# he

Being a Good Friend DAAJI

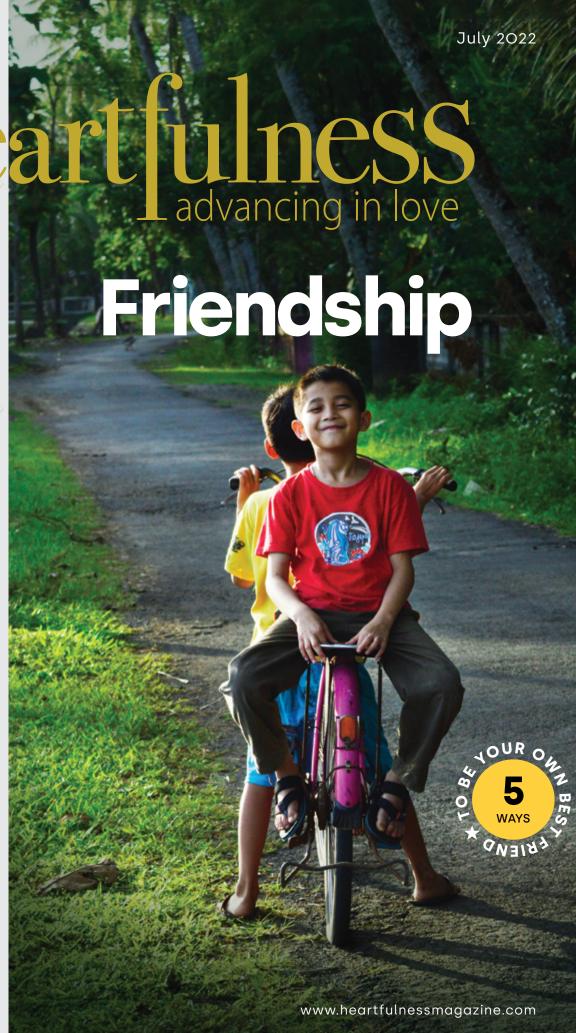
The Beautiful Life
THOM BOND

Planting Hope MICHAEL STAUSHOLM

Slowing Down ZACHARI LOGAN

+ More on Collaboration & Cooperation







# Heartful Adizes Leadership

# Celebrating 12 Voyages together!

What people are saying...



It was a great learning experience. If one says, "What they don't teach you at Harvard", the learning in this course justifies it one hundred percent!



**Prabodh Darvekar** 



The concept of the course itself in getting the voyagers to analyze and improve their thinking in the decision making basis the Adizes Techniques with a touch of Heartfulness, with no influence from skippers but with the guided push in the right direction was the WOW for me.





Students edifying each other is a truly powerful idea. Teachers almost need to be careful not to interfere. It opens up a universe of learning.



**Greg Dekker** 

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

Always... U-priced!

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

Our next voyage departs
AUTUMN 2022

STAY TUNED HERE!

mastering-change.org





**Kanha Shanti Vanam** (Center for Heartfulness Meditation) located in Telangana State, India, is a one-of-a-kind place that is a unique blend of serene spiritual retreat and a well-planned lifestyle supported by modern infrastructure.

**Serge Ferrari** is honored to be part of this unique project. Through our unique structural solutions, a massive meditation hall was established and it can host more than 60,000 meditation practitioners – giving a spacious and comfortable ambience and spiritually uplifting experience.

The light weight and flexibility of composite membranes offer tremendous freedom of shape for the creation of the **Emblematic Kanha Ashram Dome (55 mtr Dia)** shaped tree like shade structure using **Flexlight Extreme TX-30**. The structure covers the juncture of 4 buildings which stands testimony to its functional and spiritual utility to the visitors and residents.

Soulful Meditation Experience, Enriched by Serge Ferrari.

#### Serge Ferrari India Pvt. Ltd.

DLF South Court No. 306, Saket, New Delhi – 110 117 T: +91 (011) 4800 9400 E: infolNDIA@sergeferrari.com



# SUBSCRIBE TO Heartfulness Magazine



Available in print and digital versions

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

#### subscriptions@ heartfulnessmagazine.com

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

heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscribe

#### **CREATIVE TEAM**

Editorial Team — Elizabeth Denley, Mamata Venkat, Vanessa Patel, Kashish Kalwani, Christine Prisland, Animesh Anand

Design & Art — Uma Maheswari, Jasmee Mudgal, Arati Shedde, Lakshmi Gaddam, Zachari Logan, Mary Fleur, Hilary Design, Monika Jurczyk

Photography — Heartfulness Media Team, Priscilla Du Preez, Alex Green, Ron Lach, Zachary Nelson, Antonino Visalli, Anantha Padmanabhan

Writers — Ichak Adizes, Prakash Chalagulla, Divya Chowdhary, Daaji, Elizabeth Denley, Zachari Logan, Vaishali Narasimhan, Tracie Pape, Christine Prisland

Interviewees — Thom Bond, Zachari Logan, Veronique Nicolai, Michael Stausholm, Virginia Cutchin

Support Team — Balaji Iyer, Shreyas Khanjee, Liaa Kumar, Karthik Natarajan, Ashraf Nobi, Jayakumar Parthasarathy, Arjun Reddy, Jatish Seth, Shankar Vasudevan

#### ISSN 2455-7684

#### CONTRIBUTIONS

contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

#### **ADVERTISING**

advertising@heartfulnessmagazine.com

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

subscriptions@heartfulnessmagazine.com www.heartfulnessmagazine.com/subscriptions

EDITOR — Neeraj Kumar

PRINTED BY — Sunil Kumar

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

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

Copyright © 2022 Heartfulness Education Trust. All rights reserved.





# Friendship

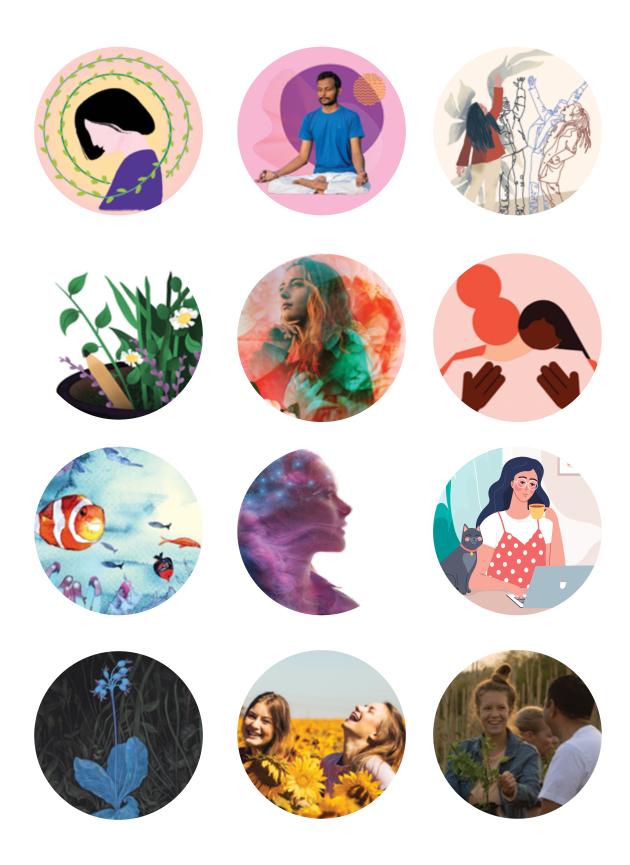
#### Dear readers,

Our friendships bring happiness, contentment, and growth. They offer mutual support, help us achieve our life goals, and teach us that giving is more important than receiving. With advancements in technology, the world is becoming one, and our relationships now span continents. Cooperation is the way forward.

We are thrilled to share the July edition with you. Daaji offers us profound wisdom on how to be a better friend, Ichak Adizes explores collaboration and cooperation at work, Thom Bond celebrates the beautiful life through communication and compassion, Michael Stausholm and Emilie Mogensen plant seeds of hope, Tracie Pape asks if we are showing up for ourselves, and Veronique Nicolai explains how yoga brings unity. Prakash Chalagulla talks to his teenage cohort about how to be relaxed and open, Christine Prisland asks us to cultivate the fundamental quality of consideration, Divya Chowdhary compares nice and kind, Vaishali Narasimhan looks to her home town as a friend, Elizabeth Denley discovers friendship and cooperation in the natural world, and Zachari Logan challenges us to slow down and take the time to appreciate beautiful art.

Happy reading! The editors

July 2022



# inside

#### self-care

## Are You Showing Up for Yourself?

Tracie Pape

12

#### Yoga 4 Unity

Interview with Dr. Veronique Nicolai

16

# Being Open and Relaxed - for Teenagers

Prakash Chalagulla

20

#### **Elsewhere**

Ramya Sriram

24

#### Listen to the Influencers: 5 Ways to Be Your Own Best Friend

Mamata Venkat

25

## inspiration

#### How to Be a Good Friend

Daaji

32

# The Difference Between Nice and Kind

Divya Chowdhary

56

# workplace

#### **Planting Hope**

Interview with
Michael Stausholm

40

# Collaboration and Cooperation

Dr. Ichak Adizes

44

### environment

#### **Cooperation in Nature**

Elizabeth Denley

62

#### Where Have You Been?

Vaishali Narasimhan

66

# creativity

#### Let Art Slow You Down: An Art Essay

Interview with Zachari Logan

70

# The Beautiful Life that's in You

relationships

Interview with Thom Bond

48

#### The Value of Consideration

Christine Prisland

53

# what's up

80



#### **DAAJI**

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide. He is an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the fields of spirituality, science, and the evolution of consciousness. He has taken our understanding of human potential to a new level.



#### **THOM BOND**

Thom is a founder and Director of Education for The New York Center for Nonviolent Communication. He is the author of *The Compassion Book*, founder of The Compassion Project, and the author of *Shifting Toward Compassion* and *64 Days for Peace*.



#### MICHAEL STAUSHOLM

Michael has been working internationally with sustainability in the business world for more than 20 years. He founded Sprout World in 2013, and was included in Worth Media's Worthy 100 list in 2021 as one of 100 entrepreneurs who use their business for good.



#### **VÉRONIQUE NICOLAI**

Véronique is a French pediatrician, meditation trainer, and Yoga instructor. She was a coordinator of the International Heartfulness Training Programs and a co-founder of the Heartfulness program for cancer patients. She is currently the Director of the Heartfulness Yoga Academy.



#### **ZACHARI LOGAN**

Zachari is a Canadian artist working mainly in drawing, ceramics and installation practices. His work has been exhibited widely, in group and solo exhibitions around the world. Logan has also attended residencies and worked in collaboration with many other artists.



#### **ICHAK ADIZES**

Dr. Adizes is a leading management expert. He has received 21 honorary doctorates and is the author of 27 books that have been translated into 36 languages. He is recognized as one of the top thirty thought leaders of America.

# contributors



#### TRACIE PAPE

Tracie is a LCSW, who has been working in the social service field since 1991. Her work has included Peace Corps in West Africa and trauma recovery with survivors in Chicago. Tracie offers culturally sensitive treatment focusing on individual strengths, self-love and connection.



#### **CHRISTINE PRISLAND**

Christine began her spiritual journey at the age of 24 with an overland trip to India, where she met her teacher in 1972. She has been a Heartfulness practitioner and trainer ever since. She has been an editor for 35 years, and also a university administrator at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.



#### DIVYA CHOWDHARY

Divya has a background in finance and is an avid traveler as well as a professional Odissi dancer. She has lived and traveled across many countries and enjoys writing about her experiences.



#### PRAKASH CHALAGULLA

Prakash is a high school student, passionate about nature and functions of the brain. He writes a blog, chalagullaprakash. blogspot.com/, and has developed an app for mental wellness, SOLACE. He wants to study neuroscience to understand how memory works



#### **EMILIE MOGENSEN**

Emilie is Danish born with design and spirituality in her DNA. Besides being a designer, she holds an Inner MBA, a Masters in conscious business and entrepreneurship, from NYU. She is on a mission to enhance unity, compassion and heart centered entrepreneurship in modern life business endeavors.



**ELIZABETH DENLEY** 

Elizabeth is a writer, editor, Heartfulness trainer, and facilitator of interactive programs in consciousness and personal development, bringing together the fields of science and spirituality. She is the editor-inchief of Heartfulness Magazine.

# Self-Care

Knowing how to be solitary is central to the art of loving.

When we can be alone, we can be with others without using them as a means of escape.

#### RICHARD FREEMAN





# Are You Showing Up for Yourself?

TRACIE PAPE is a clinical social worker, therapist, and longtime Heartfulness Meditation trainer, who works in the crisis area of mental health. Tracie questions how she is showing up for herself, and encourages all of us to ask ourselves the same questions.

oneliness does not come from
having no people around
you, but from being unable to
communicate the things that seem
important to you." – Carl Jung

As all of us emerge from the global pandemic, we are experiencing challenges unlike anything we have ever encountered before. I work in the mental health field in the area of crisis, and have witnessed first-hand the impact the pandemic has had on mental health. Many who struggled with depression or anxiety prior to the pandemic found the symptoms exacerbated by the stress of isolation and fear. One thing I noticed, even with myself, was an increased sense of loneliness. This observation has

been a catalyst for me to consider what helps me connect to others and what gets in the way.

Systemic racism and intergenerational trauma have been at the forefront of mental health issues for social workers during this time. The impact of oppression, inequity of resources and support, parents with untreated mental health concerns, and lack of education or stigma about mental health can keep many of us in the dark.

Anxiety can keep our nervous system on high alert and sensitive to perceived rejection or judgment. Depression can keep us hidden away to protect ourselves from rejection or judgment. During the past two years, most of us have felt these emotions to varying degrees. When these states are chronical, we are disconnected from ourselves and others.

Personally, the importance of connecting to myself has been reinforced as I prepare to send my youngest son off to college. I have spent many years focusing on being a mother, while also helping others professionally. One of the most enjoyable parts about being a parent has been watching my children grow into their own persons, and identify their values and unique gifts. Through conversations with my boys, I have realized that a lot of what I try to



When I am kind to myself in the same way I am often kind to others, I feel the connection with them more deeply. This has been the key for me to feel included and loved.

instill and teach others are things I am still struggling to incorporate into my life.

While giving feedback to others at work, I often think to myself, "Am I doing this in my own life?" The idea that we teach what we need to learn has been popping up a lot for me lately.

As I encourage others to practice self-compassion and take care of themselves, how often am I putting that into practice?

Self-compassion is essential if I am to step aside from negative or fearful thoughts about myself and the world, and attend to myself with love and kindness. The Chicago South Side Irish mindset I have inherited can often tell me,



"keep this to yourself," and "if you worked harder, you wouldn't feel this way." The awareness that some of my core beliefs are a result of upbringing rather than inadequacies has been liberating. Resmaa Menakem's book My Grandmother's Hand resonated with me on a very profound level by showing me how much of what I feel in my body is inherited or contextual, and it is up to me to respond differently.

The assumption that we are all doing the best we can has helped

free me from self-judgment. When I am kind to myself in the same way I am often kind to others, I feel the connection with them more deeply. This has been the key for me to feel included and loved. By loving myself, I am able to see, feel, and respond to the kindness and love of others. Sometimes, loneliness can set in when we are not looking out for it, or allowing ourselves to feel the bids for connection and offerings of support from others.

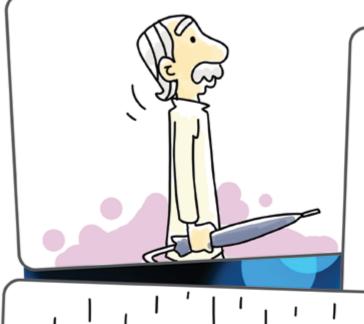
Illustrations by LAKSHMI GADDAM



WHY DO SOME PEOPLE

# FEEL THE RAIN

WHILE OTHERS ONLY GET WET?



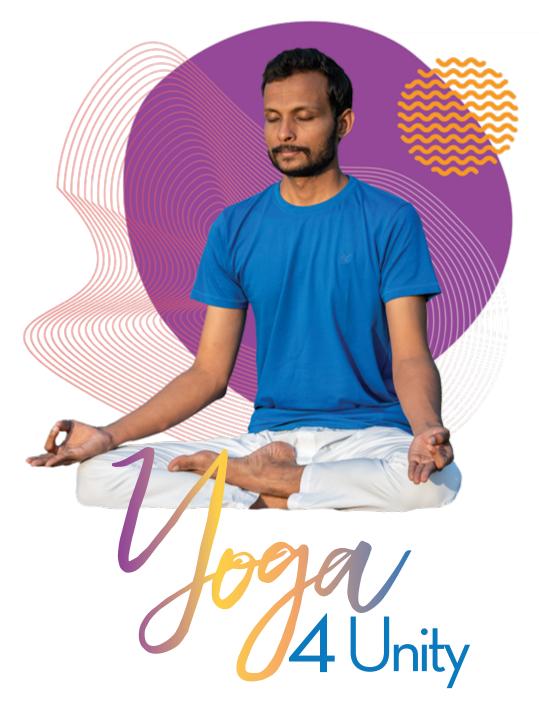






CHANGE YOUR MINDSET WITH RESTART!





VERONIQUE NICOLAI is the Director of the Heartfulness Yoga Academy and the coordinator of the Yoga4Unity platform. As a pediatrician, she is also passionate about mental and physical well-being for all ages, especially children. Here, Veronique speaks about Yoga4Unity – 100 days of Yoga.

What's on offer and how can you join up?

n traditional Yoga, you have the *Kriyas*. There are proper cleaning practices, starting with *Jal Neti*, washing the nose, and the *Kunjal Kriya*, which are practices for the digestive system. Then you have the Asanas, which clean knots of energy in your shoulders, your hips, etc.

Movement also allows energy or prana to flow without any hindrance. This is what we mean by cleaning. We let energy flow from the gross, the physical, to the more subtle with *Pranayama*, which cleans the *nadis*. The *nadis* are channels of vital energy flow. Prana flows through the *nadis*, and when we do *Nadi-Shudhi* (alternate nostril breathing) the *nadis* are cleansed.

Beyond this, there are deeper, subtler layers that can be accessed with the inner practices of Heartfulness. We have an everyday cleaning practice that purifies the field of consciousness and the emotional load of the day.

So, Heartfulness Yoga covers all the layers of your being – from the physical to the mind, and then to the core, the heart. It's the only practice that allows a beginner to start working on all the layers from day one, rather than after many years of practice.

That's a revolution! Many other schools already teach Asanas and Pranayama. But *Pranahuti* (Transmission) and the Cleaning practice add depth to the practice of meditation, which in my experience is the need of the hour.

Meditation enables the values that are intrinsic to a human being. We need people to genuinely feel that they don't want to fight each other, and that comes from the heart. If we can clean the heart, which Heartfulness Cleaning does, if we can nourish the good qualities of the heart, which Transmission does, we grow naturally into confident, balanced human beings, and that will change the world.



Meditation enables
the values that are
intrinsic to a human
being. We need
people to genuinely
feel that they don't
want to fight each
other, and that
comes from the
heart.

Unity is the meaning of the word Yoga. First, unite within yourself. Then, you grow by your neighbors also growing. There's a need to take care of the entire population.

We're also running a project of unity. Unity is the meaning of the word Yoga. First, unite within yourself. Then, you grow by your neighbors also growing. There's a need to take care of the entire population. We grow together, and that is the idea behind this program, Yoga4Unity - 100 days of Yoga. The beauty is to recognize that we grow together. People have started practicing Yoga for that reason. They want to grow, they want to change. When they feel the change, the magic of Yoga, they want to become Yoga teachers.

You can start wherever you want in Yoga. Start with Asanas if you want, or start with meditation. First know that there's a science behind it, which is ancient and universal. It has nothing to do with religion. It starts with the Yamas and Niyamas, and moves toward Samadhi. We all agree on the same ancient texts, which are the base of the science of Yoga. It is being adapted and re-introduced in the present times, and this is not something we can do working in our own corners in isolation. We need to unite.

Fortunately, when we invited some of the great mother Yoga schools of India to join us, such as Parmarth Niketan, Iyengar, Sivananda, Kaivalyadhama, Krishnamacharya, and the teachers abroad, they all said, "Yes, we will give our time." In this second year, we've consciously built the program together and we have a 100-day curriculum for four different audiences. There are programs for the elderly, for children, for enthusiasts, and for Yoga teachers.

The directors of all the schools have 30 to 40 years teaching experience. They offer what they can in these sessions. It's an opportunity, it's free, and it's online. You can register whenever you want to. The content is still available online, and you can follow it at your own pace.

The Heartfulness Yoga Academy is based in Kanha Shanti Vanam, Hyderabad, at the international headquarters of Heartfulness. It's a super place. The Academy offers regular Yoga classes and meditation training free of charge, both onsite and online. We have introductory Yoga programs, and short trainings for people who want to add to their meditation, for example, Yoga on the chair and simple breathing practices.



International headquarters of Heartfulness, Kanha Shanti Vanam, Hyderabad.

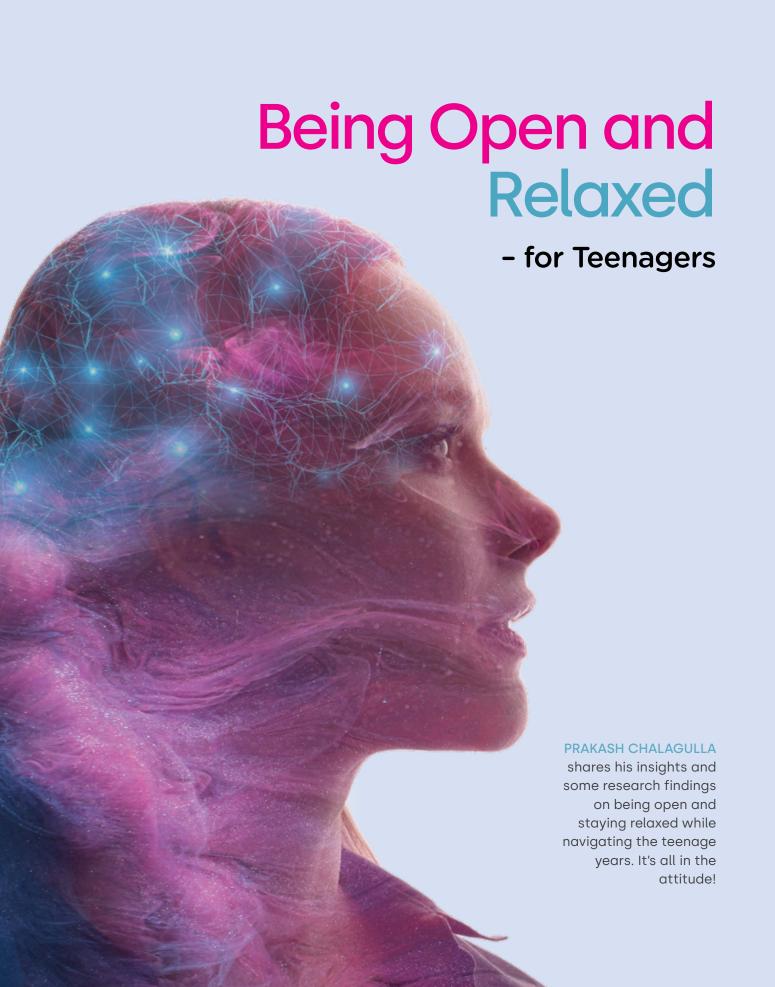
The Academy also offers teacher-training programs, and other educational, paid programs, with the curricula and criteria needed for certification in India and abroad. You can become a certified international Yoga trainer or a yoga professional by taking one of these programs.

The best time to practice is early in the morning, but simply start whenever you can. Just do it and things will fall into place. It will change your life. Let the magic of Yoga happen.

Nowadays, there's a lot of lightness in the way I look at life and the way I handle difficulties. My yogic practice gives me a line of support, a lifeline to manage any situation I feel uncomfortable with. One of the enormous changes I feel is that I have learned to manage anger. I used to have a very angry side to

myself, but I don't have the energy to be angry anymore. It's a waste of time. There are other ways to deal with disappointment. I'm sure other things have changed too. I feel that I have cultivated lightness and softness, but you would have to ask my husband and my children, and the team here at the Heartfulness Yoga Academy.

Please join us! Thank you.



eing open is a fundamental personality trait that indicates receptiveness to new information, ideas, and experiences. So that we can retain new knowledge in our memory, related brain changes need to occur. New connections between neurons and synapses are formed in places such as the amygdala, the hippocampus, the cerebellum, and the prefrontal cortex, which are all involved in memory processing. It was once believed that, as we age, the neural networks became more rigid due to insufficient exposure caused by lack of learning. But in the past two decades, research has revealed that the brain never

stops changing and adjusting. This capacity of the brain to change with learning is called plasticity.

Neuroplasticity is the capacity of neurons and neural networks in the brain to change their connections. Neuroscientist Eleanor Maguire of University College London conducted a study on London's taxi drivers. They navigate the smog-filled streets with ease, instantaneously calculating the swiftest route between any two points. In her earliest studies, she discovered that London taxi drivers had more gray matter in their posterior hippocampus (responsible for

memory) than people who were similar in age, education, and intelligence, but who did not drive taxis. Although some neural functions appear to be hard-wired, certain neural networks exhibit adaptability and carry out specific functions while also retaining the capacity to deviate from their usual functions and reorganize themselves. Hence, neuroplasticity is generally considered a complex, multifaceted, and fundamental property of the brain.

I feel we have exceptional brain flexibility as teenagers. Personality traits and interactions with family, friends, and the community

Neuroplasticity is considered a complex, multifaceted, and fundamental property of the brain. We have exceptional brain flexibility as teenagers.

Positive thinking fosters a positive attitude that improves selfesteem and promotes resilience even in difficult times.

play a vital role in our holistic development. The studies of adolescent health and well-being also show the importance and impact of such interactions in shaping our resilience, self-esteem, self-efficacy, sense of coherence, and level of perception.

Adolescent psychological well-being includes self-acceptance, positive intrapersonal relationships, autonomy, and life satisfaction. It's important to observe and adjust our attitude as we journey toward adulthood. A major milestone of becoming a teenager is finishing one phase of life, childhood, and entering another. Being independent is paramount. This, in turn, causes a lot of stress and anxiety, and they build up, leading to attitude issues.

Relaxing activities like gardening, meditation, reading, drawing, etc., help to de-stress. If we embark on this phase with the right attitude, our life journey will be smoother.

Motivational speaker and author, Zig Ziglar, once said, "Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude." Our mental attitude makes the world what it is for us. Our thoughts make things beautiful or ugly. According to the Oxford dictionary, "Attitude can be described as a settled way of thinking or feeling about something or someone."

Most successful people, including professional athletes, actors, business people, artists, politicians, and spiritual leaders, attribute



their success to one thing – the "power of positive thinking." Positive thinking fosters a positive attitude that improves self-esteem and promotes resilience even in difficult times.

Research has shown how a regular practice of meditation can relieve stress and anxiety and enhance the state of awareness and concentration level, thus elevating positivity and level-mindedness. One of the most interesting studies in the last few years, carried out at Yale University, found that mindfulness meditation decreases activity in the default mode network, the brain network responsible for mind-wandering and self-referential thoughts - the "monkey mind." A channelized mind works as an effective and efficient tool for our overall wellbeing.

We have all been witness to the changes the pandemic has brought throughout the globe. I feel qualities like compassion and empathy are essential for my generation as future leaders to develop an attitude of openness.

#### **REFERENCES**

Openness. Psychology Today, Sussex Publishers: www. psychologytoday.com/intl/basics/ openness.

Rugnetta, M. Neuroplasticity. Encyclopedia Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/science/neuroplasticity.

Hoiland, E. *Brain Plasticity:* What Is It? Learning and Memory. https://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/plast.html.

Walton, A.G., 2015. 7 Ways Meditation Can Actually Change The Brain. Forbes Magazine: https://www.forbes.com/sites/ alicegwalton/2015/02/09/7-waysmeditation-can-actually-changethe-brain/?sh=39c975f14658.

Chou, W., 2018. The Difference Between Open-Minded and Closed-Minded People. https:// willyoulaugh.com/open-minded.

Spring, S., 2015. 6 Keys to an Open Mind. The Good Men Project. https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/six-keys-to-an-open-mind-fiff/.

Cherry, K., 2021. *How to Become More Open–Minded. Verywell Mind.* https://www.verywellmind.com/be-more-open-minded-4690673.

Gordon, S., 2022. 16-Year-Old Child Development Milestones. Verywell Family. https://www.verywellfamily.com/16-year-old-developmental-milestones-4171922.

Malinowska-Cieslik, M., J. Mazur, H. Nalecz and A. Malkowska-Szkutnik, 2019. Social and Behavioral Predictors of Adolescents' Positive Attitude Towards Life and Self. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. MDPI, 11. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6888235/.

Jabr, F., 2011. Cache Cab: Taxi Drivers' Brains Grow to Navigate London's Streets. Scientific American. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/london-taxi-memory/.

# ELSEWHERE

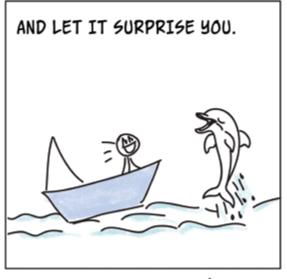












@ Yamya sriram

www.thetap.in

# Zisten to the Influencers WAYS TO BE YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND



MAMATA VENKAT manages external communications and public relations for Anthem's Global Chief Information Office. Through personal reflection, she talks about how negative emotions – especially anger – have driven her to consistently invest time in her whole health and well-being.

everal situations helped me realize I was doing a terrible job of putting myself first. In my twenties, I couldn't see how unhealthy some of my relationships were until I quit them; at one moment I couldn't manage my anxiety, and nearly lost a job because of it; my body felt exhausted when I didn't nourish it with food and sleep; I felt burned out because of work stress and

anxiety; and I was generally trying to exist. But the realization of how little time I was investing in myself did not come from any of these specific moments. Instead, it came from a feeling that still surprises me: anger.

The isolation of the pandemic forced me to do some selfreflection that helped me own and rectify my shortcomings, but in parallel came the realization that my baseline emotion was often deep anger. I was angry at everything: at friends and family who had said hurtful things to me months or years ago; at times when I had been too scared to stand up for myself, letting people walk and speak all over me; at loved ones whose constructive criticism I took too harshly; at the pandemic for pushing me out



By "being your own best friend," you're less inclined to live your life based on other people's standards. Instead you are motivated to live the life you have always wanted.

of New York City; at everyone else for everything, because it was easier than trying to change myself.

I would spiral through thoughts, all with the end goal of wishing that people who had walked all over me would come back, fix how I was feeling, and give that positive energy back to me. I wanted them to invest in me the way I had been willing to invest in them.

I would hear how negatively I'd speak to myself, constantly shaming and reprimanding myself for being human. I could never speak to my best friend in the critical, deprecating way I would speak to myself, so, why was it okay?

There was a period when I attended regular therapy sessions (I highly recommend them). I spent several sessions venting my frustrations about others, and my therapist would patiently listen and validate my feelings. But when I was ready to really listen, she said to me:

"Remember that game kids play, hot potato? Someone would play music, and kids would pretend to throw an invisible hot potato from person to person, and whenever the music stopped, the person holding the potato was out? Blame

is like a hot potato. It's fine to toss it from person to person, but the music has stopped, and right now you're the one who is feeling the burn. And if you're still feeling the burn, that means it is your responsibility to figure out how to stop it."

Wellness experts and Instagram influencers are constantly posting photos and videos captioned with 2200 characters of self-love and self-care words intended to motivate us to set aside our insecurities, seize the day and "be your own best friend." By "being your own best friend," you're less inclined to live your life based on other people's standards. Instead you are motivated to live the life you have always wanted.

As someone who regularly posts lengthy motivational captions on my own Instagram page, I'd be a hypocrite if I balked at any of these ubiquitous self-love posts. However, I still feel uncertain when I read or write such posts, like there is a part of me that is looking for the validation that I am allowed to put myself first. Can I really invest energy in myself? Am I allowed to do that?

This is a discussion I have been having with colleagues and friends – especially my female friends. Many of us still feel that

internal tug-of-war of enabling others' needs and perspectives versus empowering and honoring what feels natural to us. Why do we have such a hard time putting ourselves first? And why does it take a real struggle for us to realize that we have been depleting ourselves?

For me, a lot of it comes from a people-pleasing mentality that is both cultural and innate. I often operate with a fear that if I don't do what is asked of me, or what the people I care about expect of me, then I'm failing. That is where I have derived a lot of my value. That is also where I have derived a lot of my anger.

For years I have minimized my inner voice so much that when I finally was able to see a 30,000-foot view of my reality, the only thing that felt in my control was putting blame on everyone and everything else. That anger consumed me so much that it took me a long time to recognize that the better, healthier solution was to be present for myself.

So, how am I learning how to be my own best friend? It's a work in progress. These are five things that have been helping me feel a little closer to my most authentic, natural self:

1

#### INTROSPECTIVE ACTIVITIES,

like meditation and journaling, that help me strengthen my inner voice and get to know myself better.





7

GETTING THE ENDORPHINS GOING

by doing activities that make me feel happy, like walking, dancing, and singing.

3

# SURROUNDING MYSELF WITH REAL FRIENDS,

the ones who show me grace in my hard moments, but are willing to be honest with me, too.



28

to do one new thing every day so that I can constantly push myself to grow.





FOLLOWING MY INTUITION and allowing my heart to guide my decisions.

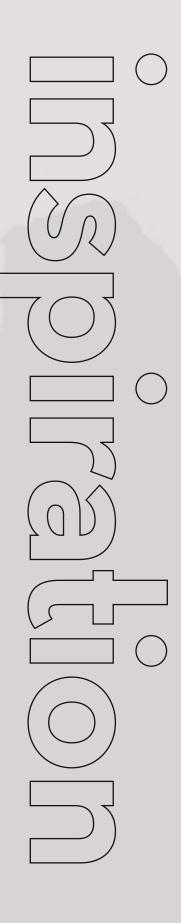
Get to know yourself. Figure out what makes you feel whole. Allow room for growth. Allow room for change. My therapist gave me the hot potato metaphor when I was twenty-four. I'm almost thirty now. I still carry that wisdom with me in the moments I'm inclined to play the blame game rather than take responsibility for my own growth.

Your relationship with yourself is the most constant and important relationship you'll ever have. It may take time to realize that, but when you do, start the work. Get to know yourself. Figure out what makes you feel whole. Allow room for growth. Allow room for change. You are allowed to put time and energy into yourself. You don't need permission. In fact, you just should.



When you stop expecting people to be perfect, you can like them for who they are.

**DONALD MILLER** 



# How to Be a Good Friend

**DAAJI** speaks of friendship and the important role it plays in our lives. He also shares a practice for removing enmity and making friends of our enemies. Finally, he shares 4 tips for becoming a better friend.





#### Who Is a True Friend?

The word "friend" comes from an Indo-European root meaning "to love." Friendship is about a shared experience of life, sometimes lasting decades, and in that friendship we bear witness to each other's struggles, happiness, and journeys. Friendship has a special place in our relationships because it is not romantic, and so it is uncomplicated by the addition of any sensual intimacy or family ties. There is a purity that is not found even in familial love. In fact, Kahlil Gibran wrote in The Prophet, "Let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit."

#### Making Friends of Enemies

The opposite of friendship is enmity, and here I will share with you a simple method for transforming enmity into friendship. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends." Friendship is not intended to be exclusive, to create discrete circles of friends, based on likes and dislikes among people. Instead, friendship can create ever-expanding circles of connection and support that grow into a vast network across all existence. To grow in friendship is to cut off the heads of enmity and separation, one

by one, just as Hercules cut of the heads of the Hydra in the second of his twelve Labors. That is also a symbol for the heads of ego that we must behead in our journey toward the universal consciousness.

So here is a method for transforming enmity into friendship. If there is a relationship that you need to mend, do the following:

#### Lalaji's Method

Think of a person with whom you feel any disturbance, conflict, or fear, as your friend and well-wisher. Develop this practice diligently.

Sit alone, and meditate with the thought that, "This person is my friend and well-wisher." Imagine their form in front of you and think that all evil or negative thoughts about you have gone out from them, and thoughts

related to your welfare have been infused in them.

Whenever you have the opportunity to go near them, fix your eyes on their face. When you breathe, add the thought, while exhaling, that particles of your love and affection have entered into their heart. While inhaling, have the thought that you have pulled from their heart all the negative thoughts they have about you, and have thrown them aside.

Establish a cycle with the inhaling and exhaling of the breath. This is very beneficial, and within a few days the entire thing will take a turn like water, and you will be surprised what a miracle has taken place. By practicing this, your hate turns to love. Initially, it will be difficult and this task will look as heavy as a mountain, but for a person of courage everything is easy. There are no difficulties that cannot become easy.

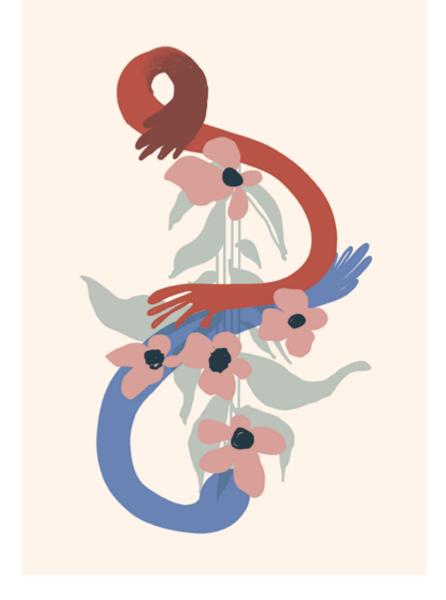
Friendship can create ever-expanding circles of connection and support that grow into a vast network across all existence.



## How Does Friendship Ennoble Us?

True friendship is to understand and be understood; to accept and to be accepted. Friendship offers a mirror for our growth, letting us see ourselves through the eyes of another. During misfortune, friends are a refuge and a comfort. At other times, they uplift us, and keep us out of trouble. And it is in the little acts of friendship that the heart is renewed: in the silence of good company; in the longing of absence; in a touching card or letter; in the sharing of experience; and in the joy of meeting after a long time. Friendship is rekindled over and over again through forgiveness, understanding, and mercy. Without patience, acceptance, and mercy, all friendships would cease.

With old friends, we are able to let our guard down and be authentic, even stupid, without worrying about the consequences. We are naturally humble in these circumstances. In fact, one of the qualities of good friendship is humility, because a humble person is looking for the best in everyone and thus invites a friendly response from the world. If we extend that to being friendly to all beings, it means we walk through the world in humility, encouraging the best in others,



and accepting those faults that make them lesser. It is not that friendship doesn't reveal the shadow side of ourselves and others, but we uplift and support each other rather than drag each other down.

Friendship is often underestimated, even in spiritual circles, where attachment to anyone other than God or the Guru is often undervalued. In some traditions, "The Friend" is one of the names for God.

Because we are all expressions of the divine, and our souls are all woven into the universal being.



Friendship means we make time for people, we value our connection with them, and we share and learn from each other.

While that is a beautiful understanding, it is sometimes mistakenly used to infer that the only friendship that matters is God's or the Guru's.

I don't agree with that view, because we are all expressions of the divine, and our souls are all woven into the universal being. As part of the whole, we are here to support, help, and love each other. True friendship enriches, ennobles, and endures, sometimes throughout a lifetime, sometimes after death. It is a state of belonging together, even when there is physical separation. Ultimately, as we become more god-like in our nature, we become a friend to all, just as God is a Friend to all.

Friendship means we make time for people, we value our connection with them, and we share and learn from each other. In fact, a person with no time for friends, because of overwork, ambition, and personal gain, leads a life of imbalance.

The trick as we evolve is to have ever-expanding circles of friends, with the attitude, "May everything be my friend."

The bias of likes and dislikes becomes less and less important as those circles widen.

Does it mean that we must hold onto all our old friendships, come what may, even when they are not beneficial? We may no longer want to spend time with a particular person whose influence is negative, but what would be the purpose of discarding that person from our hearts and excluding them, when one day the connection may bring that person also toward a nobler path?

As friends, we are there to witness each other's journeys, to accompany each other, sometimes for the briefest moment, and other times for life after life. It is like getting onto a bus or a train and traveling together for some time, then getting off at different stops. We share part of the journey.

It is not a journey we can make alone, so I would ask you to take a moment to remember and honor all those friends past and present who have accompanied you, as I will also honor the friends past and present who have traveled with me.

# 4 Tips to Becoming a Better Friend

1

Be present. Turn up when you can. 2

Let
others know
you care. Reach
out, learn to tune in,
and resonate with them
by listening well.

3

Value
friendship and
connection, value
mutual trust, respect,
and support, and value
the differences that
enrich and expand
friendship.

4

Turn
enmity into
friendship whenever
you can. Enlarge your
circles of friendship
to encompass
the whole of existence.

Illustrations by JASMEE MUDGAL

# WORKPLACE

There is no such thing as a self-made man. You will reach your goals only with the help of others.

**GEORGE SHINN** 





# Planting Hope

MICHAEL STAUSHOLM has been working with sustainability in the business world for more than 20 years. He is the founder and CEO of Sprout World, headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, with an office in Boston, USA. Sprout World was named the second most sustainable company in Europe in 2020 by Fast Company, and Michael was included in the Worthy 100 list of entrepreneurs who use their businesses to do good in 2021 by Worth Media. EMILIE MOGENSEN writes about the interview she did with him recently on his company and his values.



s a European entrepreneur, with a Masters in Conscious Business and Entrepreneurship from NYU, I recently gave myself a challenge as a freelance writer for the Heartfulness Magazine. So far, I have spoken to North American conscious entrepreneurs. Next was to approach some European companies that excel in their values and integrity around sustainability and eco-ethics.

Sprout is a company that fits this category of pioneers and

early adaptors to a world where businessowners take more responsibility for the planet and people than we have seen before in history. Michael Stausholm founded Sprout in 2013.

I am really curious to hear if Michael has a contemplative practice, so it makes me smile when the very first thing we talk about is how Sprout is aligned with Mindfulness and a conscious approach to the inner environment of people. Michael explains that the simple thing of writing with

a pencil is a value that speaks to him. It symbolizes the values he has managed to cultivate in the organization. The company created the first pencil that can be planted, growing herbs, vegetables and flowers from the little seeds inside.

There is something so simple and innocent about this idea, which makes it a captivating story; maybe because the world lacks the simplicity and authenticity of planting a simple seed and seeing it sprout. I feel a resonance with something honorable when I talk



to Michael, and that makes me curious how he can stay centered in himself.

He shares with me that he started a meditation practice during the lockdown, but it didn't become his thing as much as taking long walks in silence, while clearing his head. I ask him if walking brings him into the present moment, and he seems to really agree with this way of stating it.

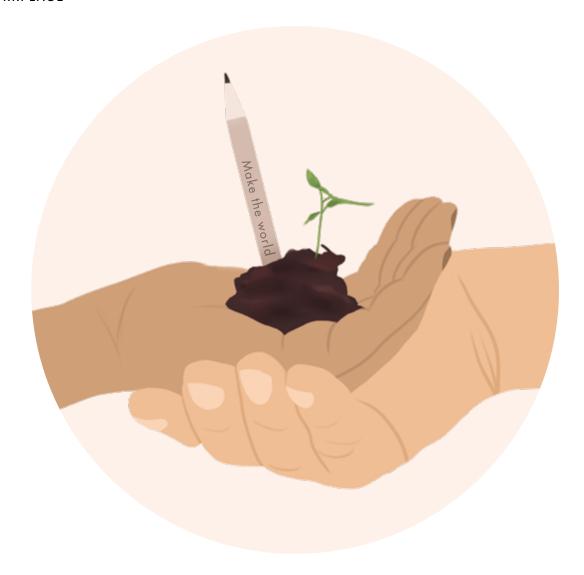
There is something private around him, and I become curious because of this privacy. During our talk, I write notes about integrity, self-respect, and an inability to be flattered. On the Internet, many platforms write about Sprout and its impressive achievements. I can only imagine a person in Michael's shoes is all the time meeting people who want something from him.

I feel that his ability to stay so focused on a simple business model requires a lot of integrity, and it is what I notice about his private appearance. I know how easy it can be in the business world

Sprout is a company that fits this category of pioneers and early adaptors to a world where businessowners take more responsibility for the planet and people.



# WORKPLACE



to fall out of the inner center, and it speaks to me that Michael keeps a distance while being able to express very profound values, going deeper into the human heart than a business adventure.

When I ask him what makes him get out of bed every morning, his answer surprises me. He says it's about being "proper," and

doing things properly. We speak Danish, and the word he uses is a very typical Danish word, so we become a bit word-nerdy when I ask him what the right word would be in English. I suggest "kind," but we both agree that it is something else. The very fact that Michael takes the time to ponder over the word shows me how he really wants to live. He wants to

do things properly, treat the planet and people in a genuine way, and this reflects in his organization.

Very few employees leave once they check in with Sprout, and most of the leaders have been with him from the start. I want to know how he cultivated this kind of loyalty in his Sprout community, and he is super clear in his answer:

it's all due to one simple truth, a really strong team of very skilled leaders. The organization is built on mutual trust, and nobody minds each other's business. If someone needs to leave at 3 p.m., there are no questions asked. He emphasizes that the team consists of equal numbers of women and men.

A part of me wants to ask why he is not totally into meditation, but I feel the need to withhold and be proper myself, as the conversation is not about my agenda of wanting to see the entire world meditating together. It is about Michael and Sprout, and how his business adventure is impacting the world, with its proper and compassionate eco-values.

I ask Michael if he feels sustainable inside, and I love his answer. He says it's not always easy to be conscious, because we need to change things in our lives, and it can seem a big task to change the world into a sustainable place. His suggestion is to start with small things, like moving closer to work, being able to leave the car at home and take his bicycle

to work every day. He suggests that we look for ways to frame the difficulties in life into positive challenges. We laugh at the idea of an angry environmentalist being aggressive in their communication; it somehow seems counterproductive to the whole.

"It's really about being able to do those little things like we do in Sprout," he says. "We might not be saving the world by selling pencils, but surely we are contributing by planting seeds and giving people the opportunity to experience the sprouting process of a plant. It's like we are planting little hopes in people's lives."

Illustrations by LAKSHMI GADDAM

# Collaboration and Cooperation

DR. ICHAK ADIZES is an expert in change management for organizations. Here he shares some thoughts on the twin qualities of collaboration and cooperation, and how they are needed at different stages



re collaboration and cooperation the same thing? Are they synonymous words? I believe they are different, and the differences can be seen by looking at the Adizes map of managing change.

What is "collaboration"? Collaboration is what a complementary team does. The team members work together, learning from each other, crosspollinating. For collaboration to occur, mutual respect is necessary. And what is "respect"? To rephrase Emanuel Kant, "respect" means to recognize the sovereignty of the other person to think differently. Once respect exists, the condition for learning from each other is established. At that point, if the parties have something to contribute to each other, collaboration might happen.



Notice that I say, "might happen," because for collaboration to be achieved, respect and resourcefulness are necessary conditions, but they are not sufficient. A positive, supportive climate is also necessary for learning and cross-pollination to occur. For that, a prescribed, structured, systemic process of deliberation is required. It should ensure that a positive climate for the dynamics of the collaboration can take place.

Cooperation is a totally different thing. Cooperation is located on the right side of the Adizes map. Its focus is not on decisionmaking, for which collaboration is necessary, but on implementation of the decisions made. To implement a decision that involves change, a commonality of interests among all the parties involved is a must. Cooperation will occur when there is a common interest, or when a common interest is perceived to exist in the long run, which requires both faith and trust.

As we can see, for collaboration, respect is called for. For cooperation, trust is called for. Trust and respect, collaboration and cooperation, are necessary for managing change without

destructive conflict, that is, for making effective decisions and implementing them efficiently.

Just thinking and feeling, Dr. Ichak Kalderon Adizes

https://www.ichakadizes.com/post/collaboration-vs-cooperation

The ultimate touchstone of friendship is not improvement, neither of the other nor of the self, the ultimate touchstone is witness, the privilege of having been seen by someone and the equal privilege of being granted the sight of the essence of another, to have walked with them and to have believed in them, and sometimes just to have accompanied them for however brief a span, on a journey impossible to accomplish alone.

DAVID WHYTE



# THE BEAUTIFUL LIFE THAT'S IN YOU

THOM BOND is a thought leader, peace educator, author, and mediation consultant who is best known for The Compassion Course. He's the founder and Director of Education for the New York Center for Nonviolent Communication.

In part 2 of this interview, he talks with ELIZABETH DENLEY about his personal experience with NVC, and the associated learning curve.





Q: Can you talk about your journey with NVC? Is it ongoing? Is there an unfolding sense of wonder? Or is it simply a framework? How do you see this whole process?

When we first start the process of integration, we make visitations into the parallel universe. Then, if somehow we can create a new path by practicing over and over and over again, we start seeing a new set of things out there. As one of my students said, it changed her relationship with her husband, her cat, and her plants. I was just like, "Yes, yes, yes! You've got it right!"

It's a never-ending story, a never-ending process. It's always about, "What else can I learn about life today? What else can I experience that's happening to me in a life-connected way?" And, when I live in a life-connected way – which means I see the divine energy of life in

you – that's what I'm going to relate to: not the behaviors but the beautiful life that's in you. It's not easy, but over time we really start to see beyond the surface.

So you could yell at me, "Thom, you're a loudmouth. You just love to hear yourself talk. You're driving me nuts." Instead of trying to defend myself, I could say, "Wow, you're hurting right now. You're in pain. I'm hearing that. I can only imagine it's really frustrating for you right now to be here with me. You'd love something to be different." If I buy into the outer judgment, then I'm going to say, "No I'm not! What about you?" ... and here we go, right?

There's a way to break that cycle. First is to empathize with myself enough to know what I want in life. Even in the moments when somebody is coming at me I still know what I want. Second, I know how to get through that process: we start with what I call

lifting light weights: don't work with devastation; work with annoyance, and work your way up to devastation.

Going way back to before I met Marshall Rosenberg, if I think about how many feelings I had then, I would say two - good and bad. Then I picked up his sheet, his list of feelings, and it blew my mind. I realized, "Wow! I can have such a rich experience if I'm willing to see it. And somebody has given me words for it." I love that, by the way. I really studied those words, because they were so helpful. Imagine, there's a feeling called "nettled" versus just "pissed off" or "not happy."

So, we start to look at the nuances of what we feel, and when we express them we also start to notice them in others, and we ask people about how they are feeling. What are we doing? Well, we're inviting a life-connected relationship in that moment. That's the process.

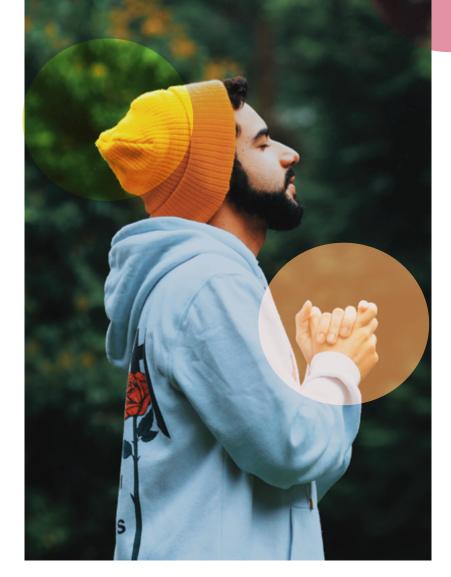
### **RELATIONSHIPS**

I have noticed that it actually goes in stages. I've watched this for over two decades now and I'm no different than any other human. First I found out NVC existed, which was really important (I prefer to call it NBR – Needs Based Relating – but let's call it NVC here). Before that, I'd never heard of it. I didn't know what it was or what it did. That was the starting point. Somebody had to tell me about it.

That's why we constantly do intros, very carefully. The intros are the hardest trainings. The advanced trainings take care of themselves. It's that beginning where we're going to make the first turn off the superhighway of judgment and cultural bent, and say, "Well, there is this little path over here, let me show it to you." That's how it starts.

Then, when we know NVC exists, we say, "Okay, needs; I think I know what needs are. I get it. I think I know what feelings are. I can even name them." We start to see them and name them.

Then comes the next part, where it's our habitual self up against this incredibly brand-new conscious self. This lays the groundwork for our transformation.



I want to help people get into relationship with their feelings and needs, so that they move past that point of thinking that "feelings are a bad idea, and needs mean I'm selfish," and find out that actually it's a way to live life.

So what is it I want to do as a trainer? Well, I want to help people get into relationship with their feelings and needs, so that they move past that point of thinking that "feelings are a bad idea, and needs mean I'm selfish," and find out that actually it's a way to live life. It's an awareness that can inform them so well that they can simply transcend those outer layers of conflict, the judgment of right/wrong thinking, should/ shouldn't thinking. NVC goes right past it.

As trainers, we have to be good at it. I'm very rigorous as a trainer. I will never say this is easy. I will never tell you that you're doing something you are not. It's so important for us to do this well so that we can sustain the practice.

It's the relationship part that really gets a lot of us. We start a relationship and we develop that relationship. The next part is: "Okay, now that I have this relationship with needs, what does that mean for me?" Well, it

means that I can be empathic. And if I can be empathic, that means I have my hands on the buttons and levers of compassion. And now I have some say in how I'm going to be in the world, and I can really start living out my values.

Q: That was just lovely. You just defined the process so simply, thank you. Any last things you want to add?

Well, yes, thank you. You guys have been great partners for us in the past. We reopened the registration for you two years ago, because somebody at Heartfulness found out about the Compassion Course, and it was the day after we closed the registration. So we re-opened it, and quite a few folks came.

I haven't found anything that is not compatible with it. I work with rabbis, priests, ministers, etc., and everyone says, "We want to have a more compassionate self." And we have the skill set to actually be it.

One thing I would add is that I don't believe this comes easy, but it does happen if you stay with it, which is why my course





Thank you.

Q: Wonderful, and lovely to meet you.

is one year. In fact, it's perpetual, because the day one course stops, the next day a new one starts. Some people take the course every year, so it's a pretty long-term prospect.

Marshall asked me, "Can we teach this without the language model please? Can we teach this as awareness, as consciousness?" That has been my goal. Then it stays with us. We don't have to memorize it. We live it. It's real, it's part of us. It's not something we do; it's who we are. And that's way harder than memorizing observations, feelings, needs, and requests. The thing is, it works.

I worry for NVC because I think some people oversimplify it. They don't perhaps know how to teach it at an advanced level and so they leave people short of the line. So if anyone out there thinks they have studied NVC and it hasn't worked, maybe it wasn't NVC that they were actually being taught, because it works when we teach it carefully.

# Q: Thank you so much, Thom.

Cool. Today is a wonderful day. Last week, the largest publisher in Germany published *The Compassion Book* in German. So the course is now in 15 languages, and the book is in 3. It's a process, and it's just going to keep going I hope.

Q: And this magazine goes out across about 160 countries, so hopefully it will also generate more interest. It's an awareness that can inform them so well that they can simply transcend those outer layers of conflict, the judgment of right/ wrong thinking, should/shouldn't thinking. NVC goes right past it.



christine Prisland focuses on those small acts of kindness and cooperation that can bring happiness and meaning to every day. She challenges us to explore consideration as a prerequisite to kindness, and to look at our level of thoughtfulness and sensitivity in our daily interactions with others.



I bought a highly recommended book the other day called #KindnessMatters, and even before I opened the first page, I started thinking about kindness. It is a big topic these days, and rightly so, as we try to navigate a different way of living. Sometimes we grimly hold on to how we lived prior to March 2020; sometimes we embrace different ways and locations of working, and different ways of relating to our loved ones. Sometimes we try to understand others with opposing views on vaccination, isolation, complying with the governments' attempts to lessen the impact of Covid. In these times, our lives have changed.

How does kindness fit into this new beginning, as it is often called? Is being considerate of others a cultural thing? And can we practice kindness if we don't experience it in our lives and culture? I've traveled a lot, and encountered kindness everywhere, so I think it is individual. It comes from within, but how it manifests can be influenced by tradition and culture, upbringing and environment.

Consideration for others is at the base of being kind. Can we be kind without feelings of thoughtfulness and sensitivity? Or perhaps they go side by side. I don't really know, and does it matter?

Either way, kindness may be more difficult to practice if we don't have that sense of consideration. If we cannot see another's point of view, or put ourselves in their shoes, or do not already have a practice of civility in our families and communities, can we truly be kind, or does it take work, imagination, and practice?

What are these small civilities? It may manifest as opening doors for people, helping others with heavy loads, smiling as we meet strangers on a hiking trail or just on the street, and maybe even striking up a simple conversation about the weather, or the beauty around us. It's about acknowledging the presence of others and helping in small ways, with no expectation of return. And it's just because we are all human, and in our own way striving to become better human beings

every day. It's about reaching out.

For example, in the small city where I live, most passengers leaving the bus will thank the driver, even if they are getting off at the back of the bus. The first time I heard this, it touched my heart. Here are strangers making a connection and showing appreciation to the driver providing the service. To some it may seem odd, as it is the driver's job after all. But it enlarges us in some fundamental way and breaks the isolation that we can sometimes put ourselves in.

Consideration is a small thing, but can make a huge difference in another's life. A few years ago during a road trip, we stopped at a restaurant for lunch. There was a staff shortage and many travelers to be fed. The waitress was at her wits' end. She told us how there was only the cook and herself, and she looked as if she couldn't cope. She was so close to tears.

I acknowledged how she was feeling: "Oh my, you poor dear, what an awful stressful day you are having. We won't add to

it, and I hope it gets better for you."

As I spoke, I could see her finding strength and beginning to smile. Her load was lighter because her feeling [extremely stressed] was respected. There was an acknowledgment that it really was awful.

She was able to say, "No, please

She was able to say, "No, please don't go, if you don't mind waiting awhile."

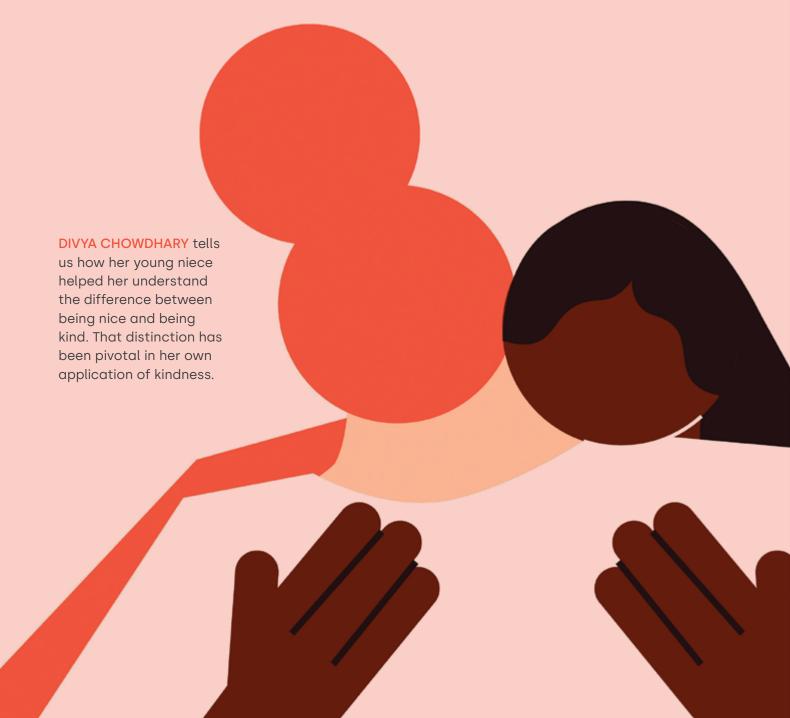
It helps to grow up in a culture where consideration is valued, but it also helps to be sensitive and have an open heart. We can learn to think of others. When When we feel connected within our own selves, we are able to feel and see that we are all human beings doing the best we can on what we call the rocky road of life.

we feel connected within our own selves, we are able to feel and see that we are all human beings doing the best we can on what we call the rocky road of life. We learn to accept and grow through adversity and the difficulties life brings to us, as well as to the joys and love we find in big and small things. We are all in this together.

Kindness does matter; among other things, it helps us all to grow and evolve to become our best selves.



# The Difference Between Nice & Kind



ne of the first things my niece learned to say was, "Be nice." Ironically, she never said it nicely. It would come as a strict reprimand to all of us. My sister-in-law originally taught her these words because she didn't want her saying "Stop" to everything. So, when my niece felt that others were not being nice, she would yell, "Be nice!"

There were countless occasions when she would say this to me, even though I knew I was doing good by her. For example, when I would ask her to put away her toys, or tell her not to throw things, and she wasn't in the mood to hear these requests, I was told to be nice. When my nephew threw food across the room, and I would scold him, she would be

his shining knight in armor and reprimand me with, "Be nice." It was hilarious at times. I knew I was teaching my niece and nephew things that were important and that would benefit them in the long run. It may not have been the "nice" thing to hear, but it was good for them. In fact, I was showing them kindness.

Although this story with my niece is a very light-hearted example of nice versus kind, it can be extrapolated into so many different aspects of our lives. We have been told growing up to be nice to others, but we don't hear often enough that we can be kind to others. And if we do, we confuse nice with kind, even though there is a distinct difference that can impact relationships very differently.

I believe niceness is what we show others when we don't stand to lose anything in the process, while kindness is what we show when we are ready to sacrifice something (time, energy, even another person's feelings towards us). The major distinction is: Are we thinking about what is best for ourselves, or are we thinking about what is best for the other person?

Being nice to others is easy. We can easily hold the door open in a chivalrous manner, not steal from our neighbors, and donate unneeded items to the local charity. We are taught to do those things, yet in none of them do we sacrifice our comfort or personal items. And, we walk away looking great in the eyes of others! Kindness, on the other hand, is a teacher staying an extra hour after school to tutor her students for free, giving helpful constructive criticism to someone who could

I believe niceness is what we show others when we don't stand to lose anything in the process, while kindness is what we show when we are ready to sacrifice something (time, energy, even another person's feelings towards us).



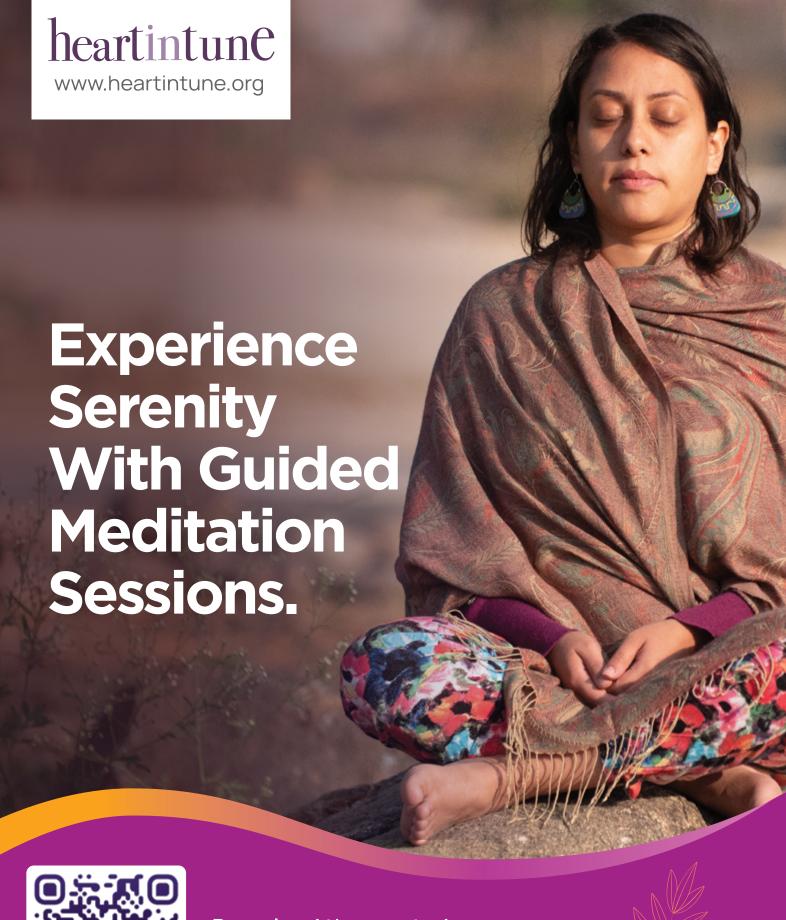
Kindness is honest, selfless, and loving. It is fundamental to building trust, which is a building block for a fulfilling friendship.

benefit from the feedback, and offering your last sandwich to your friend who forgot his food at home when you're still hungry. In each of those examples, kindness shines through the sacrifice of time, personal feelings, and comfort.

Another way to look at it is in the types of compliments we pay to others. The first is a "nice" compliment – we couldn't care less what the other person really feels, but we feel *obliged* to be pleasant. The second is a "kind" compliment - we care deeply how the other person will feel, so we feel our hearts *signal* to us to be kind.

At the core, kindness asks us to listen to our hearts, while niceness is a trained mindset. Both are important and have their place, and true friendships are built on both, but kindness leads in first place. Kindness is honest, selfless, and loving. It is fundamental to building trust, which is a building block for a fulfilling friendship.

Illustrations by MONIKA JURCZYK





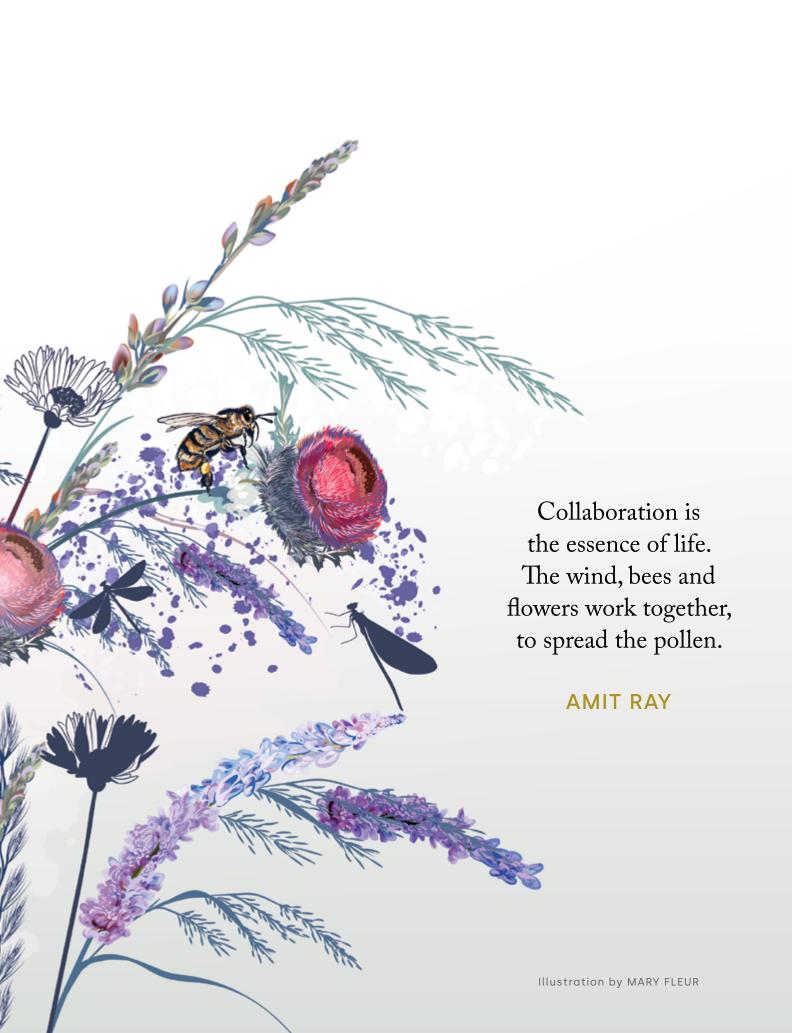
Download the app today.





# 







# T COOPERATION IN ATULE

ELIZABETH DENLEY is an ecologist, who has spent most of her life learning from the natural world. Here she explores cooperation in Nature, and what we can learn from this very common behavior, if we are to continue to survive on planet Earth.



p until the second half of the 20th century, most scientists thought that the relationships between species in the natural world were conflictual. They assumed that plants and animals either competed for resources or ate each other. The world was painted as an aggressive place, "red in tooth and claw." That all changed around 60 years ago, when naturalists and ecologists started to notice just how many species cooperate and collaborate.

This shift in worldview also coincided with a shift away from colonialism and toward a more collaborative vision for human societies. We are still in a transition phase, as the older structures and belief systems have not fully disappeared. I find it very helpful to explore friendship and cooperation in Nature, to see if we can learn a thing or two about how it operates at a very fundamental evolutionary level.

It turns out that we had a very narrow understanding of the Darwinian concept of "the evolution of the fittest." "Fittest" doesn't have to mean competitive advantage over others, climbing the ladder of success. That is a very outdated notion. "Fittest" can be the most effective collaborators,

those who create a robust interdependent web of existence.

Naturalists use the word "symbiosis" to describe the relationships between species in ecosystems, and the most common types of symbiosis are:

**Mutualism** – a mutually beneficial relationship.

**Commensalism** – a relationship where one species benefits while the other is not harmed.

**Parasitism** – a relationship where one species lives on or in a host

## **ENVIRONMENT**

species, usually causing harm to the host.

**Competition** – a relationship where species compete for resources.

**Predation and herbivory** – a relationship where one species eats another.

Mutualism and commensalism are what we would consider to be the "cooperative" relationships, as they bring benefit and cause no harm. Parasitism, competition, predation, and herbivory are the regulatory relationships, as they limit or reduce populations of species. Yet all these relationships are essential for creating balance and harmony in Nature. None are "good" or "bad" in the way we may try to judge them.

# Examples of cooperation in Nature

To understand cooperation in Nature, let's explore mutualism and commensalism. Coral reefs are a great place to start, with the very sweet relationship between sea anemones and clownfish. Anemone and clownfish live together. Normally, the anemone tentacles give off a nasty sting, but the clownfish have evolved a substance that protects them from the sting of the tentacles, so that they can hide amongst them, safe from predators. The

anemones shelter and protect the clownfish, and the clownfish clean the anemones, provide them with nutrients, and scare off predatory butterfly fish. This cooperation helps both the fish and the anemones survive and thrive.

If we turn to dense tropical forests, we find beautiful flowering orchids, which are epiphytes living on the trunks and branches of trees. Orchids rely on the trees for sunlight, and for the water and nutrients that flow on the outer bark of the branches. Orchids are not large plants, they photosynthesize themselves, and they don't harm the host trees in

any way. Science tells us that the host plants don't benefit from the orchards living on them, but it would be interesting to know if there are more subtle interactions that affect the consciousness of the orchids and the trees. We know so little about the relationships among other living beings.

Another cooperative relationship is found between egrets and grazing mammals like cows, buffalos, zebras, horses, rhinoceroses and elephants. The egrets are birds that coexist with their four-legged friends, sometimes riding on their backs. The birds feed on ticks and other ectoparasites on the skin of



the mammals, reducing pests, and they also feed on the insects that are stirred up by the mammals when they are feeding. So both the mammals and the birds benefit from this partnership.

Closer to home, we humans have a cooperative relationship with microorganisms, especially the bacteria on our skin and in our digestive tract. The bacteria in our gut help us digest food and regulate the intestinal environment. In return, they feed off the food we eat.

There are also many stories throughout history of dolphins helping people, and sometimes developing ongoing relationships. Wild dolphins are known to fish with local fisherman in places as far apart as Brazil, Mauretania, and Myanmar. There are also incredible stories of dolphins saving people's lives, for example a group of four swimmers in New Zealand were saved from a great white shark by a pod of dolphins who swam in circles around them for 40 minutes until the shark lost interest, and the group could swim back to shore.

# What can we learn?

For a start, these examples are just the tip of the iceberg – a few textbook examples that help us glimpse dimensions of interconnection we don't yet



understand. No species has evolved on its own; they have all evolved in the context of the ecosystems in which they live, and in relationship to the other species they live with.

If we humans are to become responsible citizens of planet Earth, we will have to become more attuned to the ecosystems in which we live, and to the other species that coexist with us. What we see today is a result of us not doing that, of assuming that we are separate from Nature; worse, above Nature.

Just as colonial empires in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries invaded countries and imposed their decisions on the local people and places they colonized, so we

continue to invade ecosystems we presume to own, and make decisions about what trees to cut down, what to plant, what animals to kill, and what minerals and underground water to dig up for our own use. We play with the life on this planet as if we own it. What sort of human evolution can we expect if we continue to take that route? Will it be in tune with Nature? And what can we do differently, like other plants and animals do, to cooperate and evolve within our ecosystems and with our fellow beings? It is a field open for discovery, one which may just help us to take the next step.

Illustrations by ARATI SHEDDE

where have you been?

VAISHALI NARASIMHAN describes how a very tough period during the pandemic was followed by a beautiful re-emergence, thanks to her love for poetry and the city of Chennai in the south of India.





fter I left school, I stopped reading Kabir Das, Rabindranath Tagore, Emily Dickinson, and Sylvia Plath. It remained a veiled interest. Following a tough period during the pandemic – despite the fact that we were all in that unusual circumstance together – After I left school, I stopped reading we isolated ourselves. I felt lost. How can you convey what you're thinking when you're lost in your thoughts and unable to express yourself? So I reasoned to myself.

February 23, 2021, was a watershed moment in my life. It was 3 a.m. and I couldn't sleep. I was scrolling through Instagram when I came across a poem narrative. I heard it once, twice,

and something about it compelled me to listen to it every day. On December 4, 2021, I discovered what that "something" was: this lovely thing about simplicity, honesty, and love. I began attending open mics on poetry and story-telling in Chennai, hosted by a small group of people known as Deleted Drafts, and I fell in love with my city, its people, and its surroundings. I wondered, "Where have you been all these days?"

I sat there listening to experiences similar to mine. I felt vulnerable and I choked up behind my mask. Masks are multifunctional! I felt a weight fall off my shoulders, something heavy and painful. Today, I began writing poetry, and I shared my thoughts with the rest

I discovered what that "something" was: this lovely thing about simplicity, honesty, and love.

of the world. I remembered Aisha (from the movie *Wake Up Sid*) saying, I have a strange feeling of love for this city. You can only heal yourself with time.

Thank you for your time and poetry, and happy morning to you, Chennai.

Illustration by HILARYDESIGN

The great benefit of slowing down is reclaiming the time and tranquillity to make meaningful connections – with people, with culture, with work, with nature, with our own bodies and minds.

CARL HONORÉ

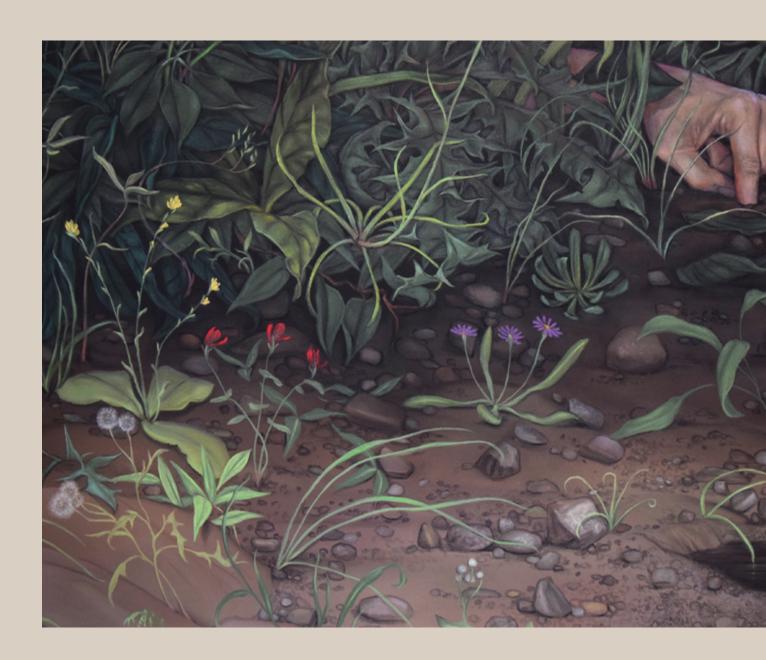
# Creativity





# Let ART slow you down

ZACHARI LOGAN is interviewed by VANESSA PATEL from the Heartfulness Institute about his art, the influences that have informed his approach, the relationship between the human body and the land, and the beauty of slowing down and contemplating the world at a different pace.









Q: Hello Zachari, thank you for your time. I noticed that your exhibition at the Peabody Essex Museum is in a space dedicated to contemplation and meditation.

Yes, a lot of my work is a mixture of figuration and landscape. My belief surrounding the body and land is that they are one and the same. I have a desire to slow the viewers down, because we interact with so many media that speed up our brains, and don't always foster contemplation or critical thinking.

Recently I was in New York and saw the Hans Holbein exhibition at the Morgan Library. I was in the room with people who were just quietly staring at objects for ten minutes or longer. Sharing moments within that type of space is phenomenal because our brains work in a different way.



Q: Yes, instead of being bombarded constantly, something emerges from within. The work you are showing right now at the Peabody, "Remembrance," is a lot about life and death.

I gravitate to the contemplation of my own mortality in my work. The Jurrien Timmer Gallery at the Peabody is a space of contemplation, which gave me a great opportunity to do some new works that had a specific focus on the past couple of years. Some were done in immediate response to the pandemic, and later became a conversation that touched on our perception of time, the contemplation of loss, and the remarkable change and potential as we're emerging from whatever this is.

Q: I have been enjoying your nature drawings, and also some of your pen and ink drawings. They have such an old-world feel, the detailing is beautiful, and the visualization process is almost like contemplation for you. What has informed your work?

The art historical reference point was really important. For example, I worked on a series of very large self-portraits, referencing the scale and the construction of the neoclassicists. I'd been thinking about figuration of the male body, so I started with my own body, while making references to historical tropes and styles. In 2009 I had an exhibition in Paris, and it was the first time I'd seen a lot of the historical work I was referencing; works like *The Raft of Medusa*, and the paintings of David and Delacroix. I've made it a part of my practice to do residencies, and to do research and work from collections. It's

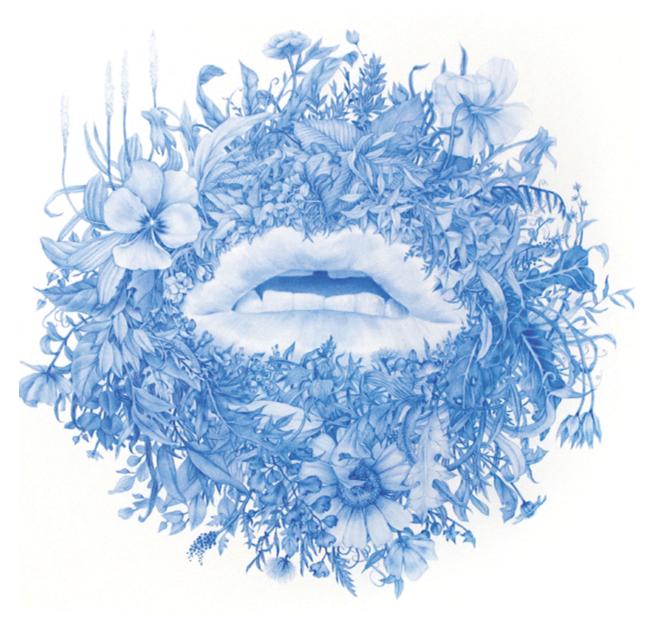


how I've come across most of the works that are referenced in my visual language.

My body is always the catalyst. Regardless of whether or not it is visually present, I think about things in relation to my body, which I address in terms of mortality.

Also, I see no separation between our bodies and the land. What we do to ourselves, we do to the land, and vice versa. So, with something like the pandemic, it probably happened because of encroachment in places that we don't need to be. In a lot of ways, I think it comes down to human greed.





Another big influence was my upbringing in an isolated area of Canada as a Roman Catholic. A lot of Western art is linked to the Catholic narrative, with male bodies in different forms of torture and transcendence. A lot of 20th century Canadian art was very British or European, transposed to a North American context, and that was what I knew.

Q: This is what informed you, and along the way you have discovered new things. At the

Peabody, part of your work has been making murals. How was that?

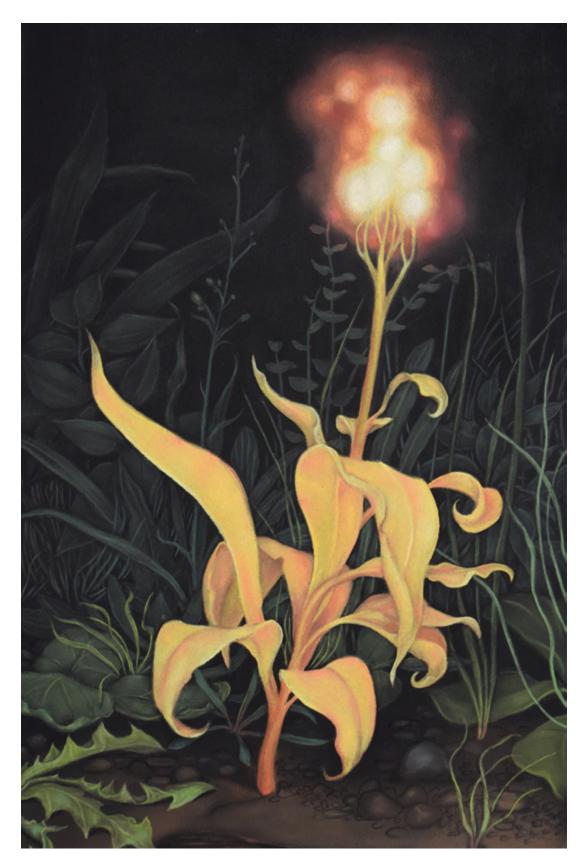
I had a lot of time to think and rethink projects during the pandemic. I wanted to do work that would disappear after an exhibition, just sink into the wall. The mural artworks are literally sanded down (they're graphite drawings) and painted over. Traces of them will always remain in the wall, which is a lovely notion. I call them Nomenclature 1, 2, 3, and 4, and I definitely

### CREATIVITY









wanted to do one for this exhibition. It's simply a gesture about time, about how we're here then we're not.

Q: Coming to your installations, you made one in porcelain and encouraged people to touch it. That is very unusual for an artist in a public space.

People have a desire to touch things. They get to be in dialogue with the artist, to experience the same thing, even in a slight way. One of the aspects that personally drew me to ceramics, and the specific clay that I work with, is the feel of it. It almost feels like bone, and the color looks like bone matter. Again, it all comes back to the body. "Fountain 1" is really like a pile of bones. Every time I show it, there are more flowers. It changes with every installation.

The Fountain installation came out of seeing how monuments were changed by human interaction, and how they changed each person who visited them. The first monument I visited was the grave of Oscar Wilde, which is in Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. It was a very cold wintry day, and there were brown, green, and red mosses on everything. As I approached the grave, I thought it was covered with red moss, but as I got closer I realized it was lipstick.

People had been kissing the grave. I thought, "What a beautiful, beautiful thing. This monument has been changed in a subtle but physical way." It really affected me.

I had another experience in Vienna at the Stephansdom, the city cathedral. As you walk through the door, you're invited to touch a small piece of limestone. There's a hand imprint in the limestone from people having touched the stone in the same spot for 900 years. That continual very simple gesture over time created a beautiful impact.

My thinking about a monument isn't that you visit it once, but that you visit it at different times in your life. You're always changing, so you're going to have a different experience each time.

Q: So far you've explored painting, ceramics, murals, installations, illustrations, poetry. What's next, Zachari?

I'm not sure. I have a few projects coming up, and the expansive space of my new studio will definitely affect what I do. We'll see what happens.

Q: It's been lovely chatting with you.

I thank you so much.

Artworks by ZACHARI LOGAN









# What's up



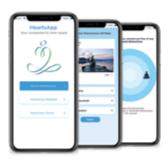
# heartintune

Master the habit of meditation

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

Download app at 
→ heartintune.org

### **HEARTSAPP**



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

Download at → heartsapp.org

info@heartsapp.org



MEDITATION MASTERCLASS

3 masterclasses

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

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

→ heartfulness.org/ masterclass



yoga

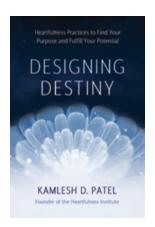
Post graduate diploma in advanced yoga.

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

DEGREE IN OM

Heartfulness Yoga Teacher Training Course

→ heartfulness.org/yoga/



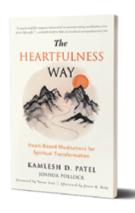
**#1 BESTSELLER** 

### DESIGNING DESTINY by DAAJI

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

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

→ designingdestiny.com



**#1 BESTSELLER** 

# THE HEARTFULNESS WAY

by DAAJI

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

Available through

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



Find a trainer or meditation center near you!

→ heartfulness.org/en/ connect-with-us/



## CONSCIOUS LIVING IN STOCK

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

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

 $\rightarrow$  hfnlife.com



YOU-NIVERSITY

Meditation & The Evolution of Consciousness

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

A Heartfulness and Udemy Video Series. Register today.

→ daaji.org/udemy









**EPSON** 

**WE STOCK LEADING BRANDS** 



brother.



Lenovo

All brand logos and images are copyright of their respective owners.



♠ Shop on hfnllfe.com





