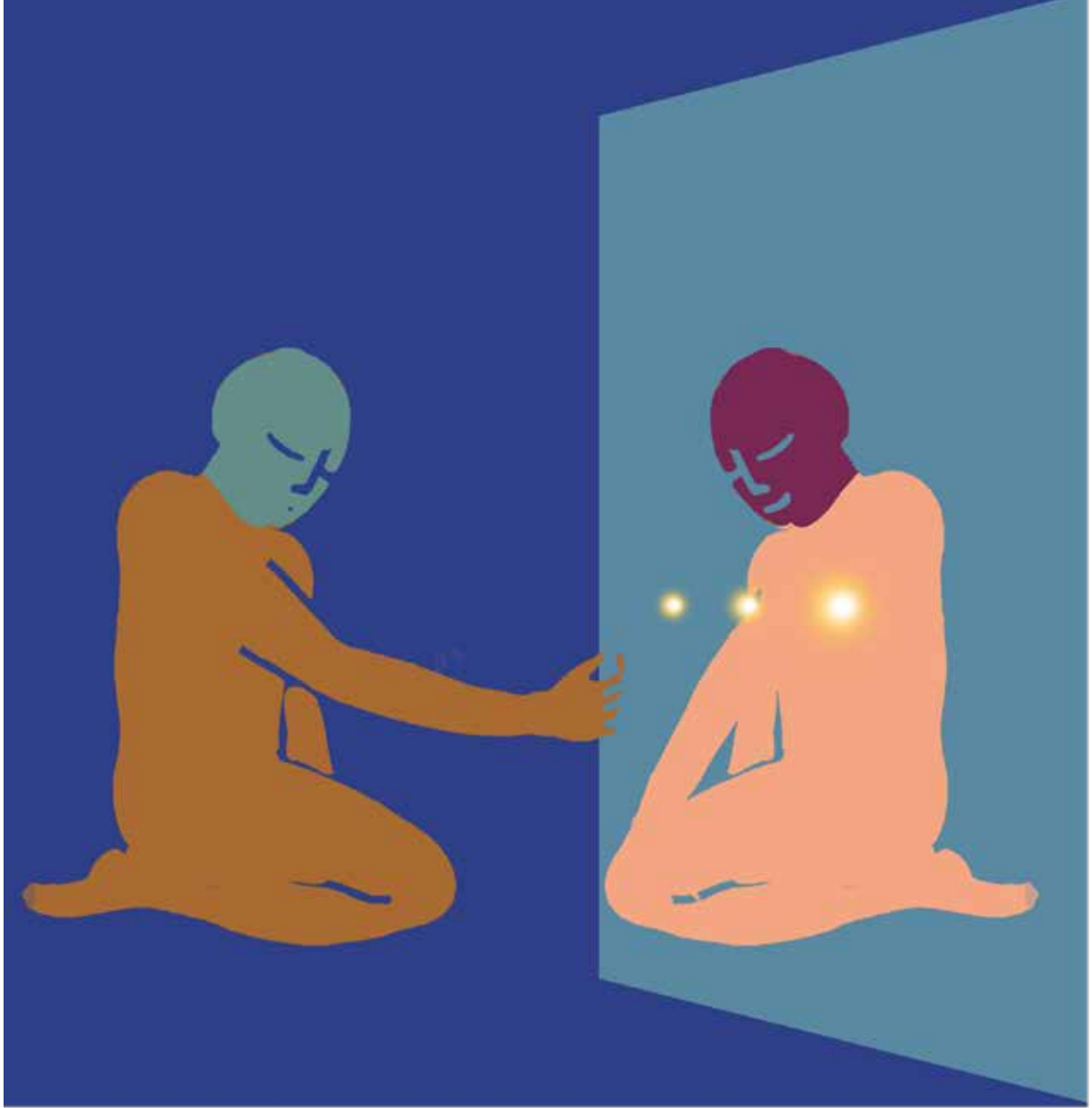
It takes one hundred trillion atoms to form a single cell in our body, and there are some 37 trillion cells in the human body, all originating from the same Source.

Further, genome studies have concluded that there is hardly any difference between one person and the other in terms of their DNA. In fact, the entire human ancestry can genetically be traced back to a common origin in Africa.

If this is true, then why is it that we feel so hopelessly separate?

Babuji explains it: “It is our thoughts and actions that created the separation. It is our feelings of selfishness that alienate us from other human beings. The separative feeling is the root cause of our alienation.”





Separation is an illusion

Most psychologists agree that when a baby is born she does not know she is separate from the mother. Gradually, over the first few months of her life, she develops a separate sense of self, and starts identifying with beings and objects in her surroundings. This phenomenon of separation and identification is a part of the process of ego formation.

As the child grows into an adult, sibling rivalry occurs, creating separation laced with competition, and even an element of enmity. Remoteness is

another factor that increases separation, and most of us experience it in our own lives. As we become adults, we leave our families and sometimes settle down far away. This remoteness further increases separation – initially we feel a strong connection, but it wears away over time.

The feeling of separation seems to be part of our conditioning. It is a veil of Maya that impacts every facet of our being. Once this veil is peeled away, we recognize the reality that we are all from the same Source. We must accept and embody this if we are to become human.



From me to we

How can we peel away this veil of illusion? It is only through heart-based meditative practices. We need to *experience* the oneness – knowing about it is not enough. While our ego's sense of individual identity is all about "I," the heart is all about "we." The heart is where we are all connected, where we naturally feel oneness, especially when our field of consciousness has been purified. When heart-based meditation is supported by yogic Transmission, we are naturally infused with love. As our capacity for love expands, so does our feeling of brotherhood.

As we grow in our practice, we are able to identify and break up the individual network formed by our thoughts and actions, which leads to an expansion of consciousness. When this expanded state of

consciousness percolates into our lives, in our day-to-day dealings with others, we eventually rest in that connection constantly. Connection is nurtured through constant practice, and can be applied in our lives with awareness. It comes from within, not from any external authority. It transforms all our relationships, with our family and with all humanity. We *feel* love for everyone, as a first step – a true paradigm shift that enriches our lives. Later on, we go beyond the level of feeling, as love radiates from us, naturally. We no longer need to love, we become love itself.

And in Babuji's words, "It will naturally lead to mutual association and greater attachment, and our dealing with one another will be molded accordingly, ensuring greater peace and contentment to everyone. How nice it would be to have it thus."

Our success here leads to our success there

Yet it doesn't end there. There is a great truth about worldly life that many of us don't grasp. We mistakenly believe that our life in this world is transient and hence not important. But that could not be further from the truth. Whatever we do here also determines our destiny and success, instantly, though the results of our actions may not always be seen now, but in some distant future.

What is meant by that? In Babuji's words, "This world is in fact a reflection of the other world. When this one is molded properly, its effect extends on to the other world whose reflection it is and that too will begin to be purified."

This world is a projection of the astral or cosmic world, the *Brahmand Mandal*, where everything happens in astral form before it manifests here. There are several such higher regions, each more subtle than the other. When we refine our worldly existence on Earth, the effect is carried to each of the higher regions, all the way to the highest. We are multidimensional beings, and what we do in this layer affects all other layers. This life is a precious opportunity for us to change all levels of our being. When we act in alignment with these universal principles, it transforms all the dimensions of our being. This is yogic science.



Universal brotherhood in action

Now, imagine that a single act of compassion welling up from the bottom of our hearts has the power to transform all levels of our being. Principle 6 states, “Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such,” so we can look at this principle as having two aspects – knowing and doing.

The first aspect is knowing: “Know all people as thy brethren ...”. Knowing is a realization that comes from a state of being, and creates a perceptual shift that helps us make the choice between separation and unity. Knowing removes ignorance and

resistance, and brings enlightenment, clarity, and purity. It acts as a bridge between being and doing.

The second aspect is doing: “... and treat them as such.” Once you know from the depths of your being that we are all brethren, then how will you treat others?

Knowing is the embodiment of being. Doing is the embodiment of knowing.

The third aspect, being, is something we often miss out on. The tastes of spiritual conditions are not to be taken as a buffet dinner, like children storming at a counter to be fed. “Taste and forget” should not become our tragic culture. That is why the practice of AEIOU is so important. It allows us to savor the experience, and let it be imbibed and enlivened within us, so that we become one with it.

And what about the fourth aspect, non-being? Let us not venture into this philosophically but prepare ourselves for the true encounter and merger in that state.



Embodying universal brotherhood

What does it mean to embody universal brotherhood in our lives? Before I address that question, I would like to clarify the confusion and common misunderstandings associated with this principle.

Embodying universal brotherhood does not mean that we go about hugging everybody in the street. It does not mean that we agree with everything that others say, and avoid confrontation at any cost. It does not mean we are always trying to please others and appease them. It does not mean that we believe everything we hear. It does not mean that we force ourselves to stay in an abusive relationship. It does not mean that we allow ourselves to be intimidated, taken advantage of, and manipulated.

We cannot have true compassion for others unless we have compassion for ourselves, nor can we love others unless we love ourselves. We are here to learn from one another. We are here to help and be helped. We grow only when we are fully engaged with others in healthy relationships, with a mutuality of love and respect.

As we grow in our practice, our awareness expands. We uncover a deeper understanding of the belief systems that color our perception of reality, which include the feeling of separation. Over time, this feeling of separation gives way to a feeling of oneness. When this knowing leads us to change our behavior in a natural way, we start treating others as our brethren. When this becomes our natural habit, we can say that we have embodied the principle of universal brotherhood.

We cannot have true compassion for others unless we have compassion for ourselves, nor can we love others unless we love ourselves. We are here to learn from one another. We are here to help and be helped. We grow only when we are fully engaged with others in healthy relationships, with a mutuality of love and respect.

When we embody this principle, our lives transform in a fundamental way. We build meaningful and fulfilling relationships with our family members, friends, and colleagues, as well as members of our community, humanity as a whole, and then all lifeforms. We develop genuine love and compassion for others, even when the feelings are not reciprocated, because we are all connected to the same reality. We are all one.



Taste of Life



You can't use up creativity.
The more you use, the more you have.

MAYA ANGELOU

The Fountain Within

An Art Essay

NARENDRA KINI manages to integrate his work as a successful Silicon Valley-based entrepreneur with being an artist, a poet and seeker of higher truth through meditative practices. He is currently the co-founder and CEO of Global Touchpoints, and here he talks of how he finds his inspiration for creativity and art.

*"Meditation is evolving from thinking to feeling,
from feeling to being,
being to becoming,
and finally going beyond."*

—Daaji

APPROACH



Meditation Inspires

I have found that my own approach to art is inspired by meditation. It is a process of letting go of control and allowing something to emerge. I took to art after I was inspired by an inner calling that happened after a meditation session about five years ago.

The efficacy of a meditation practice can be also assessed by its impact on our attitude towards life. It provides us with a sense of perspective and creative freedom that is unmatched. Through invoking stillness in the mind and relocating our awareness center to the heart, meditation – within minutes – offers a blank canvas with a wide range of possibilities. “Writer’s block” and “artist’s cul-de-sac” are common terms. Creativity can get stumped and inspiration can dry up, and we often look for external sources to revive these things. This approach is sometimes successful, but I have found the real fan to the creative flame lies within us. And if we lose that spark, we may irreparably dry up our authentic sense of creative direction. A visit to the fountain within will rarely fail to quench the thirst for inspiration. My personal realization is that paying attention to the inner condition, being centered in stillness and



CONSCIOUSNESS



GURU & GUITAR

contemplation enables the manifestation of creative work. It is not to say that the work will be perfect, but it will be truly your own.

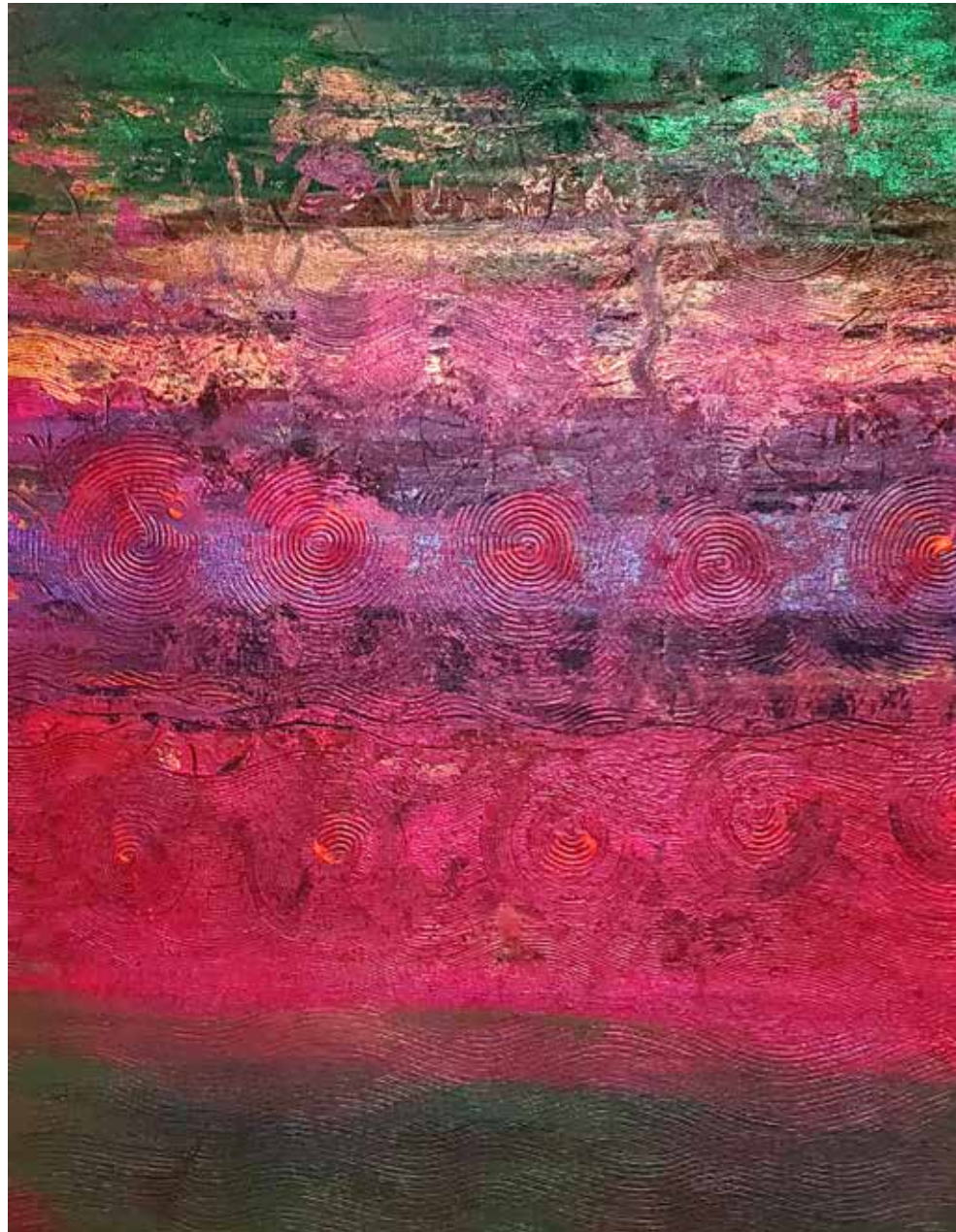
The way in which meditation liberates an artist's creativity can be very nurturing to the soul. No matter how focused we are while working on art, no matter the physical environment we are in, if the mind is not steady and the body is not relaxed, very little is actually *created*. By turning inward, centering our awareness, and being heartful, we are free to express our own truth. Furthermore, we are able to trust ourselves and our innate creativity.

Meditation is food for the soul and the very source of inspiration for my creativity. When under stress, inspiration can become elusive. A relaxed body and a calm mind provide us the opportunity to become observers of ourselves, pause with patience, and wait for an idea, image, or concept to germinate at the core of our being. This puts us in a "flow," or a rhythm of sorts. While the ultimate purpose of meditation could be spiritual, a way to expand our consciousness, it can very well be a beautiful and simple way to tap into the limitless potential of our being.

Inner Inspiration

In his book, *The Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell prescribes 10,000 hours of practice as the “magic number for true expertise.” Inspired by the idea behind this, I challenged myself to turn creating art into a habit. It is said, “Sow a habit and reap a destiny.” Now, I am not sure if I have gone that far, but I have certainly reaped a touch point. I like to think that the art I create is not just something to look at, but something that hopefully touches and inspires hearts.

If anyone is on a creative journey – be it writing, sculpting, painting or singing – when we take silent time to meditate, a shift happens within. Our consciousness expands, our awareness deepens, and we come into the presence of what Albert Einstein described as the most beautiful emotion we can experience – the underlying power of all true art and science. Now, neuroscience is showing through brain mapping that such qualities are available to all who meditate regularly, creating the mental and emotional conditions in which they are most likely to flourish.



VIBRATIONS

Inner Guidance — Intuition

Regular meditation, like the practice of Heartfulness, has the potential to help us get into a deep state each time, thereby strengthening our inner intuition and connection to the heart. The heart is where feelings reside, and connecting to it strengthens our sense of intuition. This intuition fans the creative spirit in us, guiding us to pursue the right idea or concept. When regular meditation is intensified, it becomes the very inner bedrock of spiritual confidence to progressively invest in a vocation.



TOWARD THE CENTER



INNER LIGHT

Inner True Self — Authenticity

Meditation helps us connect with the inner true self – the soul – awakening us to who we really are, independent of perception of the outer world. Meditation helps create a balance between the mind and the heart (soul), thus enabling us to birth creativity with equanimity and ease.

Inner Cleaning — Rejuvenation

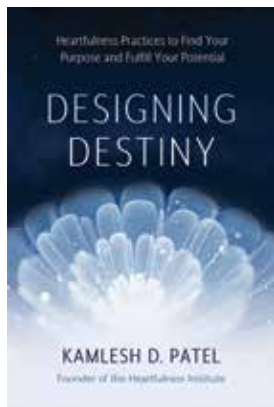
When we open the gateway to our soul and nurture our inner self, a natural sense of grace ensues, and light becomes our very being. That aspect of our *prana* – that enlightened, elevated state – allows us to embrace the magnificent completeness of our being, despite its blemishes, limitations, fears, inadequacies, imperfections and other barriers. As we travel on our own *yatra* (journey), even with the simplest of meditation practices, true expression as an artist emerges. All we need is an open mind, an open heart and a willingness to explore our inner world.

Meditation cleanses and nourishes the spirit. It helps us approach our empty canvas with an unbiased subconscious and enables us to arrive at calmness. Cleaning out our impressions at the end of each day enables us to remove past impressions – thoughts bound by emotions. It enables us to let go of feelings of fear, sadness, and anger, which can make us emotionally weak and unbalanced, in turn affecting our creative expression.



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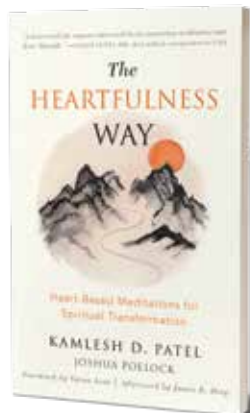


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KAMLESH PATEL
(Daaji)

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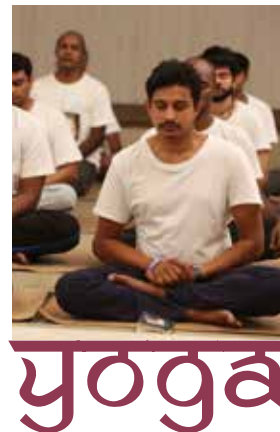
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