

heartfulness

purity weaves destiny

What Do We
Really Need?

DAAJI

How We Know

TOBIN HART

Neuro-development
in Children

ELISABETH
BOUDERLIQUE
& BIRGIT DÜRR

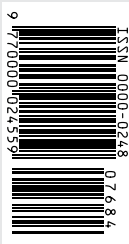
The Mirror of
Your Values

ICHAK ADIZES

Beyond Fake
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Reality



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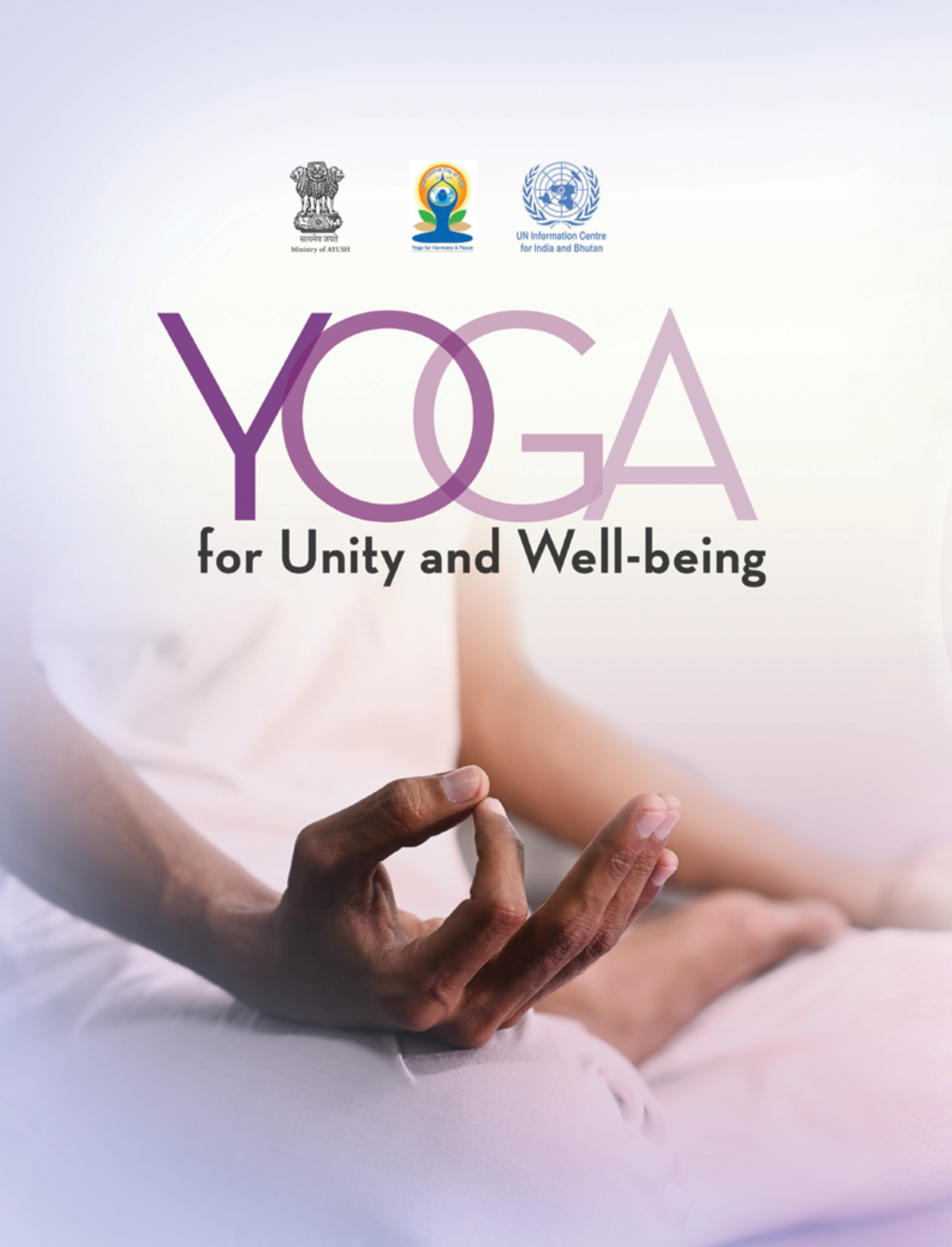
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Dear readers,

The art of finding reality seems to be the need of the hour right now – accepting life as it is and finding our potentiality within that scope. In this edition, we focus on authenticity and reality, and how we can entrust ourselves to create the life we wish to live, despite challenging setbacks.

Daaji explains the “why” and “how” of paring back our attachments and desires. Professor Tobin Hart explores human consciousness at the nexus of Western psychology and Eastern spirituality, and Drs. Elisabeth Boudierlique and Birgit Dürr provide insight into how brain imbalances can be healed, especially in children. Sanjay Sehgal offers us an inner reality check, while Annika Sharma shares the enriching journey of following her heart. Dr. Ichak Adizes challenges us to evaluate our calendars – as how we spend our time is a mirror of our priorities. Naren Kini helps us understand how meditation generates love and positivity, Ravi Venkatesan continues his series on the Heartful Innovator, Paolo Lezzelle’s Heartfulness Sport focuses on time this month, and Simmone Holm offers us a mouth-watering healthy soup.

Happy reading,
The editors

contributors



DAAJI

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



ICHAK ADIZES

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.



ANNIKA SHARMA

Annika is the co-host of the podcast, *The Woke Desi*, and author of the *The Rearranged Life* and the upcoming book, *Love, Chai, and Other Four-Letter Words*. With a background in biobehavioral health, neuro-psychology, and early childhood special education, she is passionate about breaking boundaries and having dialogues on both fun and taboo topics to encourage others to grow and evolve.

TOBIN HART



Tobin is a professor in the University of West Georgia's Humanistic, Transpersonal and Critical Psychology program, and co-founder of the ChildSpirit Institute, a non-profit educational and research hub exploring and nurturing the spirituality of children and adults. His work explores human consciousness at the nexus of spirituality, psychology, and education. His recent books include: *The Four Virtues*, *The Integrative Mind: Transformative Education for a World on Fire*, *Spiritual Knowing*, *From Information to Transformation: Education for the Evolution of Consciousness*, *Transpersonal Knowing: Exploring the Horizon of Consciousness*, and *The Secret Spiritual World of Children*.

ELISABETH BOUDERLIQUE & BIRGIT DÜRR



Elisabeth is an occupational medicine specialist, who helps people with neurodevelopmental disorders at her clinic in the south of France. She is also a Montessori classroom director for children aged 3 to 6, and for special needs children.



Birgit is a general practitioner from Germany, who also specializes in neurodevelopmental disorders. She has completed diplomas in homeopathy, TCM nutrition, and other body therapies, focusing on therapies that have a neuro-integrative approach. Both are also trainers of Brighter Minds, a program for cognitive development in children.

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thought in action

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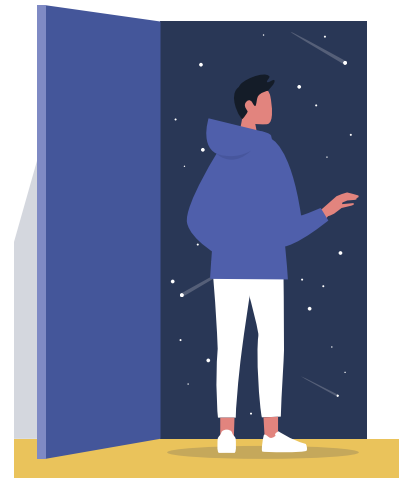
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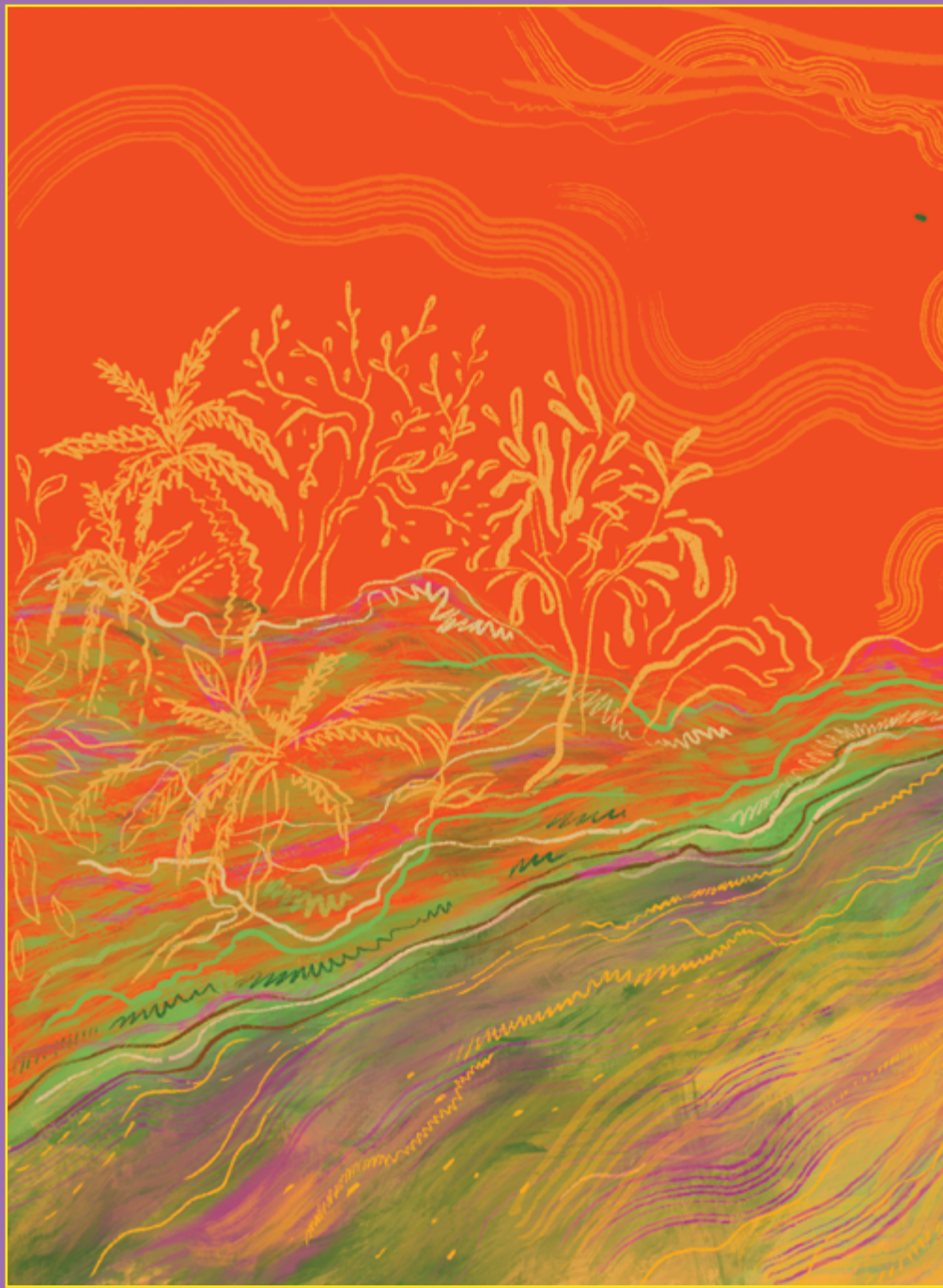
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REALITY:
BEYOND
FAKE
EXISTENCE

Life is not a problem
to be solved,
but a reality
to be experienced.

SØREN
KIERKEGAARD

Illustration by ANANYA PATEL



Living Authentically

ANNIKA SHARMA is the co-host of the podcast, *The Woke Desi*, and author of the upcoming book, *Love, Chai, and Other Four-Letter Words*, about following your heart, life influencing art, pokes and stretches caused by the coronavirus pandemic, and the things we can be doing to fill our cups. Here she is interviewed by **MAMATA VENKAT**.

Q: We have had so many conversations over the years about being true to ourselves. I learn from you what it means to really live from the heart.

What was the point in your journey where you realized you were living how you thought you should be living, instead of living how you wanted to be living?

The day I got my agent was one. Subsequently, getting a book deal was another. These were pivotal in the journey of recognizing that I have a tendency to build my life according to what society tells me is acceptable, rather than building it according to what strengths God gave me. Until then, I was forcing myself into convenient boxes that no one was pressuring me toward except myself. My parents have always told me I should go into communications of some sort. But I kept seeing people who I thought were successful go into other more traditional paths and it was all I knew. I followed.

But certain common threads always weave themselves through our stories – for me,

connection, words, having a voice, creativity, whimsy, and telling stories, were the center of every success I had had. Even on the paths that ended up not being right for me, the common thread was there. For example, I survived nursing school for exactly one semester, during which my greatest success (earning a \$10K scholarship) came from writing an essay. I chose to ignore the very large, very colorful, billboard-sized signs that I was meant to connect with people with my voice.

Once I wrote my book the doors began opening, and I found that working hard didn't feel like work at all. The fact that I was the first in my circles to take this path became empowering rather than fearful. I felt so centered, purposeful, and the inner voice was nothing short of divine-like whispering, "You're exactly right on this path." The successes afterward only affirmed that. And after knowing what conviction right to my bones felt like, I couldn't imagine going back to a life where I didn't have it.

There is a quote about our greatest fear not being that we are inadequate but that we are powerful. I think about it all the time. We have power that

Certain common threads always weave themselves through our stories – for me, connection, words, having a voice, creativity, whimsy, and telling stories, were the center of every success I had had.

The more connected I am to the Divinity in me and in the world, the more authentically I live, the more I see my greater purpose, and the more I chase those endeavors. It's a wonderful cycle of trust, faith, purpose, and authenticity.

is granted only to us, and the paths we live can be a testament to that gift. Otherwise, what are we doing? Are we honoring our God-given gifts? So many of us never lean into them out of fear. Since the book deal, it's been a chase for the next conquest that I feel pulled to.

This is a more spiritual answer than I think you were shooting for, but it's the truth! Turning inward and looking to a greater power has allowed me to hear and feel the plan meant for me, and the internal compass has guided me toward it. With each success comes reaffirmation. The more connected I am to the Divinity in me and in the world, the more authentically I live, the more I see my greater purpose, and the more I chase those endeavors. It's a wonderful cycle of trust, faith, purpose, and authenticity.

Q: Let's talk about your passions for a second. What are the things you are currently working on that are filling your cup?

The last year has been a brutal one in terms of loss, grief, exhaustion, and shaky stability. It's also given me time to reflect and to seek out my purpose, and to lay the groundwork for the life I want to live going forward. Am I surviving or thriving after this? The last year allowed me to lean into the things I love most: connecting with people, discovering my voice, growing my podcast, writing my books, and continuing to ground myself in healthier practices. The gym has finally seen more of me than it ever has before! The points of connection these things provide with the universe, with my loved ones, and with myself, have been eye-opening in terms of where I want to go and what I want to do.

I've also slowed down and become more intentional about my time. We were moving at such a fast pace prior to the pandemic that I never took stock of whether certain things felt right. I said yes all the time. Now I feel more comfortable saying, "This isn't working so maybe it's time to let go," rather than feeling obligated to participate in something. My priorities have shifted.

I've been consumed by writing manuscripts. My next book, *Love, Chai, and Other Four-Letter Words*, comes out on October 5. It's a romcom story set against family drama, bucket lists, and city lights. I'm now deep in the throes of writing the second book in the series and working on a few others to rev up my career!

Q: Do you find that that real life influences the characters you create and the paths they take in your books?



I like to think that as I grow more confident, comfortable, and risk-friendly, my characters grow bolder and less apologetic too. My stories are told with more conviction and are fuller because I myself am experiencing that fullness and certainty.

All the time. Whether it's a life experience I've had, like visiting every tourist place in New York, or a feeling as devastating as heartbreak or as magical as a sparkly night with friends under city lights, writing allows me to empathize and to put myself in the shoes of the people I've created, who may be nothing like me. And that translates to real life too. As I witness my characters come to life and do things that perhaps I wouldn't do, I learn to empathize with people who make different decisions from mine, and that creates growth. I like to think that as I grow more confident, comfortable, and risk-friendly, my characters grow bolder and less apologetic too. My stories are told with more conviction and are fuller because I myself am experiencing that fullness and certainty.

Q: Your podcast, *The Woke Desi*, has seen incredible success over the last year and a half. I think that you and your co-host, Nehal Tenany, have beautifully created a community where both guests and listeners can come to the table as themselves. How has this project aligned with your goals for yourself?

My brother Sridhar is our producer. He told me something that makes me laugh and also drives me when I work on the show: "You have one job as a podcast host: use your voice to tell a story." The audience can tell if we aren't ourselves or if we aren't enthusiastic about a particular advertisement. We have no choice but to be ourselves! The podcast has given us greater confidence in owning our unique stories. It's also given me a platform to create the connection I mentioned before.



One of my greatest missions in life is to create interactions where no one leaves feeling unhappy or alone. As we explore different stigmatized issues, the podcast allows us to foster growth in those who haven't experienced certain difficulties, and to allow those who have experienced them to feel seen and loved.

Q: Are there stories you've heard from your guests that have made you pause, think, and reframe?

All the time! One episode was about Indo-Caribbean identity. Over 1.4 million Indians were taken, sometimes against their will, and shipped to other parts of the world like Fiji, Africa and the Caribbean, as indentured servants and slaves. The descendants of those people carry traumas, in addition to the pressure of preserving cultures to which their ancestors clung. Now, South Asians tend to see them as outsiders. We have abandoned our own, and much of that is entwined in casteism, socioeconomic status, colonization, and more.

Many of our women's health issues also stick with me. It's a sad reality that our South Asian culture, while beautiful and ripe with tradition, often doesn't see people outside of our own families as equal, and women are included in that. Discussing issues like sexuality, marriage pressure, miscarriage, infertility and mental health, allows us to explore how much we inadvertently put others in pain or silence them. I think those are the most powerful episodes – the ones that make us feel like we can create a great change within our own families and societies and encourage people rather than demoralizing them and isolating them.

Q: Have there been professional, emotional, and literal bumps that you have had to overcome on this journey of turning your passion into a reality?

The road to success is often a lonely one, particularly if there aren't many people in your circles who have pursued similar paths. It can foster a lot of doubt when you don't have many people to turn to for guidance. It can be isolating. I often struggle with the question, "What's next?" because not many people close to me are positioned to give me advice. I learn through networking, observing, studying on my own, and navigating my own instincts amongst it all. I have to rely on myself constantly to answer my own questions. That takes a lot of self-awareness, prayer, and growth.

I learn through networking, observing, studying on my own, and navigating my own instincts amongst it all. I have to rely on myself constantly to answer my own questions. That takes a lot of self-awareness, prayer, and growth.



I firmly believe that my prayer time is mine alone, where my mind can have a breather and loosen its knots. I meditate afterward to clear out any heaviness. My faith has been an evolution.

Another difficulty with being heart-led and passion-driven is that you throw your soul into everything you do. So the things that don't align – friends who aren't the same way, jobs that don't fill your cup, day-to-day tasks that seem boring – are frustrating to cope with. I would love to write full-time but it typically takes five or more books to generate a steady income stream. I am on book three. That means for the sake of my student loans and financial stability, I have to also hold a full-time job. When your purpose calls loudly that can feel limiting. It's a very practical roadblock and practicality can often be at odds with passion.

Q: What are the tools that you lean on – both internal and external – that keep you anchored during those bumpy times?

Externally, the biggest tools I have are ones that fill me with joy and I've been keeping those a high priority through the last year of instability. I try to exercise four to five times a week. I have a therapist and I am a huge proponent of therapy to handle the stress of my day-to-day in juggling multiple endeavors. I try to take one night a week (at least!) to relax and watch a show or do something fun with my husband. My family should count as a tool – my parents are amazing sounding boards and my brother is a huge source of joy for me.

Internally, my biggest grounding element is prayer. I'm the daughter of a Vedic scholar and priest, and my dad instilled knowledge that has been passed down for thousands of years, and rightfully so as it works! I firmly believe that my prayer time is mine alone, where my mind can have a breather and loosen its knots. I meditate afterward to clear out any heaviness. My faith has been an evolution. Like anyone in their twenties, I doubted certain practices, but it has been the greatest guiding force

in my adult life and as I navigate starting my own family. When I'm miserable, prayer gives me hope. When I'm happy, it gives me gratitude. I can't lose knowing that my future is divinely planned and that I am chasing exactly what I am meant to.

Q: How would you define "living authentically"?

Contentment and faith that you're living as you're meant to.

Q: What is the best advice or support you've received?

The best advice I've received is to stop viewing life as black and white. Nothing is a success. Nothing is a failure. They are simply steps on your path that direct you to your next stop. While I haven't learned many of life's lessons yet, I'm so thankful I learned this relatively young. Recognizing that every step you take is meant to be and not viewing them as a terminal move has led to less fear, more confidence, more risk, and more happiness. It's led to more trust and more faith that I am always in good hands, because nothing will lead me where I'm not meant to go. And by not viewing things as extremes on two ends of the spectrum, I've found a lot of clarity, resilience, and stability in the middle of chaos. There is a lot less swinging between "This is awful!" and "This is amazing!" and a lot more, "This is where I'm meant to be. I'm content. Let's keep moving."

Q: Any advice for people who might be feeling a little stuck on their path?

Movement starts with one step. Make the doctor's appointment. Call the friend. Send the cold email. Set aside ten minutes for yourself. Write a few words of your book. Start your podcast. Growth

Recognizing that every step you take is meant to be and not viewing them as a terminal move has led to less fear, more confidence, more risk, and more happiness. It's led to more trust and more faith that I am always in good hands, because nothing will lead me where I'm not meant to go.

comes from pushing your own boundaries, and it doesn't have to be as momentous as becoming a star in a movie or going cliff-diving. It can be much quieter and equally powerful.

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL

Reality:

Going Beyond Fake Existence

SANJAY SEHGAL, CEO of MSys Technologies, shares a story of a man whose ego-driven intentions led to a much-needed lesson, and explains the importance of connecting with our truest selves so we can authentically fulfill our purpose.

What is the purpose of my life?

Who am I? Why am I here? What am I really doing?

A direction to the answer to these questions is in this article, but bear with me to get there.

The three wishes

There was once a sage who gave his disciple a magic mantra that would fulfill three of his wishes. But the boon came with a catch: The disciple's neighbor would be twice blessed with whatever the disciple received.

The disciple was overjoyed. He chanted the mantra for a good living, including a nice house, a beautiful wife, elephants, horses, cows, buffaloes, etc., without paying much heed to the codicil.

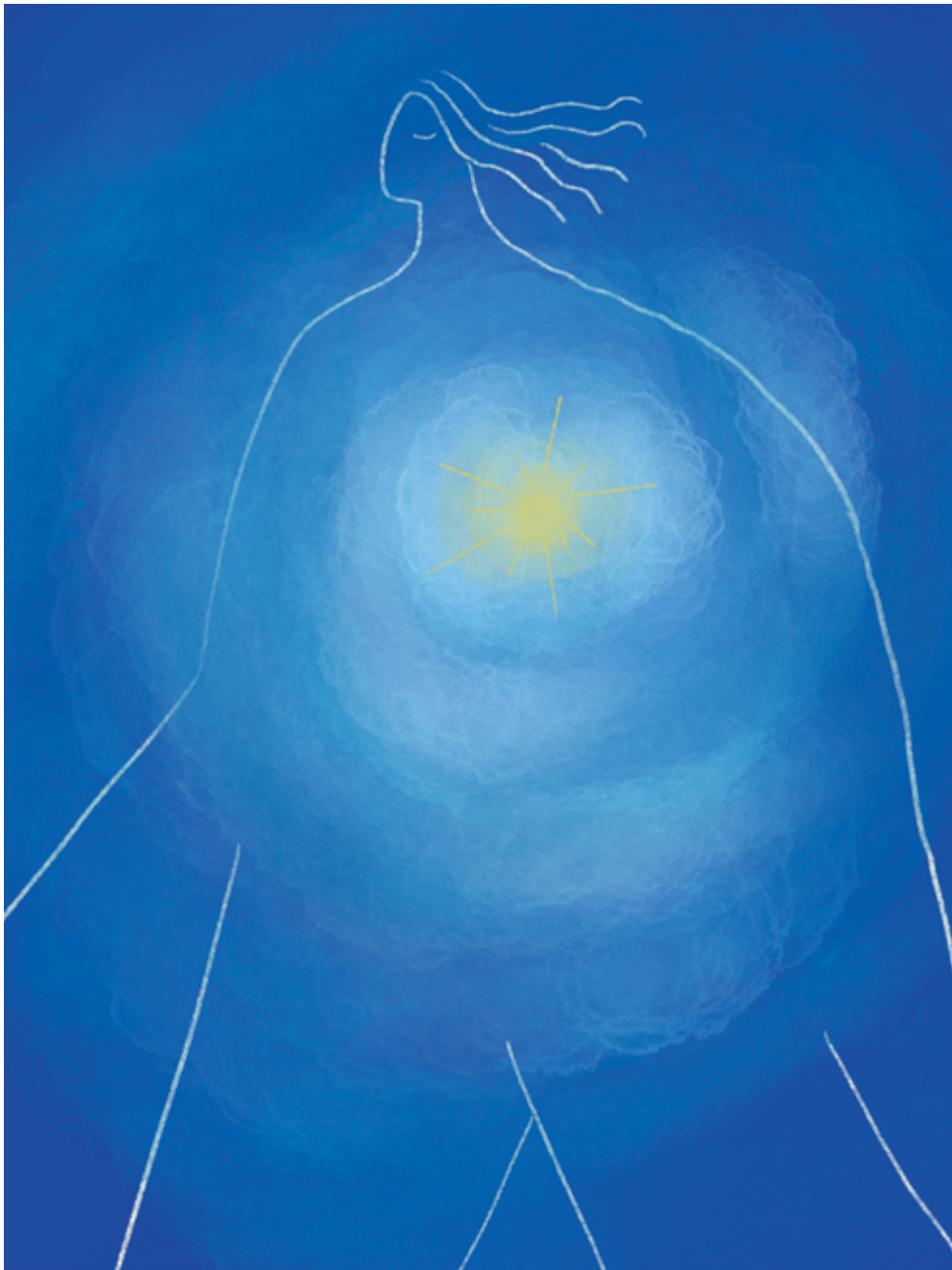
As predicted, his neighbor received twice what the disciple wished for.

Suddenly the disciple felt the weight of his wish and its condition. He became jealous, and started wanting to harm his neighbor.

So intense was his desire that he used his second wish for his neighbor to lose one of his eyes and break a leg and an arm. His neighbor thus lost both his eyes, and broke both arms and legs.

But, as destiny had it, soon the disciple was struck by paralysis that completely immobilized him. He lost the use of his working arm, leg and eye. He was devastated and wanted to use the last wish to get back to normalcy. However, the mantra did not work.

The disciple was confused and called his teacher, the sage. The wise sage came to visit his disciple and learned the whole story. He pointed out that the wish could not be granted because of the condition. The neighbor had to receive twice whatever the disciple wished for, and no normal human has four eyes, arms, and legs.



To save our minds and not be trapped in an ego-trip, it is very important to investigate the motives behind our actions. And a reality check every now and again would not go amiss either.

The disciple realized his mistake and used his last wish to regain the use of one eye, arm, and leg to at least be mobile. And lo! His neighbor was back to being healthy.

The moral of the story

This is what happens when we get too wrapped up in ourselves and our own importance. The disciple was probably hard-working, which is why he received a boon from the sage, but due to a lack of self-introspection his hard work turned him into an egotist.

To save our minds and not be trapped in an ego-trip, it is very important to investigate the motives behind our actions. And a reality check every now and again would not go amiss either.

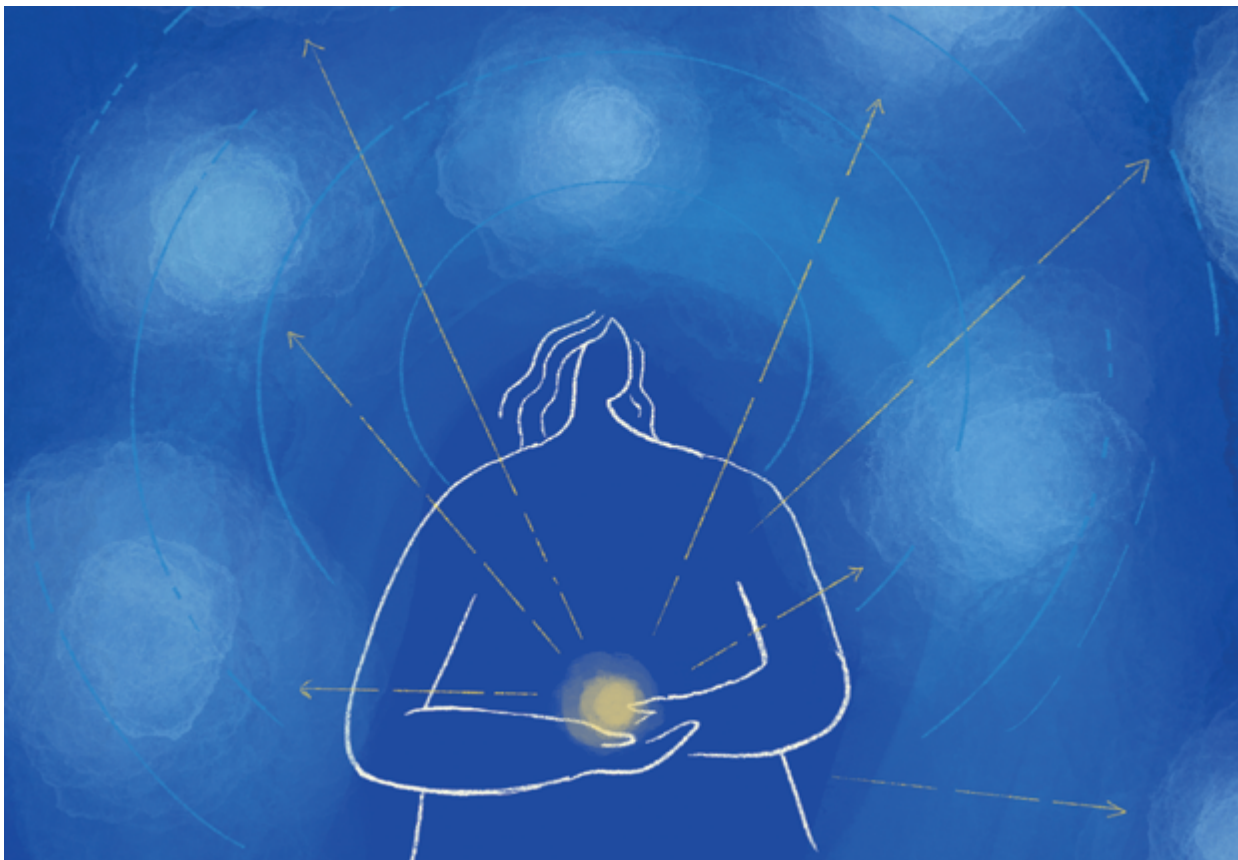
A reality check?

In life, we play different roles – son or daughter, brother or sister, wife or husband, mother or father, boss or subordinate, mentor or mentee, etc.

But who we are, our identities, differs in each of these roles. In other words, can we behave like a son or daughter, be demanding and emotional the way we are with our parents, say, or in front of a boss?

The answer is no, we cannot. Our behavior changes based on the people and situations we are in.

The same thing applies to social media. Our behavior, actions, the way we project ourselves, is influenced by the various platforms on which we have our profiles. And it is when our identities



clash that we enter crisis mode, much like the story of the neighbor in the beginning. The desire to be better than someone else pushes us toward an identity crisis.

In the race to be better, to be the same as others, to fit in, we compromise on personal space, without taking a note of the fact that we have no control over the way people may perceive us.

We have no clue which version of us will be liked. So, to meet the unsaid demands of social media, we keep changing our behavior, which eventually leads to a loss of identity.

The only way we can save ourselves is to go beyond this fake existence, identify who we really are, and become secure in ourselves.

How to approach the real us?

How do we merge the experience of the virtual world with our authentic self? Let's do a self-study.

Ask yourself: "What does being authentic mean? Does our version of our authentic selves align with the reality?"

No knowledge is complete without subject and object. When we introspect, we can differentiate between subjective perception (that we imbibe from our surroundings), and objective knowledge (of things and life as they are).

This is self-study: To be able to differentiate between perception and reality, which happens when we go beyond our existence.

Meditative practices help this process, helping us to stay true to our inner nature without letting the demands of a consumer-driven society define our existence.

To summarize

Let's return to the questions:

Who am I? Why am I here? What am I really doing? What is the purpose of my life at this time?

These are the questions that help us stay true to ourselves and stick to reality.

They trigger a spirit of inquiry from within, which in turn lifts us to another dimension that is free from ego, jealousy, depression, worry, and all sorts of mental stress.

Seeing life from a broader context is what meditation is all about. It is not about chanting a few mantras or some nasal breathing techniques and performing religious rituals. We don't need to do any of that. Instead, the quest to uncover the very source of our existence is enough to help us differentiate fake from reality.

The only side effect of sticking to our true nature is a happy, healthy and intuitive conscience.

So, as they say, "You be you." That's the purpose of our life at all times.

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL

FROM EMOTICONS TO EMOTIONS



USHA PADMASOLA wrote this article pre-Covid. Little did she realize just how relevant her thoughts have become in the current era, where most of our connection and communication in the business world are via screens. How can we adopt her suggestions in 2021?

Recently over a breakfast meeting, en route to a business site, we held some purposeful engaging talks with our 75-year-old negotiator. Needless to say we were sold for his wisdom, business acumen and the warmth that every bit of his personality exuded. Extending his firm handshake, he invited us to visit the NGO he was running in Himachal Pradesh, and we bought a lifetime of friendship.

As opposed to such rich invaluable human experience, a recent digital engagement hit me hard. The fear of automation and machine-age gripped me. This is what happened:

Since I had an issue, I dialed a toll free number of an outsourced customer service center. As the automated voice walked me through the 15-minute route, I was made to feel like a 16-digit numeral by the end of the call. I realized that the modern business houses were hitting an all-time low on customer service and relationship building.

I wondered: Why doesn't any company want to speak with their customers?

No doubt technology on one hand has allowed us to be more efficient, more productive and more profitable, but technology has also depleted the very humane essence from humans and from the many important aspects of business today. Today when I have a query and make a call to a business house, I expect to speak with a live person and not with an automated digital replica that is designed to maximize profits and minimize interaction.

I face the paradox of having to interact more with my plastic cards and humans with iPod ear-buds. I am made to feel like a prisoner with a code, I feel more like a numeral than a human. Where are all the humans and where is the humaneness?

Business is not just about analytics, conversion rates and clicks through, but it is about making a connection. The feeling of helping a customer tackle a problem and presenting them with a solution is a very palpable achievement. I wonder if I can put a laugh and empathy on an Excel sheet and mark my business. Likes, tweets, shares, posts, upticks and chats, although a few mouse clicks help us express ourselves faster, it's a fallacy to think that people are more connected than ever. The crux of the matter is that people are connected



more to technology – smart phones, tablets, laptops and hardware – and not to real people.

Real people build real, face-to-face, human-to-human relationships. Real people smile at one another and interact. If we've forgotten what it's like to be real humans, let's:

Use technology as an invertendo to aid us.

Network digitally to connect in a real way.

Get to know someone, earn a relationship, and their business.

Do it the old-fashioned way and make a connection that will last a lifetime.

Real people express themselves through real emotions not emoticons.

Illustrations by ARATI SHEDDE

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



**NEVER DOUBT
THAT A SMALL GROUP
OF THOUGHTFUL,
COMMITTED CITIZENS
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD;
INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY
THING THAT EVER HAS.**

MARGARET MEAD

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All we have to decide is what to do
with the time that is given us.

J.R.R. TOLKIEN



YOUR CALENDAR –

The Mirror of Your Values

DR. ICHAK ADIZES challenges us to reorganize our lives so that we are able to be in charge of how we spend our time, and thus create balance and well-being. As he points out, it is easier said than done! It requires a radical shift in our way of thinking and working.

In my work as a consultant to top management, I come across the same question over and over again: “Doctor Adizes, how do I balance my professional career with my personal life? I am not just a corporate leader, but also a spouse, a parent, and a community member. What do I do when my work totally absorbs all of my time and my personal life suffers?”

I hear this question mostly in countries experiencing rapid change. Change causes problems. Problems call for solutions. Business solutions, to be developed and implemented, consume lots of time and personal life suffers. In order to balance life, ask yourself, “What do I truly value the most?”

People usually discover what is of value too late. On their death bed. Or when they get sick.

Why? Because we recognize the most important things in life by their absence.

You do not know the value of health until you get sick, the value of democracy until you live in a dictatorship, the value of love until you do not have it, or the value of living until you are dying.

We take for granted the most important things in life because we normally have them. But not really. Health, democracy, and love are not static, fixed. If not maintained, they deteriorate. With time passing, they do not stay the same. There is nothing you need to do for love or health or democracy to deteriorate. Just do nothing and they will diminish with time on their own. Consider this metaphor: Build the best garden money can buy. Do not do anything to this garden for two years. What happened to the garden? It is the same with love, health, democracy, and thus the quality of your life!

Just to maintain it, not to mention to enrich it, you need to dedicate time.

Here is what I suggest my clients to do: Open your calendar and budget time. Like you budget money. Budgeting time is more important than budgeting money because time is absolutely fixed while money is not. Every hour and every minute that passes will not come back. Money might. Time does not, and there is no bank of time where you can ask for time to be loaned to you.

Usually, people spend time as pressurizing problems require, until they have no time left for what they really want to do. It is the equivalent of

Open your calendar and budget time. Like you budget money. Budgeting time is more important than budgeting money because time is absolutely fixed while money is not. Every hour and every minute that passes will not come back. Money might. Time does not, and there is no bank of time where you can ask for time to be loaned to you.

spending money without a budget as opportunities to spend arise, and then being surprised when there is no money left for what they really need the money for.

I believe we do not budget time because to really accept that time is fixed is tantamount to accepting that we will die. We know we will, but we do not want to look at the topic of death in the eye and accept it; it is too scary. So, we spend time freely as if we will live forever.

You know the truth, so have courage and get to work. Budget your time.

To help us budget time I am going to use my PAEI model – Producer, Administrator, Entrepreneur, Integrator:

First, realize what most people do wrong: They usually spend their time on **P** first, because it is a short-term focused role and the immediate needs always take precedence over what needs to be done later or in the long run.

Next, people's focus turns to **A**, taking care of the details of paying bills, answering emails or inquiries, etc. Another short-term focus. Unless you are the entrepreneurial or creative type, **E** is attended to if time is left, usually when it robs us of sleep, or we are on vacation. **I** gets attention during a crisis: If our spouse threatens us with divorce, someone in the family gets sick, or children are abusing drugs, for example.

If you are going to balance your life, you need to change and address what is really of value to you. Since success is from the inside out and not from the outside in, I suggest:

If you are going to balance your life, you need to change and address what is really of value to you. Since success is from the inside out and not from the outside in.



I should be first,
E second,
A third, and
P should be the last.

If you handle the long term issues right, the short term problems down the road can be proactively prevented.

Let us begin with I.

Your first priority is time for yourself, like exercise, practicing Yoga, meditation, reading a book, playing some music, and maybe having some time to do nothing whatsoever. Just contemplate your navel. This will remove the need for late night insomnia.

Now, I for your spouse. Open the calendar and plan one evening per week for going out for a

date. To a candlelit restaurant. It must be the same day of the week and not when time permits. It is planned; the time is safely secured like Christmas. You do not decide when to celebrate Christmas. The date is known year after year. The same should be true for having a date with your spouse. Your spouse can count on it. And go out just the two of you, no one else, and reconnect. And agree to have no computers, TV screens, or smartphones in the bedroom so you can have pillow talk nightly. Furthermore, I suggest a re-honeymoon on each anniversary of your wedding day because, as one client of mine said, "One honeymoon is not enough for a lifetime of marriage."

Next, I with your children. Every child gets scheduled undivided time, the same time, the same day, for just the two of you. Not with all the kids. One kid at a time so that each child gets your undivided attention. Each child is

Go somewhere, away from home, without computers or smartphones. During that long weekend, have a family meeting and establish rules of not interrupting each other. Discuss whatever is bothering anyone that needs to be addressed by the family.





different. Dedicate the time to something that that specific child adores. Perhaps one likes horseback riding, another might prefer ballet, a third child skateboarding or stamp collecting.

Now, schedule one long weekend per month or at least per quarter, for the whole family, starting Thursday evening and ending Monday evening. Go somewhere, away from home, without computers or smartphones. During that long weekend, have a family meeting and establish rules of not interrupting each other. Discuss whatever is bothering anyone that needs to be addressed by the family.

PUT ALL OF THIS IN THE CALENDAR. If you do not, it will not happen. It will be difficult to honor these commitments as is. Without the

calendar reminder, my experience is that it has no chance of being implemented.

You might want to extend the **I** one more level, to integration with the community. Explore allocating time for social community work.

Now schedule time in the calendar for **E**, time for discussing what changes need to be made in the company or in your life. Do not mix executive committee meetings, which are usually for **A** purposes, with strategic planning, which is for **E** purposes. If you mix the two, **A** will take up all of your time and **E** will suffer.

Now that you have taken care of **I** and **E**, in the long run, allocate time for **A** in your calendar. This is when the executive committee will meet

Never ever have your calendar full.
This allows no time to think,
no time to just reflect, or to be available
when someone needs you unexpectedly.

or you will hold one-on-one meetings with your subordinates to follow-up on decisions.

Of the time left, use it for **P** – to call clients, sell, or perform responsibilities that produce actual results. **P** can be delegated as much as possible.

When you finish it all, look at your calendar. You should still have thirty percent of the calendar empty. Reserve this time for unexpected demands. Never ever have your calendar full. This allows no time to think, no time to just reflect, or to be available when someone needs you unexpectedly. You are a lousy executive if your secretary has to tell someone begging for your time that you are only available next month or worse, in two or three months.

I can imagine that in allocating the time you found that there are simply not enough hours in a day, week or year to give each **PAEI** role the time you would like to dedicate.

Back to the drawing board. Just like when you budget money, you have to make choices. You need to decide what to cut. You need to decide what is in the “need to” category or in the “nice to” category.

Every quarter, have your secretary give you a report of how much time was budgeted for each **PAEI** role and how much time was actually spent on each role. Next quarter, you can take corrective action just like you do when budgeting money.

It is normal that you might have difficulties implementing these recommendations. You might be too close to the action and have a hard time making choices, a problem I have difficulty with myself. If this is the case, then ask somebody close to you, someone you respect, to support you in budgeting your time.

Notice the difference between being in control of how you spend your time, to the usual practice where time is spent as dictated by the problems.

Who should be in charge?

You of your Life?
or
Your Life of You?

Just thinking and feeling,
Dr. Ichak Adizes

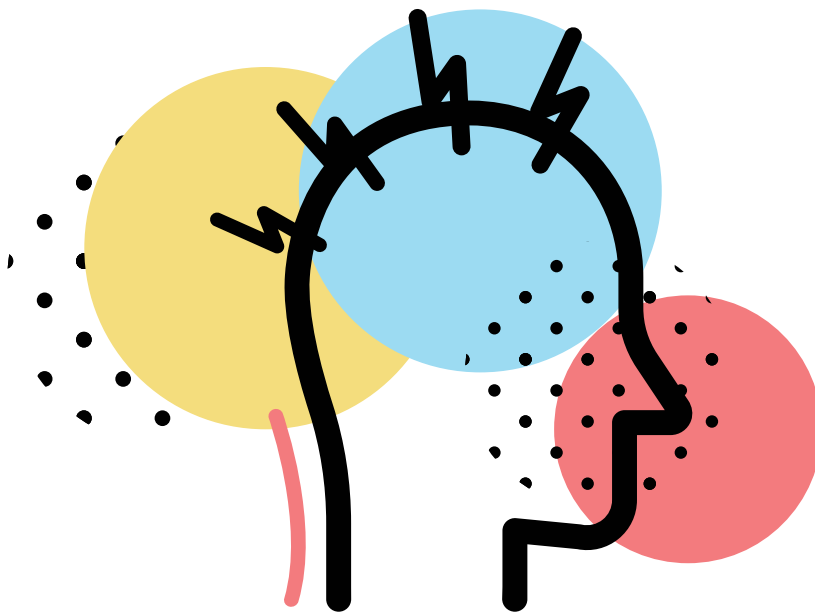
<https://www.ichakadizes.com/post/your-calendar-the-mirror-of-your-values>

THE HEARTFUL INNOVATOR

– PART 6

Disruptive Innovation through Inner Transformation

In the previous articles, **RAVI VENKATESAN** outlined 4 key aspects of the “inner state” that we want to fine tune to become Heartful Innovators. He explored the role of the intellect, ego, mind, and awareness, and their transformation in enabling innovation.



In this article, he focuses on the single biggest barrier to innovation – fear and its associates, uncertainty and doubt. Collectively known as FUD, these factors have prevented or killed more innovations than anything else.

Almost always, innovation requires taking risk to achieve rewards. We are all “wired” differently and have different attitudes towards risk. There are two statements that have held true through the years:

1. “Where some see risk, others see opportunity.”

I’ve studied carefully the attributes of some of the most successful business leaders, and consistently I’ve seen them spot opportunities where others around them were seeing risk. A great example of this is Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft. Prior leadership at Microsoft viewed the open-source software movement, exemplified by the operating system Linux, as the biggest risk to their business. Satya, on the other hand, viewed it as an

We know that taking risks is essential for reward. We also see the best innovative leaders demonstrate the ability to take risks where others may advise against it, or the “wisdom of crowds” may be against it.

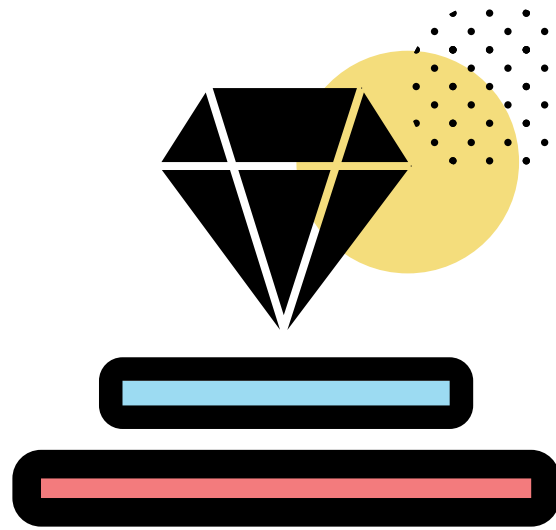
opportunity to develop Microsoft’s Cloud business. Fast forward a few years and Satya ended up growing Microsoft’s cloud business to be a market leader, only behind Amazon. The cloud business also ended up being over a third of Microsoft’s revenues.

2. “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

This statement is actually from Alexander Pope’s 18th century poem, *An Essay on Criticism*. One of the areas I find successful entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs achieve great success is by betting on projects and initiatives that don’t pass muster based on rigorous analysis. They require a certain leap of faith. They require using intuition more than analysis and facts.

While most people are risk averse beyond appropriate, there is also the opposite case of people who are “risk perverse.” Taking liberties with the English language, I define people who take uninformed and unreasonable risks that put their personal, family and business interests at risk as “risk perverse.” Gamblers are a great example. The classic case of a gambler who believes they need just one more bet to win back all their losses is well known.

We know that taking risks is essential for reward. We also see the best innovative leaders demonstrate the ability to take risks where others may advise against it, or the “wisdom of crowds”



may be against it. We also know that there is a dark side to risk, and we have to be careful not to gamble. How do we strike that balance and how can the principles we have learned in the previous articles help us with this?

The best way to understand if you are not doing something because it is excessive risk or because of FUD is as follows:

1. Ensure that you are calm and centered. A disturbed mind will create a complex network of negative hypothetical scenarios that will never occur. One of the great ways to ensure you are centered is the Heartfulness practice of Cleaning.
2. Form a positive hypothesis about what could happen. For example, let's say you are in a really good job but now a new opportunity has come up. The new job could really take your career to the next level, but you are concerned about losing your current good job and landing up in a job that you don't like. Start with a

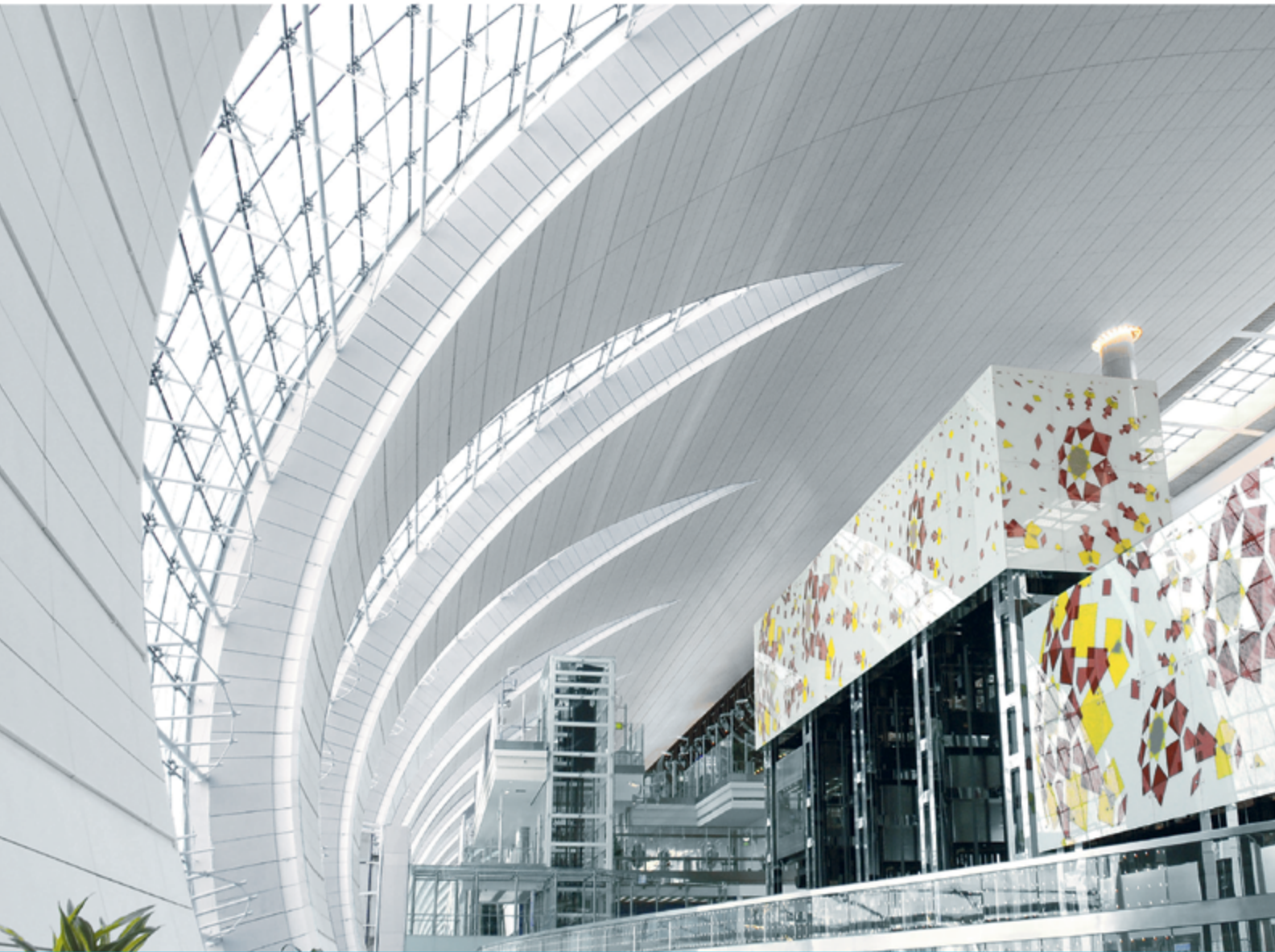
hypothesis that this new job will take your career further and you will really enjoy it. Talk to multiple people you trust and get opinions, and then apply your intuition. This type of approach will lead you to identify and counter FUD.

3. Make yourself a witness to your own mind's working. This is a trick to raise the level of consciousness from which you operate. Of course, regular practice of meditation will help you do this more easily versus just attempting it when you need it. Doing this will provide you a clear view of whether you are letting yourself be a victim of FUD or getting ready to take the right level of risk to be innovative.

Over the next few weeks try to observe yourself as you encounter decision points. Are you taking the right risks or are you being paralyzed by FUD? I wish you success in applying the principles of being a Heartful Innovator, to identify and move past FUD, to take the right risks and create great outcomes.

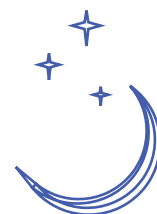
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innerview





Where my consciousness meets
or embodies or taps into what
we call universal consciousness,
that's when I'm awake. That's
the goal.

TOBIN HART

How we know

PART 1



TOBIN HART is professor at the University of West Georgia's Humanistic, Transpersonal and Critical Psychology program, and co-founder of the ChildSpirit Institute. In this 3-part series he is interviewed by **VICTOR KANNAN**, Director of the Heartfulness Institute USA, about the intersection of Western psychology and spirituality.

Q: Good morning. Hope all of you are fine and safe.

We are. No one is safe anymore, are they?

Q: I think not. I will answer your question as to how we are doing these days. I've been practicing meditation as a journey of self-discovery, and also self-development. When we combine self-discovery and self-development, it seems to usher in nice surprises and challenges. Over a long period of time, I think we are trained to be comfortable with the wholesomeness of the aloneness. It's more of being alone, but not lonely. COVID-19 has added another dimension to it in the past one year.

Fortunately for us, we have sufficient social contact. I go to work, and we have a community of meditators that meets virtually a couple of times a week, so there is enough social contact for me. And yet there is no personal contact. There is no smell of coffee or ambience. If we are not engaged with all our five senses and absorbing with all our five senses, are we in some way impairing our presence?

That probably takes us to your book, *The Four Virtues*, the first virtue being Presence.

It's a lovely description. I love your phrase "the wholesomeness of aloneness." That could be a book title. Right? These are such strange days. You really did describe it beautifully, and it also makes me think of smell.

The New York Times magazine had a big article on smell recently: Prompted by just what you're saying, in part. With COVID, people lost some of that sensuality and have begun to appreciate something that they didn't realize was always there.

As you say, it's always a discovery and growth. It's always about: What is it that is here today? And how can you meet it in a way that's heartfelt and not too fearful, but appreciative? That's the challenge every day in these days.

Q: So, Tobin, I want to talk to you about Western psychology and where spirituality plays a role in it. I am actually very heartened to see quite a bit of conversation about consciousness, emotional intelligence and their connection to neuroscience.

I would like to explore with you to see if Western psychology is ready to take the big leap into pure spirituality. Of course, we can define what pure spirituality is later. As far as I understand, the Western approach to psychology comes from a purely materialist point of view, rationally explaining everything that happens in the realm of psychology. But when I read your books, it looks like you are making a bold move to intersect Western psychology with spirituality.

Would that be a right assessment?

Yes, I think so, but I don't know how bold it is. There is already a long tradition in Western psychology that has been an undercurrent, including the thinking of the reputed father of American psychology, William James. James was born about 180 years ago, and the psychology he described was really two psychologies. One of them is what we would recognize today basically as neuroscience. The other, he said, was really an effort toward introspection and reflection. One is the outside view and the other is the inside. So, he studied what we certainly would call spirituality 150 years ago in the West, and he wrote a book called *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Today, it would be called "The Varieties of Spiritual Experience."

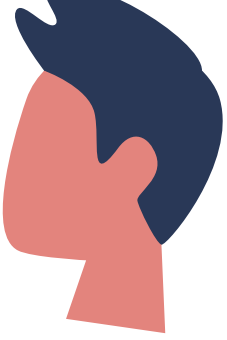
There's a long record all throughout the Western literature, from the Greeks onward, of people tracking what we think of as spirituality. I'm just following the current of this wisdom stream from

the folks who have been looking at this fullness of humanity in a big way.

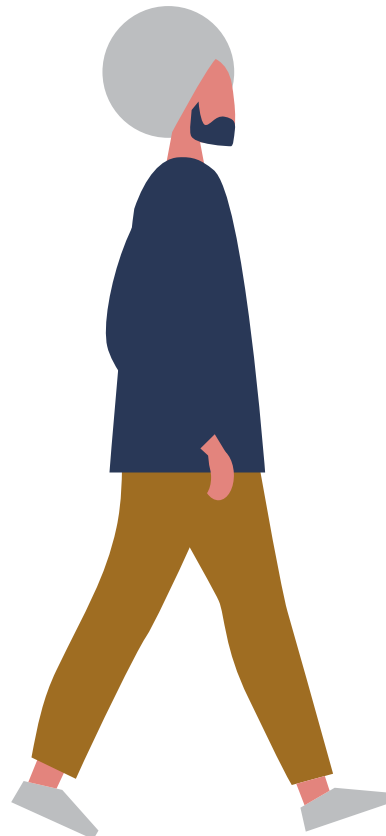
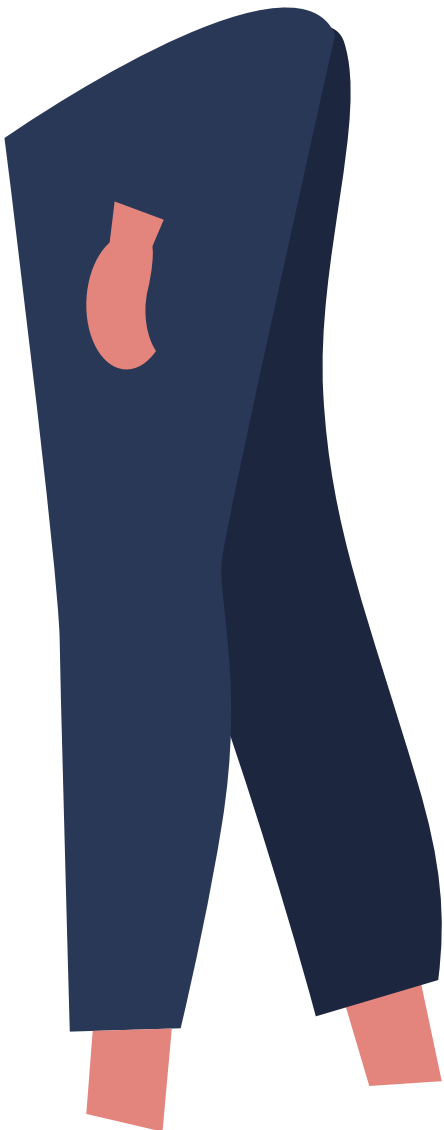
For example, Abraham Maslow in the '50s and '60s talked about human experience, particularly in the sense of human potential, human creativity, human choice, and human spiritual experience, and what he called peak experiences, self-actualizers and self-transcendence. We would easily call this spirituality. The whole stream of what might be called transpersonal psychology, from James to Maslow and further on, really has looked at spiritual experience. So, that's one solid thread in the West.

It's pretty clear that Western psychology has become increasingly materialistic, trying to understand consciousness as an epiphenomenon of brain activity. It's been described as the "hard problem." How can subjective experience possibly emerge out of brain activity? We have no idea. The East comes from a different angle; the material world emerges out of consciousness. These two clearly incompatible worldviews create this place of paradox, an irreconcilable difference, and that's the place where I think the Western approach and the Eastern approach have been coming together to try to understand what we mean by consciousness, what it means to be human.

This has been a search from nowhere, essentially, an objectivist search in Western psychology that tries to eliminate subjectivity, and it's impossible. They recognize that it's impossible. So instead, the question now is: How do we use our subjectivity



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– our interiority – to meet the world? And that intersection is one of the front edges of psychology.

Q: This idea of reality compared to objectivity and subjectivity is also a fascinating idea.

Yes.

Q: What you are saying is that you are bringing the thread of the spiritualist viewpoint of Western psychology to the fore, and that probably opens up more possibilities for exploration. The search for reality has been ongoing. The materialist view is one approach to the search for reality. Nowadays I see a lot more of this intersection between materialist viewpoints and people introducing the hard problems, for example, David Chalmers and others are trying to explore consciousness having recognized that it is a subjective field. However, are there any objective cognates that we can begin to explore?


I think that's fair. I might also say that it's largely about how we know. The world is disclosed to us to the extent to which we are open to it. This begs the question of how we open to it. We presume that the whole of a thing can be known by observing, cutting apart and categorizing objectively, versus entering into the world as connection, which is very different. That is part of an epistemic or epistemological shift. When we really come into contact with one another, for example, suddenly it's no longer about the other as

a commodity or category; instead it's an encounter, a meeting. We are really here to meet the other. There is a resonance rather than just categorical understanding. So what I experience is that there's an organic spirituality, we could call it, that emerges out of this more direct way that we know the world.

The way that we've been told the world will disclose itself to us – rational objectivist, materialist science – is great for some things, but it is inadequate as a foundation for morals or value or virtue or mutual survival. So, what I might argue is that while I don't really know how to define spirituality universally, I do know that the way we know has consequences for what we could call spirituality.

Q: That's nice. So, you may say that consciousness is essentially at the center of this spiritual knowing. How do you define consciousness?

Yes. I'll have to punt a little bit because I don't know. Again, it's like spirituality. Consciousness can mean many things. It's taken up in a lot of different ways. As it relates to spirituality, I like the idea of being awake and aware, being present. That's about being conscious or having consciousness. In the West, we often talk about consciousnesses through a materialist doctrine as an epiphenomena of brain activity. If we're conscious, awake, or we have memory or can think, that means we're conscious. When the brain stops, we're not conscious.



So, for me, where my consciousness meets or embodies or taps into what we call universal consciousness, that's when I'm awake. That's the goal. That's what we're working towards, when we can feel that vitality and that thread of universality.

I know in many traditions, however, that consciousness is about “all consciousness.” So, for me, where my consciousness meets or embodies or taps into what we call universal consciousness, that's when I'm awake. That's the goal. That's what we're working towards, when we can feel that vitality and that thread of universality.

Some people will have magical experiences, others an overflowing heart, or deep compassion, or inspiration, and so forth. Those things can take different forms, but it feels like we're tapping something that is universal and alive. That's where the tension of spirituality and psychology really gets a lot of traction, I think. That is where our individuality meets something universal.

Q: It's interesting you say that when our individual consciousness meets with the universal consciousness, we become awake.

Yes, I think that's a way of saying that we're always part of that consciousness. Essentially, that's who we are. That's the tradition in the East, and one that I believe in.

But we often get in our own way. So we have to develop certain capacities. For example, some of the Greeks would say that the senses are not trustworthy, so we have to use rationality to know reality. Others said, no, you have to develop the senses, you have to develop the capacity to feel deeply, to touch deeply, to be aware. Part of being alive is about these developing capacities, like compassion. In the Buddhist tradition, however, they would say, you don't have to grow compassion, it's always there. You have to do things to allow it to flow, to allow it to come back to its home. I think that's probably a good description.

Inviting certain values serves to shape character and society. ... to talk about values is really important. It's really central.

Q: Yes, I love that. Going back to the exploration of reality, or going back home, if you say that we become awake when the universal consciousness (which consists of all the truths) meets individual consciousness, that is when we recognize those truths. It is a powerful explanation of what it means to be awake. It probably also ties into the ritual of being "born again" in many religious and spiritual traditions, of being reawakened. That's powerful. Thanks, Tobin.

I was wondering, what is the difference between virtues and values? Many times I see people using these terms interchangeably. How do we distinguish a virtue from a value? What type of relationship do they have between each other?

Again, these words can mean many things. They are tricky, aren't they? I had mixed feelings about using these terms, because both words often imply

a commandment. Instead, I was treating virtues as capacities, like qualities are the kinds of capacities that you might develop and access in some way. For example, empathy would be a capacity. To have wisdom, to have presence, finding one's voice; these are inner capacities that emerge in a dialogue and expression in the world in some way. I think of capacities as "ways of being that we might act out in the world."

One blind spot we've had in science in the West is how values have gone underground – the valueless search for facts. But our values are present, our subjectivity is present. For example, who's funding the research? That's a value, right? What are the ways you think about it? Those are particular values or worldviews that shape what we see and how we make sense of it. So it's really important to acknowledge and explore values.

There's a great line from Rumi:

*Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.*

And that field is consciousness, that's that organicity, that organic quality of being. I think that's inherent.

Certainly, inviting certain values serves to shape character and society. Humans have the capacity for all sorts of horrific things – we only have to open up the newsfeed every day. But to talk about values is really important. It's really central.



And we always want to be careful not to impose values as “should” on someone, because then we engender this sense of sin that we often identify with through shame and so forth. The idea of sin and the idea of shame or guilt can be useful when they operate as a feedback loop: “Oh, geez, I did the wrong thing!” or, “Yes, you’re right.” So, for me, there are values that are pretty universal but they have to be worked through and made one’s own. These are things that are absolutely relative and relatively absolute.

Q: Yes. I read somewhere that virtues are like seeds; they give birth to and blossom into values. They are the core of who we are.

This also brings me to the so-called seven cardinal virtues and seven cardinal sins. Have you ever tried to juxtapose those seven with these four?

By the way, the original meaning of the word “sin” comes from archery. It means missing the mark. It doesn’t mean you’re bad. It means, “Oops, you missed the mark.” Just as in archery, the goal is to take that as feedback. It’s a feedback loop that says, “Okay, let me see if I can get closer to the target and adjust my angle and effort in a different way.”

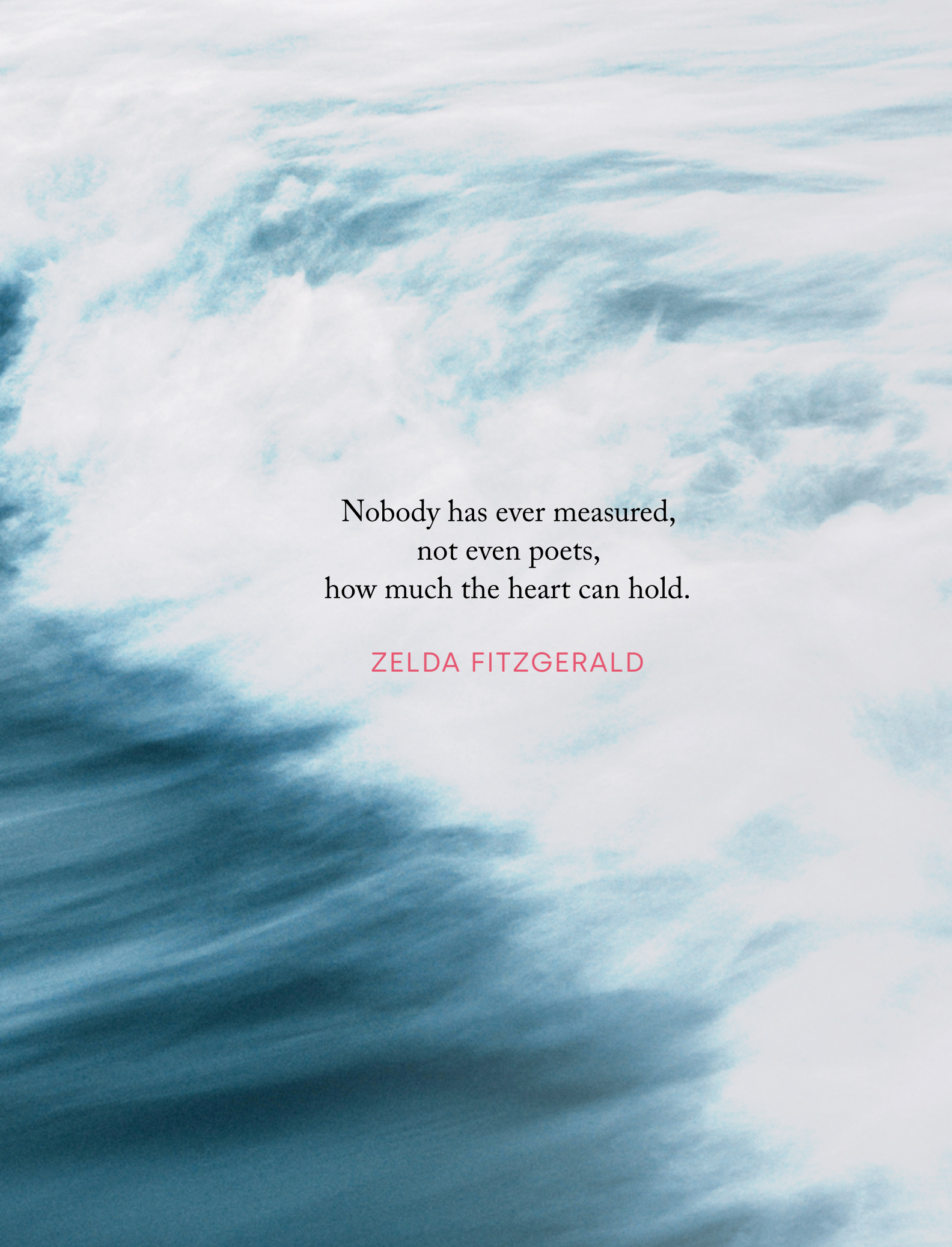
Q: So, try again. If you miss it, try again and again.

Yes. That’s what we’re on the planet for, I think.

To be continued.



it changes
everything

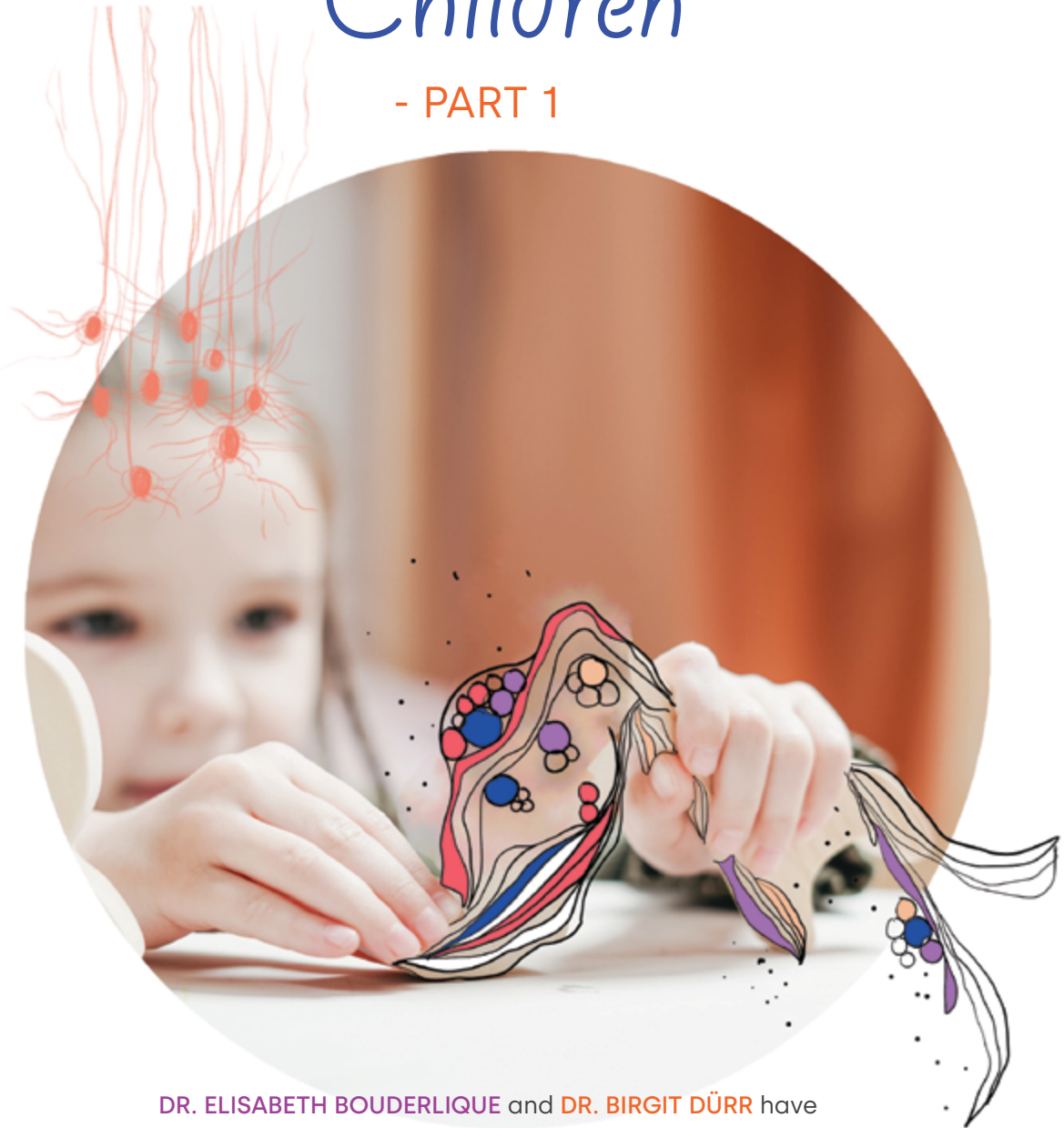


Nobody has ever measured,
not even poets,
how much the heart can hold.

ZELDA FITZGERALD

Neuro-development in Children

- PART 1



DR. ELISABETH BOUDERLIQUE and **DR. BIRGIT DÜRR** have specialized in behavioral disorders in children from a neurodevelopmental perspective. In this 2-part series, they were interviewed by **PURNIMA RAMAKRISHNA** for World Mental Health Day, October 2020.

Q: Welcome Elisabeth and Birgit. Today, mental disorders are among the most common of disabilities. We are seeing an epidemic rise in physical and mental health issues in the last decades and it's only getting worse. Today we live in a society which impacts our brain's development negatively in so many ways.

You were both trained by Dr. Robert Melillo from the US. Dr. Melillo is an American chiropractor and researcher who developed the concept of "functional disconnection syndrome." He has helped thousands of children with various neurological dysfunctions for many years, and his method has been the subject of an independent study done at the psychiatric department of Harvard Medical School.

The study showed that three months of "brain balance" exercises and interactive metronome on children with ADHD had beneficial effects on attention and hyperactivity, and also showed physical effects in the MRT on brain connectivity between the regions involved in the symptomatology of ADHD.

Elisabeth, I would like to know why you ventured into this field of developmental disorders.

EB: After I finished my medical education as an occupational doctor, I gave birth to a daughter, Charlotte, who was born a few days after term with a low birth weight of 2.2 kilos. She grew up following the lowest curve. She was late to sit and she neither crawled nor crept. She walked around

eighteen and a half months and was falling a lot. Everyone around me was saying "Don't worry, every child is different. There is no problem," but a few months later, Charlotte was labeled with a developmental delay by a neuro-pediatrician. At the age of two she had the development of a nine-month-old child. No reason was given – maybe a lack of oxygen during the last trimester of pregnancy – and nobody had an answer for the delay. Charlotte went through many therapies, such as speech and language, and physiotherapy, but I never saw an impact on her. As a mother and a medical doctor, I was looking for methods that could help her. At some point I had the opportunity to train as a Montessori teacher and I thought it would give her a good educational environment. Charlotte went to different Montessori schools, with the

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

help of an assistant, and later she went to a special needs school. She was very well taken care of, but I was still looking for a way to address the problem at the core, and not just compensate for her difficulties.

When she was thirteen years old, I discovered an institute in Philadelphia and I learned to work with their method

with my daughter. It was the first method that addressed the brain, and dealt with lifestyle issues and diet as well. It was an intensive program – I was working six to seven hours a day with her for one and a half years. Then we continued with a home program of three hours a day for another year. Charlotte was making enormous progress in all domains – physical health,

speech, sensory – but after some time things stagnated again.

At that point, I met someone who recommended Dr. Melillo's *Disconnected Kids*, and that book was a revelation for me. Everything was so logical and I was surprised that such a method was not known in Europe. Dr. Melillo had more than 100 brain balance centers in the US, working with children with learning and behavioral issues. I had the opportunity to take Dr. Melillo's course in Italy, and was becoming more and more enthusiastic about the concept of brain imbalance and how to correct it. Being a teacher, I was also in contact with many children needing extra help for issues that were not addressed but just compensated. So, two years ago I decided to open a clinic in order to use my knowledge and experience to help other children and their parents. Of course, I continued to help my daughter also.

Q: Thank you so much for sharing your journey, Elisabeth. I hope your daughter is doing much better these days.

EB: Absolutely! But there is still some way to go.

Q: Birgit, what is your interest in this field?

BD: Elisabeth and I have known each other since we were medical



students, and we have often spoken about different approaches in medicine. I followed Charlotte's development over the years and was also confronted with both milder and more severe cases of developmental deficits in my immediate environment. I think we all know families where children have behavioral or learning issues.

After Elisabeth met Dr. Melillo, she called me and said "Birgit, you have to read Dr. Melillo's book." What I read made a lot of sense. I was right away able to recognize people around me with brain imbalances, I had always been looking for a simple and effective method, and I saw and still see the huge need, especially for the youth of today. So, after training with Dr. Melillo, I am using his method in my own clinic in Munich.

Q: Could you tell us what is happening in the brain of a child or adult who has difficulties in learning or controlling their behavior?

BD: If I had to answer this question in one sentence I would say that it is a brain imbalance. Dr. Melillo writes, "All of the conditions that adversely affect behavior and learning are related to one problem, an imbalance of electrical activity between areas of the brain, especially between the right and left hemispheres. There



is even a name for it: Functional Disconnection."

Essentially it is a lack of connection, communication and integration between the networks on both sides of the brain. The most common "brain imbalance" occurs between the right and left hemispheres. This lack of integration is usually a result of a developmental imbalance or developmental asynchrony.

When we say developmental, it means that something happened during a baby's or child's development which affected the timing of the growth of the right and left hemispheres. The development did not follow its intended timeline. Usually, this starts in the womb. So, when we speak of functional disconnection syndrome, we are not talking about physical damage that affects the brain.

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Q: So what is the normal schedule of brain development?

EB: Normally the right hemisphere develops first in utero and during the first three years of life. Then the left hemisphere takes over for the next period of two to three years. Of course, both hemispheres are growing all the time, but during the first three years the right hemisphere is around 20% more active, and responds a little faster to the surrounding stimuli. Then, between three and six years, the left hemisphere is a little more active. At the end of the first six years, both hemispheres will have developed equally in terms of maturity, but differently regarding their functions. As the right and left hemispheres continue to develop in alternating periods of two to three years until young adulthood, that slight difference in functioning will increase, so that each hemisphere becomes more and more specialized.

Now, if something happens to interfere with the development of the brain during these first six years, one side of the brain will be delayed or slowed in its development, which often causes the other side to mature and grow faster. This causes a brain imbalance. As the hemispheres develop, this imbalance becomes



What we need for optimal functioning is the healthy development of both the right and left hemisphere, with their specialized functions, and that both sides need functional connectivity to be able to communicate with one another properly.

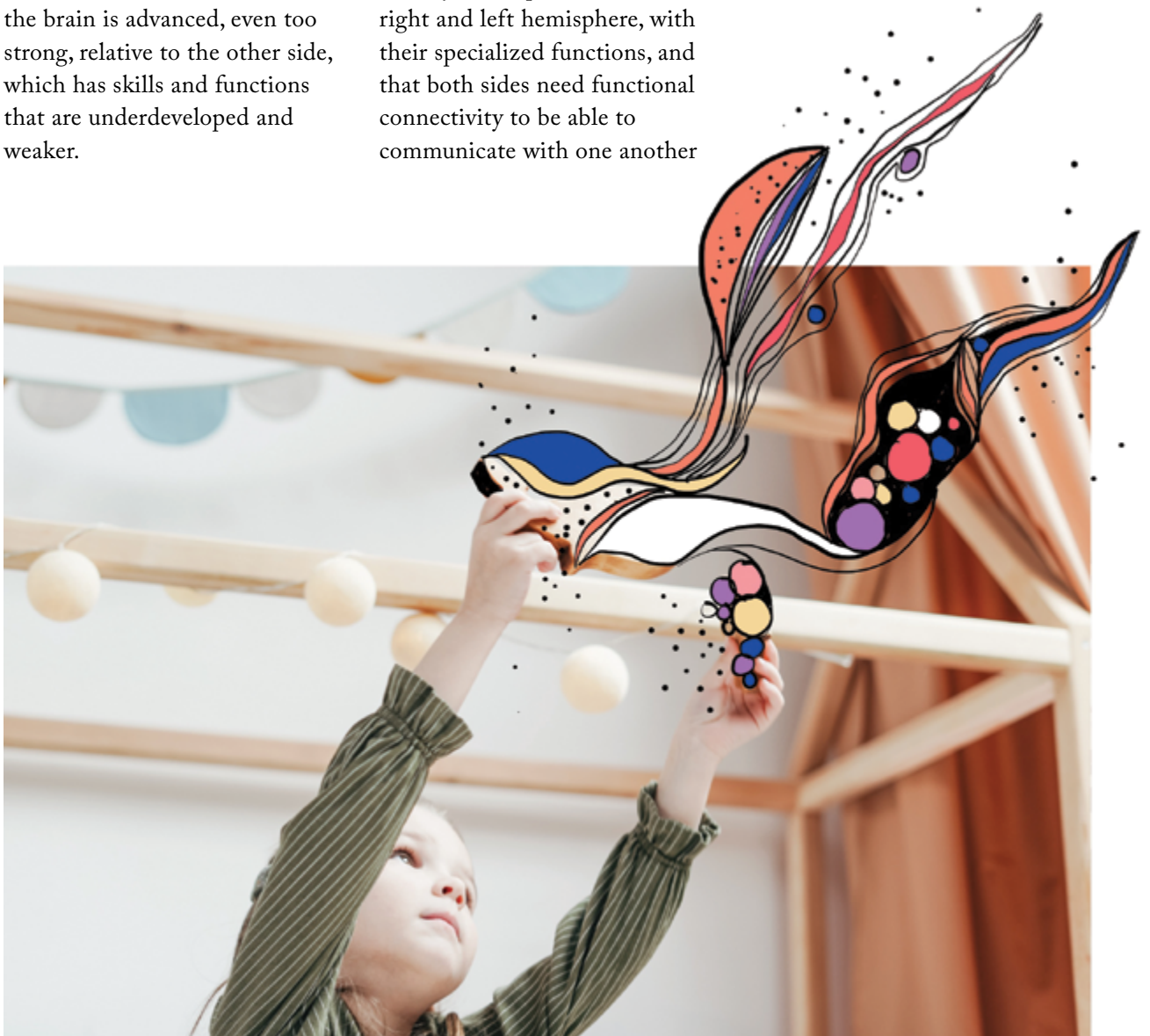
more and more pronounced, with one hemisphere behind and the other ahead. This imbalance in growth and maturity then prevents the two sides of the brain from properly integrating.

This result is what we call “unevenness of skills” or “unevenness of functional abilities,” where one side of the brain is advanced, even too strong, relative to the other side, which has skills and functions that are underdeveloped and weaker.

There may be several years of difference between certain functions.

In some cases both sides are delayed, but usually we find one side even more delayed than the other. You have to remember that what we need for optimal functioning is the healthy development of both the right and left hemisphere, with their specialized functions, and that both sides need functional connectivity to be able to communicate with one another

properly. Whatever we do, we get optimal results when we use both sides of the brain together. Anything that prevents the brain from integrating will cause problems. This is what is at the root of almost all developmental problems, and almost all mental health issues.





Q: What are some of the issues associated with a brain imbalance?

BD: As the brain is involved in almost all functions of the body, an imbalance in the brain can result in imbalances in every system of the body and in every combination. Each person is different, and each person can have a specific combination of strengths and weaknesses, but there are common features depending on which areas of the brain and which hemisphere are affected, and in what way.



Some diagnoses associated with a brain imbalance are ADHD, autism, dyslexia, OCD, memory and concentration issues, depression, and anxiety. But we also find muscle and sensory imbalances that can cause back pain, headaches or dizziness; hormone imbalances that can affect blood sugar and fat metabolism; and often we find immune imbalances that cause allergies, food sensitivities, and autoimmune issues, as well as chronic infections.

All of these issues have been increasing dramatically, and all can be directly associated with a developmental brain imbalance.

Q: Elisabeth, what are the causes of a brain imbalance?

EB: We now know that the environment plays a greater role than genes in creating a brain imbalance. That is what we call Epigenetics, meaning the influence of the environment on the expression of our genes. Around 85% of our genes are there to build the brain. These genes are normally switched on in the womb, and especially from birth, but if something prevents them from turning on, or if they are delayed in turning on, there will be a delay in growth and development of the brain.

Lack of physical activity, poor diet, stress and inflammation are the primary factors that affect brain development and can lead to imbalances in the brain.

One key process in gene expression is called DNA methylation. When exposed to stress, toxins or negativity, our body produces what we call “methyl molecules.” These molecules can attach themselves to DNA segments and prevent their transcription and translation. They don’t alter the structure of DNA but cover parts of it, so that the protein created will be different at the end. This methylation can turn a gene off at any time during life. So, if environmental exposure methylates a gene in an adult prior to conception, it can be passed on to the child and will interfere with their normal

brain development. These epimutations can be passed on through several generations. The good news is that genes in the off-position can be switched on again with intensive training and enrichment of the environment.

The cause of brain imbalances is mainly environmental and lifestyle changes that have arisen during the past decades with advancements in computer technology. Lack of physical activity, poor diet, stress and inflammation are the primary factors that affect brain development and can lead to imbalances in the brain. For example, video games can induce a brain imbalance. The left side of the brain is over activated, automatically shutting down the right side.

There are other risk factors as well, such as an undetected brain imbalance in one or both parents (which is quite common), pollution and chemicals, but it is mostly lifestyle factors that are the root of a brain imbalance. It is the accumulation of risk factors that cause an imbalance in the brain. Physical trauma, head injury or psychological traumas can also cause some disconnection syndrome later on in life, but they are not as common as the

imbalance occurring from the beginning of the development of the child.

Q: Is it possible to correct such a brain imbalance?

Because each person has a unique combination of strengths and weaknesses, to correct the problem we have to identify the nature of the imbalances, meaning we find the weaker areas of the brain and then we target them with a specific program of mental and physical exercises, sensory stimulation, lifestyle and behavior modifications, along with a healthy diet.

Adopting simple lifestyle changes, activities and exercises will start changing the brain right away.

To be continued.

Watch the whole interview at <https://youtu.be/AvEB65sAHiU>



Let your Heart Be a Love Generator

NAREN KINI uses the simple analogy of a mechanical flywheel to help us understand the role of meditation in generating love and positive feelings.

What is a flywheel? A flywheel is essentially a very heavy wheel that takes a lot of force to spin around. So, when it is spinning at high speed it tends to keep on spinning. We say it has a lot of angular momentum, which means it can store a great deal of kinetic energy. You can think of it as a kind of mechanical battery, but it is storing energy in the form of movement or kinetic energy.

How does this relate to the heart? For the purpose of this exercise:

Flywheel = Human heart
Angular Momentum = Intensity of meditation
Kinetic energy = Love or positive energy
Moment of inertia = I

“Moment of inertia” sounds abstract and confusing, but it’s much easier to understand than you might think. What it really means is that the effective mass of a spinning object depends not just on how much actual mass it has but on *where* that mass is located in relation to the point it’s spinning around.

In essence, when we go through our day at work, we have several distractions, resistances and negative energies that tend to play on our hearts and minds. If we are aware of the reservoir of positive energy (love), it can overcome the inertia and loss of positivity at work.

The most sophisticated flywheels float on superconducting magnets, so they spin almost entirely without friction. They are also sealed inside vacuum chambers, so there are no losses due to air resistance.

When we create a vacuum in our hearts, we attract, store, generate and expand more of this positive love energy. Essentially, we become a mobile love generator with an unlimited reservoir of positive energy.

There are some other analogies about flywheels that we can apply to our situations:

When we create a vacuum in our hearts, we attract, store, generate and expand more of this positive love energy. Essentially, we become a mobile love generator with an unlimited reservoir of positive energy.



Create a balanced existence by letting the mind refer to the heart:

A flywheel helps to smooth out the power the wheels receive. So, while the engine’s cylinder might add power to the flywheel every thirty seconds, the wheels can then take power from the flywheel at a steady continuous rate. The engine will roll smoothly instead of jerking along in fits and starts.

Use pauses to prevent domination of the mind over the heart:

The flywheel can be used to slow down a vehicle, like a brake. As it does, energy is transferred from the vehicle to the flywheel, which picks up speed and keeps spinning. You can then disengage the flywheel to make the vehicle stop completely.

Let the heart become a love energy generator:

A flywheel can be used to provide temporary extra power when an engine can't produce enough. Suppose you want to overtake a slow-moving horse and cart. Let's say the flywheel has been spinning for some time but isn't currently connected to either the engine or the wheels. When you reconnect it to the wheels, it provides extra power.

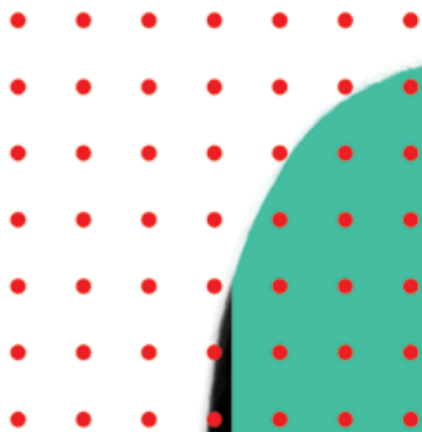
Now, if you take the flywheel (heart) and spin it twice as fast to double its angular velocity (double the intensity of meditation), you'll *quadruple* how much energy (love) it stores.

That's why flywheel designers (meditators) typically try to use high-speed wheels (regular practice) rather than a few long sessions. Even better, when the Inner Self directs our lives, the spinning continues non-stop, and we constantly generate love.

Illustrations by JASMEE RATHOD



If you take the flywheel (heart) and spin it twice as fast to double its angular velocity (double the intensity of meditation), you'll quadruple how much energy (love) it stores.



be inspired

A nail is driven out
by another nail;
habit is overcome
by habit.

ERASMUS





What Do We Really Need?

THE ART OF REMOVING AND CREATING HABITS

PART 6

DAAJI continues his series on refining habits, in the light of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga and current scientific and yogic principles and practices. Last month, he shone a light on the habit of moderation, *brahmacharya*, exploring the way our senses interface with our feelings and desires. This month, he focuses on the final *Yama*, the virtue of *aparigraha*, which means not being possessive, attached, greedy, or focused on material gain.

Minimalism and sustainability

In the last few decades, there has been a growing movement away from indulgence and hedonism toward simplicity, minimalism and living a sustainable lifestyle, centered around the 5Rs of refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose and recycle. We see this in building, architecture and interior design, for example, with the many TV and streaming programs showing us how to live in smaller homes made with recycled and natural materials. We have been wowed by Marie Kondo's book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, and TV show, *Tidying Up*, challenging us to buy only those things that we need, and that bring us joy, and encouraging us to clean up our living spaces. And as a result of the obesity epidemic in the developed world, we see this trend also with food and diet. In general, we are moving toward "more and more of less and less" in the words of my first teacher, Babuji.

This principle of taking and using only what we need has been followed by yogis since time immemorial, and it pertains to all areas of life. In Yoga it is known as *aparigraha*, and it is the fifth and final *Yama*.

As we face the dangers of climate change, environmental destruction, mass extinction of species, and the vast inequality among people from different social and cultural walks of life, this *Yama* is truly the need of the hour.

Aparigraha

Aparigraha is the culmination of the other four *Yamas* – love, truthfulness, honesty and moderation. It is an important underlying principle in all cultures, as well as all religious and philosophical traditions, even though it is not always fashionable. Over the centuries, we find that many seekers have renounced material possessions to live the lives of mendicants. And during the last 50 years, many people have chosen to live off the grid, to escape the rat race, to simplify their lifestyle, and to actively denounce the throw-away culture of modern urban life. While these choices can be seen as aspects of *aparigraha*, this *Yama* is not only about renouncing material acquisitiveness. It also means that even when we live in the world and have possessions, we are not so attached to them that we are affected by their presence or absence.

The Sanskrit word *aparigraha* is made up of three components: *a*, a prefix meaning "non," *pari*, meaning "on all sides," and *graha*, meaning "to take, grab or seize." It is the opposite of *parigraha*, which means to focus on gain and acquisition, and generally refers to material gain. *Aparigraha* means to rise above a "taking" attitude, and to accept what is truly needed at any stage of life. This involves self-restraint, avoiding overindulgence and covetousness, and removing the greed and possessiveness that bring destruction in their wake. Another definition of this principle is to give more than you receive. It is to live in the consciousness of abundance instead of scarcity.

And perhaps it is even more than that, because Swami Vivekananda once said that *aparigraha* means not to accept any gift from anybody, even when you are suffering terribly, because when you receive a gift from another person your heart becomes attached and beholden. You receive the vibrations of the person who has given. You lose your independence.

This is an interesting perspective that is worthy of reflection. Does Swami Vivekananda mean that we should remain so aloof from one another? Let's try to understand it further.

A natural etiquette of care emerges in our behavior because our thoughts and actions are no longer based on personal desires. We are no longer pulled by likes and dislikes for people, places or things. We simply live our life with devotion, developing an unattached state naturally and spontaneously. It is not that we are detached in a heartless way – instead we love everyone and everything, universally.

Possession versus belonging

One way to approach this is to explore the emotional difference between *belonging* and *possessing*. Imagine the scenario in childhood of your mother cooking meals for you every day and serving you with so much love. The times when you went to a friend's place for dinner, you were so thankful for the meal, but did you show a similar gratitude toward your own mother every day? Or imagine it is raining, and you find shelter under someone else's roof. Again, you are thankful to the homeowner, but are you so grateful to your family members for the shelter your home provides every day? No, because you take them for granted. You have the sense that they are yours! You belong together. Belonging brings us closer; it is fundamentally different from the attitude of possession, which is transactional.

So, going back to Swami Vivekananda's statement, when there is love and belonging, there is no longer the transaction of giving and receiving, of possessing. What is mine is automatically yours. In fact, there is no longer any "mine" and "yours."

As a result, our sense of human duty to each other and all other forms of life develops naturally, because we put others first as the result of an inner generosity of the heart. A natural etiquette of care emerges in our behavior because our thoughts and actions are no longer based on personal desires. We are no longer pulled by likes and dislikes for people, places or things. We simply live our life with devotion, developing an unattached state naturally and spontaneously. It is not that we are detached in a heartless way – instead we love everyone and everything, universally.

A story

There are many great ancient kings whose lives can teach us a lot about *aparigraha* – one among them is Raja Janaka of India. It may be easier for a poor person to be unattached to wealth and possessions, but what about a wealthy king who has everything? Still today, these men are known for their wisdom and generosity of heart rather than for their wealth, even though their material success was staggering. There is a wonderful story about Raja Janaka that exemplifies this quality of *aparigraha*, which is so often misunderstood by those on the path of Yoga.

A young seeker was instructed by his teacher to visit Raja Janaka to continue his spiritual training. The teacher said to the youth, “I renounced the world – I know nothing of worldly life – so you must go to a teacher who knows about the world if you want to continue to progress. The next step in your training will be with him.”

The student was baffled. He thought, “If this Raja is so enlightened, why does he live in a palace surrounded by opulence and possessions? Surely he would have renounced all that if he is a serious spiritual seeker and no longer has any interest in possessions.”



But because his teacher had insisted, he decided to be open-minded and travel to the palace of Videha.

He arrived in the evening, and Raja Janaka invited him to the court. Everyone was having a good time, and there was a lot of overindulgence, so the seeker wanted to leave immediately, feeling quite disgusted with whatever he saw. Raja Janaka persuaded him to stay the night and leave the next morning, so that he could also speak with him one-on-one about why he had come.

The young seeker was well cared for. He ate well, bathed and was ushered into a beautiful room with a grand bed and stunning views across the lake and the forests. He was tired and decided to turn in early, but when he lay on the bed he looked up and saw a sharp sword hanging by a thin thread just above his head. Needless to say, he didn't sleep that night! He didn't enjoy the bed, the room, or the view, as the sword took all his attention.

The next morning, Raja Janaka asked, "Did you sleep well?"

The youth answered with some frustration, "Your Highness, how could I sleep with that sword hanging above me all night?"

The king smiled and asked, "You were in the most beautiful room with the most luxurious bed, and still you could not sleep?"

"No, your Highness, because of that sword I was unaware of my surroundings. I have never been so afraid."

So the king replied, "Stay here a while with me. I may live in this grand palace, but the sword of death is above me every second of every day, and the thread holding it is thinner than the thread holding the sword above your bed. Any moment I may die. Would you like to learn how to live like that in the world?"

The point Raja Janaka was trying to make is that when we are aware of the fragility and transient nature of this worldly life, we lose any sense of possessiveness, as death does not allow us to take anything with us in our onward journey. In fact, the very idea of possessiveness becomes ridiculous. Our attention is inward, not outward. No matter whether we are poor or wealthy, when we understand the natural cycles of birth, life, death, and our existence beyond the physical plane, we become free of possessiveness.

The circle of life

In his Yoga Sutras, the sage Patanjali explains it like this:

2.39: *Aparigraha-sthairye janma-kathanta sambodhah*

When established in non-possessiveness, the yogi understands and sees the truth of earthly life and rebirth.

Looking inward, we become aware of the Center of our existence. Having let go of all possessiveness, in the resulting purity we also become aware of the nature of our past lives, our comings and goings from this mortal dimension. This spurs us on toward a higher goal, beyond the physical dimension – toward the ultimate goal of life.

How do we achieve this?

We live in a world where marketing professionals and advertisers try to inflate our desires to look beautiful, wear the latest fashions, own a fabulous house and car, amass wealth, and have health, a successful career and a happy family life. FOMO

Looking inward, we become aware of the Center of our existence. Having let go of all possessiveness, in the resulting purity we also become aware of the nature of our past lives, our comings and goings from this mortal dimension. This spurs us on toward a higher goal, beyond the physical dimension – toward the ultimate goal of life.

(fear of missing out) is constantly pulling us outward in the belief that we need all this to be happy, otherwise we can easily see ourselves as failures. Social media intensifies this outward focus even further by posting photoshopped images and fake personas. In such a lifestyle there is little connection with the Center – everything is outward-focused instead of inward-focused. It is no wonder that people continue to grasp for more and more, hoping it will bring the happiness that will always be elusive through this outward quest for materiality, until eventually our attention turns to focus on the innermost.



There are two aspects to how we achieve *aparigraha*: the first is to remove the existing attachments we have, and the second is to maintain the purity of an inward focus so as to continue to be free of the pull of possessiveness.

By this, I don't mean that we have to give up all our material possessions and attachments. Here we are talking about *inner attitude*. It is within us that the solution lies, not in the possessions themselves, no matter how much or how little we have. It is all about non-attached attachment. Otherwise we may become obsessive with pride at having no attachment to possessions. It is possible to become attached to non-attachment!



By maintaining and enhancing the condition and attachment to the Center we experience in meditation every morning, throughout the day, we are vaccinated against the pull of desires. This is the ultimate spiritual protection we can keep alive through a regular daily practice.

Here are some of the Heartfulness practices that help us to transcend possessiveness and live in a state of constant belonging and *aparigraha*:

Meditation: takes us inward to our Center, and trains the mind to ignore external stimuli.

Cleaning: removes the underlying habitual attachments we have based on our likes and dislikes from the past and present. Done daily, the practice of cleaning continues to maintain our purity of consciousness.

Prayer: connects us with the Center of all existence, and allows the flow of Grace to continuously move from the Center into our hearts.

As we develop the attitude of belongingness, and let go of the attitude of possessiveness, the circumference of our giving will continue to expand, until eventually our hearts will become generators of generosity, giving to all who are in need.

Point A Meditation: cultivates the feeling of belong to the same family. We develop the sense that everyone and everything are our brothers and sisters. This way, we remain in a constant state of “belonging.”

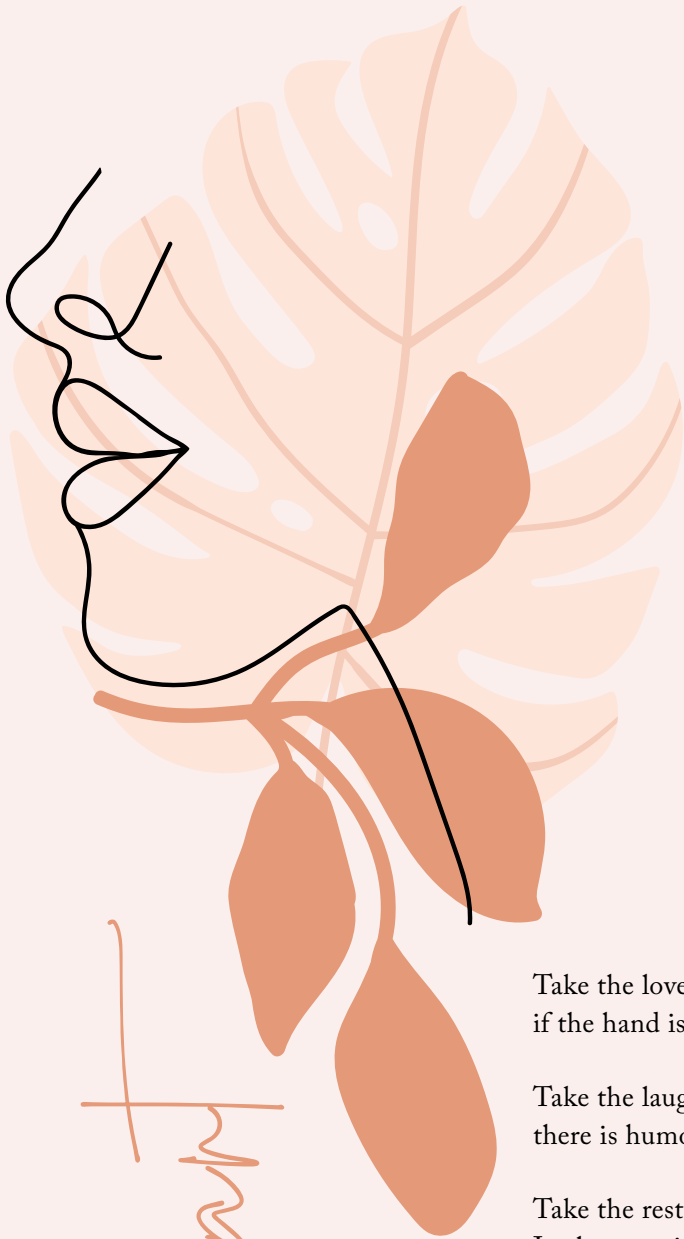
Meditative state: by maintaining and enhancing the condition and attachment to the Center we experience in meditation every morning, throughout the day, we are vaccinated against the pull of desires. This is the ultimate spiritual protection we can keep alive through a regular daily practice.

In summary

Once we are able to remain in a state of *aparigraha*, we will no longer be buffeted by the ups and downs of the outside world, fame or fortune. We will be contented no matter what. We will have no need to beg, nor any need to flaunt our wealth and success. Everything will remain focused on the Center, which is beyond the material existence. We will be happy with whatever the universe provides.

Does it mean that we should not strive to excel in this world? Not at all. Is it okay to earn to provide for our families and friends? Of course. As we develop the attitude of belongingness, and let go of the attitude of possessiveness, the circumference of our giving will continue to expand, until eventually our hearts will become generators of generosity, giving to all who are in need. It reminds me of the famous Quaker saying:

“I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.”



Take Heart

Take the love in the touch, it doesn't matter very much
if the hand is perfect or the skin is rough.

Take the laugh in the cough and the drenching of the rain,
there is humor in our troubles and it serves to keep us sane.

Take the rest in the night, leave your worries in your shoes.
In the morning shake them out and don't listen to the news.

Take time with a neighbor, she'll have news enough to share.
You can ruminate together and find contentment there.

Take the lesson from the error, without carrying the past.
Keep the best it had to give you, nothing more was meant to last.

Take heart: When everything you tried seemed not to be enough,
your part was matched and multiplied if love was in the touch.

LESLIE BLAIR

taste of life



Live the moment
for the moment.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Heartfulness Sport

- PART 2



Time, Timing, Timelessness

PAOLO LEZZELLE draws simple parallels between the Heartfulness system and sport, in this article focusing primarily on how we master time.

wish to speak about one of my favorite topics in the sporting field, which is a “sense of time” or, more appropriately, timing. I’ve always been fascinated by it since I was a child watching sports on TV. Of course, I could not understand it in detail way back then, but I sensed that any kind of athletic action was strongly determined by the capacity of the athlete to catch the right moment to do something. Be it running, jumping, or hitting a ball, it seemed to me that the basic dynamics was the same, namely, to be there in the right way at the right moment. I didn’t know it, but this is what timing is in its essence.

Later on, as a tennis trainer, I could give a sound meaning to these observations, and come to understand the importance of this aspect of sport, which in my opinion is hidden behind more apparent aspects. Needless to say, I’m deeply grateful to some extraordinary mentors whom I’ve been so lucky to meet.

Oddly enough, the topic of timing is very much related to the topic of strength. Assuming that there are different types of strength (I won’t go into detail), it may appear that specific physical acts require a lot of strength to be performed

successfully, which implies muscular mass. But it is not so. Most efforts, even the hardest, are much easier if performed with synchronicity among body segments. This means that the kinetic chains performing the act function without interruption, with smoothness and at the right time (kinetic chains are interlinked muscular groups).

This synchronicity is mainly responsible for strength or energy. Therefore, the right timing is the factor that reduces effort and enhances the endeavor of the whole performance.

Then magic can happen! The more we become familiar with this mechanism, the more we seem to enter a dimension where time is sort of suspended. Slowly we realize that it is no more a question of timing, and becomes instead a kind of timeless matter.

We could propose an equation:

More timing = more feeling of timelessness.

That is to say, less and less effort. Personally, I find it fantastic!

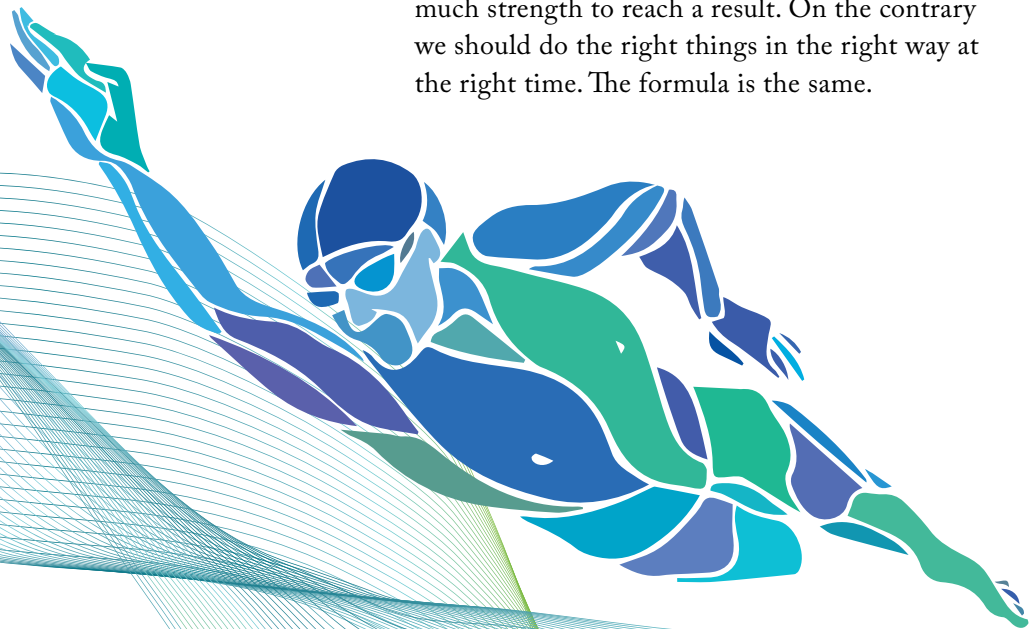
The right predisposition to timing is also acquired through the practice of meditation. It helps us find an easy flow of things (the famous “here and now” of atavic memory), the functional juxtaposition of the many elements of chaos, where we can perceive more clearly the best solution to follow with the least effort.

Any sportsperson knows that when they find themselves out of tune, out of synchrony, for any reason, they start making mistakes. At that point there is only one thing to do: slow down. Slowing down allows us to regain the necessary detachment to restart afresh. There is no other way. When you are fighting against time (as in biology, so in sport) you will never win!

This question of time, in all its permutations, is a theme innate to life itself. It appears obvious. Life can often appear to be incessant confusion, a continuous weaving of so many things, often out of our control. Viewed from this perspective, sport is an invaluable teacher.

There is a time to study, a time to ponder, a time to be idle, a time to have fun, etc. Timing is so precious, even in apparently small things; in conversation for instance, there is a time to speak and a time to listen. Good radio DJs are expert in this. Even in cooking, time is essential. Needless to say that in music timing is everything!

So also in life, as in sport, we should not apply too much strength to reach a result. On the contrary we should do the right things in the right way at the right time. The formula is the same.





The right predisposition to timing is also acquired through the practice of meditation. It helps us find an easy flow of things (the famous “here and now” of atavic memory), the functional juxtaposition of the many elements of chaos, where we can perceive more clearly the best solution to follow with the least effort. A good practice always promotes good timing. If we are touched by grace and this daily timing takes us by the hand to lead us gently into the dimension of timelessness, then it all gets a lighter and wonderful tinge.

After many years of practice in both sport and meditation, I can say that a sporting practitioner, who wants to reach a certain level of performance

without implementing a meditation discipline, will find insurmountable barriers sooner or later. His or her work will look like a computer painting – beautiful, excellent perhaps, but alas without a soul.

Time and space are interlinked. Spiritual masters tell us this all the time, Einstein explained it to us, and toddlers prove it to us while they innocently play lost in their joyful present. And novice Yoga practitioners can also get lost in meditation, finding themselves in an undefined elsewhere, still keeping a certain state of presence. We can't explain what it was, but it was beyond space and time. From time to timing, and going beyond into timelessness.

Beetroot Soup

SIMONNE HOLM is the founder of the Alkaline Institute. She helps people discover plant-based cooking through classes, retreats and her cookbooks. Here she shares a wonderful vegetable soup, rich in flavor and color.

The vegetables in this soup have many health benefits and they are low in calories and a great source of nutrients and fiber. You can also spice up the soup according to your taste by using more chili, fresh herbs and lemon juice for taste. Cook with joy and enjoy.

Prep time: 10 minutes / Cooking Time: 30 minutes / Serves: 2 persons

Ingredients

3 to 4 large fresh beets
 1 big onion
 2 cloves garlic
 1 tablespoon ginger
 1 to 2 celery stalks
 1 big sweet potato or 1 carrot
 1 to 2 parsnips
 ½ to 1 teaspoon chili, fresh or dried
 1 teaspoon Himalayan salt
 ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 liter water
 1 teaspoon vegetable bouillon
 2 tablespoons fresh herbs: thyme and basil (or 1 teaspoon dried herbs)
 1 to 2 tablespoons of lemon juice
 3 to 4 tablespoons cold pressed olive oil

Preparation

Wash or peel all the vegetables and roughly chop them into similar sized pieces.

Add 1 liter of water to a medium pot, add the chopped onions and cook for 5 minutes.

Turn down the heat, add the rest of the vegetables and cook for another 25 minutes. The vegetables should be fully cooked.

Add the fresh or dried herbs and turn off the heat.

Blend the vegetables and water with the olive oil and lemon juice. Make sure that your blender can handle the hot soup, or let it cool first for a few minutes.

Taste with salt, pepper and chili. If needed, warm the soup again after blending. It also tastes good cold.

Presentation

Garnish with toasted seeds, fresh parsley, coconut creme or serve as it is.

To toast seeds:

Put ½ cup of pumpkin or sesame seeds in a medium skillet over medium heat. Dry roast them until they are golden brown, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 4 minutes.

Let them cool completely.

The seeds have many potential health benefits and have been used in folk medicine for thousands of years.

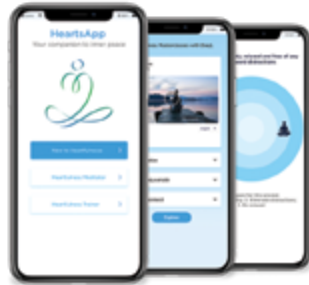
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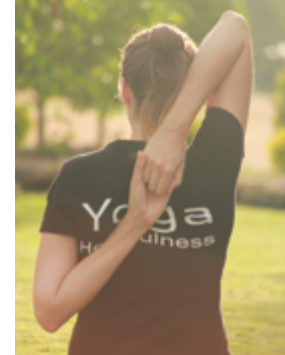
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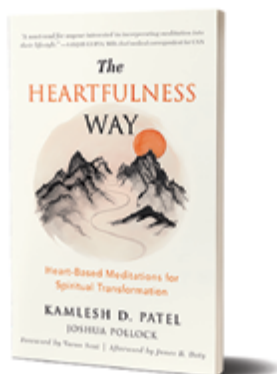
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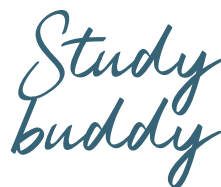
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