

heartfulness

purity weaves destiny



TUNING THE SOUL
Music and Spiritual Life

ENTROPY IN RELATIONSHIPS
Love and Stability

HUMAN EVOLUTION
In Pictures



EXPERIENCE HEARTFULNESS

Learn to Meditate
with the help of yogic transmission.
Experience the beauty of the heart.

Everything Comes from EXPERIENCE

www.heartfulness.org

In the early 1900s, a great sage known as Lalaji of Fatehgarh exposed that knowledge and spirituality are synonymous. Lalaji said that knowledge expands with the removal of bondages or veils in consciousness. Gaining this knowledge is a precondition to happiness, peace and rest. From this type of knowledge and rest comes purity, which shapes our destiny.

Heartfulness emphasises that knowledge derived from personal experience is the best, especially for personal development, potential and consciousness. Even those experiences are, however, subject to biases and confusion because of our own limitations. The recognition of those limitations as well as the great potential we have in us is the first step towards growth.

When we engage in the stages of practice of Heartfulness, from relaxation to morning meditation to cleaning the mind of its clutter in the evening and then to bedtime contemplation, we gain this knowledge of our Self. We welcome you to use our audio and video files of self-guided practice.

If you are affiliated with educational, corporate, non-profit or governmental institutions, please contact us for free workshops for the benefit of all.

Victor Kannan,

Director, Heartfulness Institute



Interconnectedness

Dear readers,

Imagine sitting quietly alone in a garden. At first glance, everything seems still and serene, but as you adjust to the subtler rhythms around you, you become aware of a world teeming with activity. The plants sway rhythmically, birds fly from tree to tree, insects crawl and buzz and the shadows dance and flicker, as everything is alive with movement. It is like seeing the iconic 'blue marble' view of the earth – from afar there is a static slow motion feeling, the clouds' swirling movements barely detectable, but as you zoom in many life forms become visible in their own flow and bustle on the surface of our earth.

Just as every insect's activity adds to the nourishment of the soil, so too our activity as humans adds to the sustenance of our planet. At the physical level our choices have an impact on the environment. On a more subtle level, our thoughts, emotions and reactions affect the 'atmosphere' and so we affect each other. This may not be visible, but we feel it. There is one type of atmosphere in a hospital, and another at a cricket match. There is the joyous lightness of little children in a kindergarten and a different feeling in a corporate board meeting. Atmospheres are different because of the thoughts and feelings people have in different situations, and every thought we have has its effect. We are all connected at many levels.

In this issue we explore this theme of interconnectedness and relationship. In this age of Internet and social media, we are connected across the globe at the press of a button on a smartphone, yet does that guarantee quality in our communication? How are we affecting the world around us by our thoughts and feelings? Drop us a line and let us know what you think.

Happy reading!

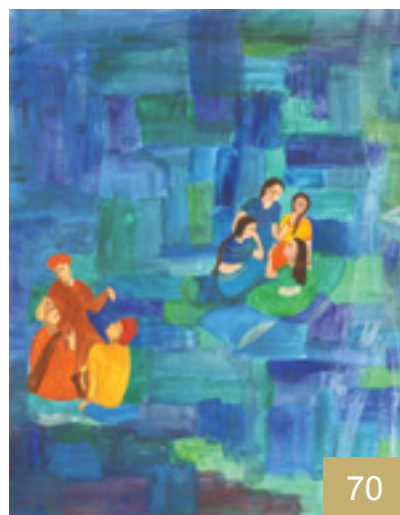
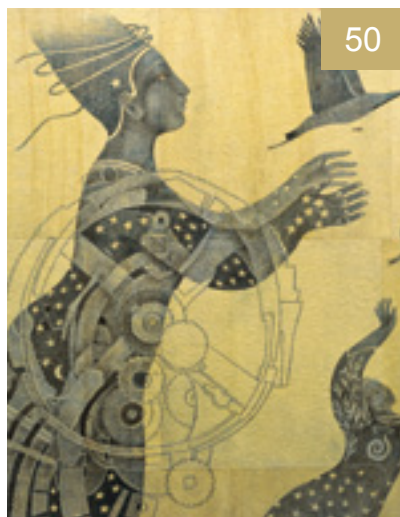
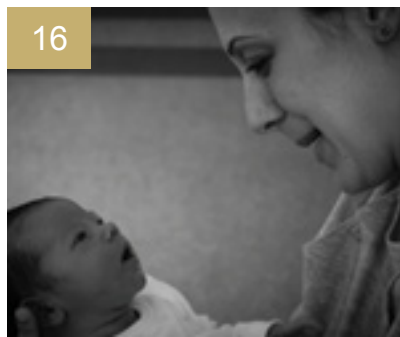
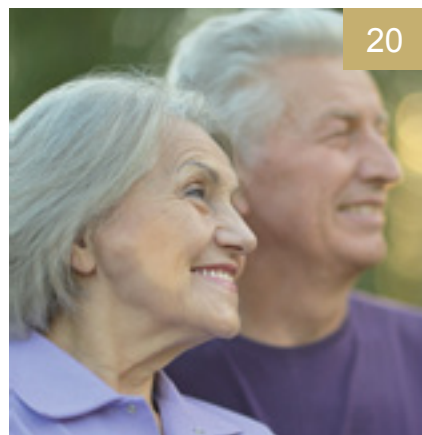
The Editors

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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.

**ATTRIBUTED TO
STEPHEN GRELLET**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROMAN LEHMANN

Priorities

TREVOR WELTMAN

Welcome to the Real World. It doesn't matter how old you are. If you are in high school, college or you are a young adult, the decisions you make now are as real as any others you will make during the course of your life. Youth is not a shield behind which we hide our material immaturity, but the platform upon which we build the foundations of our future.

What you say, think, and do now actually matters. How is that for empowerment?

Almost everything in our 21st century, material-centric life resists meditation. How? Because there is always another exam to prepare for, friend to catch up with, book to read, assignment to be done, lecture to attend, movie to watch, child or spouse to spend time with, instrument to practise, party raging somewhere, load of laundry to be washed, phone call to make, text message to respond to or wait for, email to write, work to get ahead on, etc.

Many new meditators think that at some point in their life everything will just fall into line, and meditation will naturally have an appropriate, steady, appointed time slot in their busy schedule. Meanwhile, as they wait for this blessed day to come (which never does), everything else they have to do continues to get done, while their meditation practice doesn't.



Seasoned meditators know that it is on them, every day, to carve out the time to meditate. It is always sitting down that's the hard part, as everything else continues to resist the time they set aside for meditation.

So what do they do? How do they ignore the distractions of contemporary life and actually sit down and do their duty to themselves? They make meditation their unyielding number one priority, and they don't let anything get in its way.

"But, I'm simply too busy to meditate."

I don't buy it, not even for a second. The busiest, most successful people I've ever met all have at least one uncompromising daily ritual of sorts. For many, it's their physical workout routine. I've met countless high-level artists, surgeons, performers, and C-Level executives who have their secretaries deflect all calls and meetings during their appointed one hour every day while they swim, run, walk, meditate, or nap, and aside from consistently getting enough sleep every night, all of them credit this personal time as the key to their continued success.

Furthermore, there is a volume of scientific data and contemporary literature being written on this very topic of performance theory, which discusses the need for taking intentional breaks during the day.

Here's a true story:

The day before leaving her Guru's ashram to return home, a girl goes to him to say goodbye. She says, "Guruji, I am leaving tomorrow. Could you tell me how long I should meditate every day?"

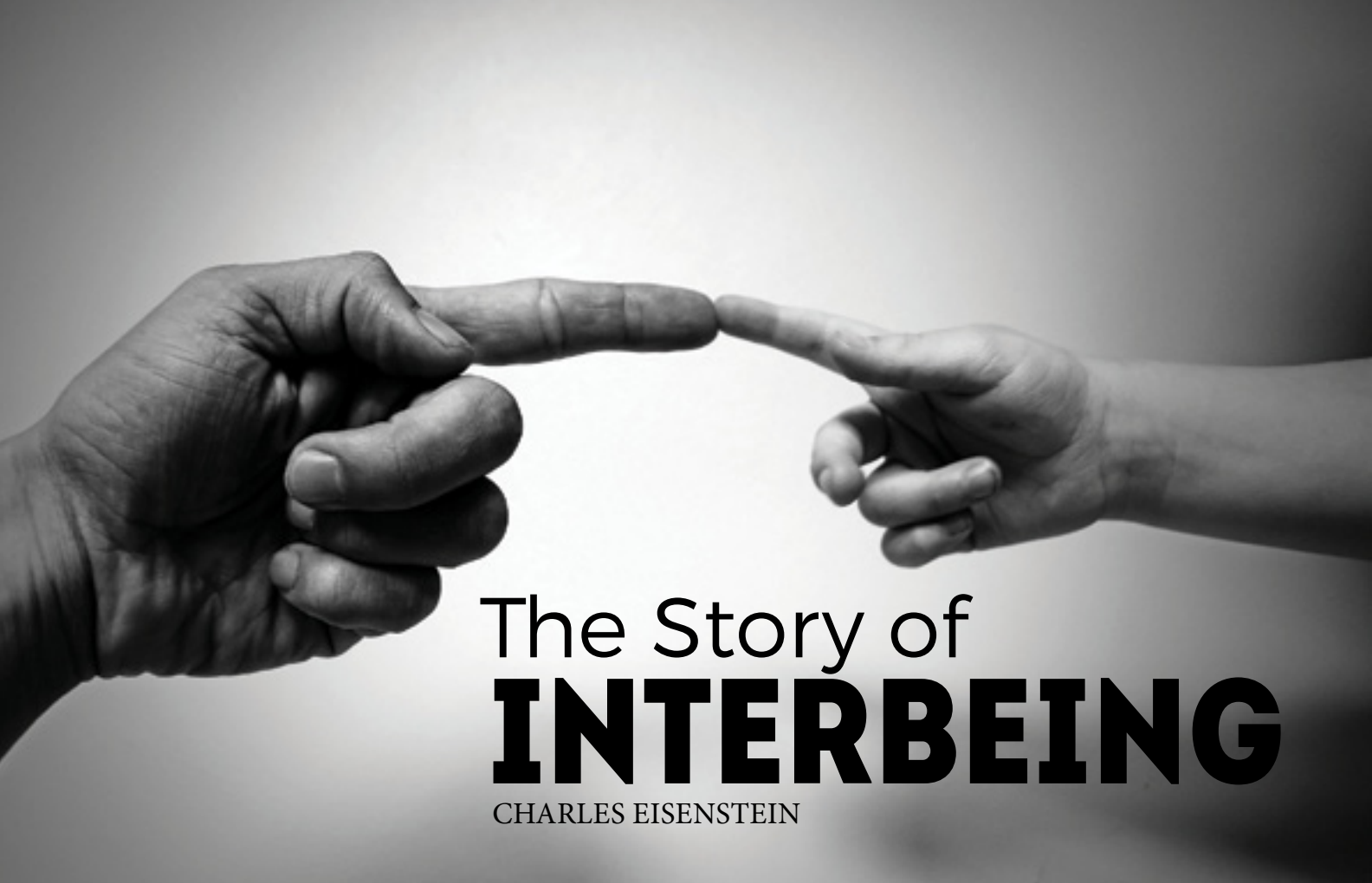
The Guru thinks for a few moments and says, "For you, I think half-an-hour a day will be sufficient."

Aghast, the girl responds, "But Guruji, what about when I'm really busy?"

Without missing a beat, he smiles and says, "Well then, when you are really busy, no less than one hour will do."

Yet somehow, as college students and young adults, we think we have less time to meditate in our day than someone running a global company. No way. We just haven't made it a priority like they have.

And why haven't we made it a priority? Because we haven't felt its effects yet. I sympathise with this line of logic, but, in order to feel its effect, we first must be uncompromising in our priorities. This is one of many situations in life where the chicken comes first. For once we do make it a priority, a magical thing happens: after a while, it becomes the point around which everything else in our life revolves – busy or not. Suddenly we start wondering how we could have ever lived without this sacred refuge of time alone with our inner being, no longer needing to force that which has become as natural to our wellbeing as breathing ●



The Story of **INTERBEING**

CHARLES EISENSTEIN

To those immersed in the study of crises facing our planet, optimism often seems like the banner of ignorance. The optimist must not understand just how bad things are. Anyone who is aware of the severity of the current world situation could not possibly be optimistic. Right?

So let me explain how it is that, without minimising anything, I hold a great and growing belief that a more beautiful world is possible.



Real transformation usually happens through an archetypal process of growth, followed by crisis, followed by breakdown, followed by an empty space, followed by the emergence of something new. We are in the state of crisis, nearing breakdown. This is how big change happens, and maybe it cannot happen any other way. And when the breakdown happens and old assumptions, systems and structures fall apart, things become possible that were inconceivable before.

I have learned that the realm of the possible is much greater than our society tells us is possible. I have witnessed what I call ‘miracles’ -- something impossible within an old story, but possible from a new one. They showed me that I’d been educated into a seriously deficient understanding of what is possible and what is real. From regenerative agriculture to holistic healing, from restorative justice to nonviolent communication, the technologies for rapidly healing society and the planet are taking shape in the margins. When the centre collapses, they will flood into the vacuum and become the new normal.



Perhaps my greatest cause for optimism is the amazing young people I keep meeting, men and women in their twenties or late teens, who seem to be born into a way of thinking, seeing, and being that took me decades of struggle to imperfectly achieve. What will they accomplish, born free of the morass that my generation spent so much energy wading through? It took me twenty years of adulthood before ‘authentic communication’ became more than an abstract concept; already my nineteen-year-old son practises it better than I do.

When I look deeply into someone’s eyes, I see a tremendously powerful and creative being, and I think, “How could I not be hopeful, when You exist in this world?” Perhaps this isn’t a reason for optimism, but rather a connection to a wellspring that waters the rest. Try it and you will see the reasons for despair become somehow irrelevant in the face of that beauty.



None of these suffice as proof, or even evidence, that a more beautiful world is possible or that we will survive the crisis of our time. They are elements of a new narrative that acknowledges the suffering, acknowledges the despair, and includes it as part of a larger process.

Following Tich Naht Hahn, I call that narrative the Story of Interbeing, in which the inner reflects the outer and the whole reflects the part. Herein lies a final reason for hope: the separate self is relatively powerless, limited by the force at its disposal, whereas the self of Interbeing is infinitely powerful, because each act, no matter how humble, has cosmic significance ●

ABC of Stress Management

AMIR H. IMANI

What is the ABC of stress reduction? This question takes us to the root cause of stress, and the one effective way out of it. The very root of stress is really the lack of compassion and kindness we have towards ourselves. This is the A of the ABC of Stress.

A The root of stress

It may sound odd, but if we dive deep inside when we are really under pressure, we will see that it is not only the toothache, or the upcoming mortgage payment, or the feeling low and depressed, but the fact that we do not want to feel the pain or the worry that makes us suffer.

The closing of ourselves to life and what we are going through at difficult times is what causes us the most pain. Put it this way: it is not only the stressor that determines our level of suffering, but the quality of our relationship with it.

Here is an example: first consider a day when you wake up early in the morning, spend some quiet time with yourself, walking, reading, breathing and stretching, before starting your working day. Then take a day when you jump out of bed and hit the road, hurrying all the way through your day. Your reactions to life and what it brings you are different. I welcome

you to test it. An incident of, say, somebody cutting you out on the expressway will affect you differently on those two days. Perhaps on the first day you have more space for life. This brings us to the question: what can I do to deal with stress in a better way? This is the B of the ABC of Stress.

B What can I do?

The answer is in the question. If the root cause of suffering is the lack of kindness, then the remedy is compassion and gentleness towards ourselves at all times, even when things are really stressful and out of our control. Having a soft corner in ourselves for the bad and miserable to come, stay and leave, maintains a degree of balance and reduces suffering tremendously. It is like being in the midst of a storm, but not getting lost in it; being in the water but not getting drowned. This is possible if we permit ourselves to be the way we are moment-by-moment, no matter how unwell we feel.

How can we do this? This is the C of the ABC of Stress.

C How can I do it?

Cultivate heartfulness and compassion. Take time to practise opening up to ourselves – to the way we are and the way we feel, in whatever way it works for us. This gives us the ability to do so even when things are not that good in our lives. There are numerous ways of training the heart to rest and return to its original state of openness and acceptance. Here are some of my favourites:

1. A slow and silent walk in nature, with no aim in mind. Just walk and take in nature the way it is through our inner and outer senses.

2. Sit silently and in a relaxed way with the mobile phone switched off. If you wish, you can bring the attention to the heart very gently and allow the heart to be the way it is without forcing anything.
3. Lie down, staying awake, and pay attention to the way your body is, however it might be from moment to moment.
4. Eat a meal with your awareness in the present with the food. Stay with how it tastes and feels to be nurtured by nature, thankfully.
5. When feeling peace and gratitude, share these feelings with others by allowing the heart to open up and send joy and calm to all beings ●

BE A BETTER Friend

SURAJ SEHGAL

When I came to college I began to appreciate my friends and what friendship means.

Suddenly you are surrounded by people, and you have many more duties and responsibilities, so the day-to-day trade-off between friendship and classes, work and organisation becomes really tangible. I realised some important aspects of friendship that have helped me grow.

WAYS TO BECOME A BETTER FRIEND

1. SHOW UP



Whether it's an event your friend has planned or just a trip to the grocery store, be present to show that you care. Seeing someone's face makes them familiar.

2. REACH OUT



When you remember somebody you haven't talked to in a while, take a moment to reach out to them. It takes no more than a minute to text someone a "how are you?" or a "let's catch up!", but in a world where everyone knows hundreds of people, taking the time to reach out with a simple hello can make you stand out. After all, don't we all like to be remembered?

3. ACCOMMODATE



For many of us, with our busy lives, busy jobs, and constant work, we often find it very difficult to see the relevance of talking to anybody who is not actively present in our day-to-day activities. We become so absorbed in our mundane tasks that we often forget those people who have helped to make our experiences worthwhile. When someone is making an effort to reach out to you, try to accommodate. Recognize how much effort the other person has been making by letting them know that you notice how much they have been giving to you and try to give back as much as you can.

4. APPRECIATE



Many times, we forget that our families and friends shape who we are today. Take a brief moment to look within and acknowledge who has had an impact on you. If someone has helped to change you or your perspective, take the time to let them know – it may mean more than you can imagine.

We ought to think that we are one of the leaves of a tree, and the tree is all humanity. We cannot live without the others, without the tree.

PABLO CASALS

We meet each other for a reason, and everyone plays a role in our development and growth, whether it is the professor who taught discipline or the grade school bully who helped develop patience.

Ultimately, there is no formula for being a better friend. Maintaining friendships and good relationships is a continual process that takes intention, love and time. While we may never be perfect friends, our little efforts go a long, long way to uplift those who have helped us on our journey.

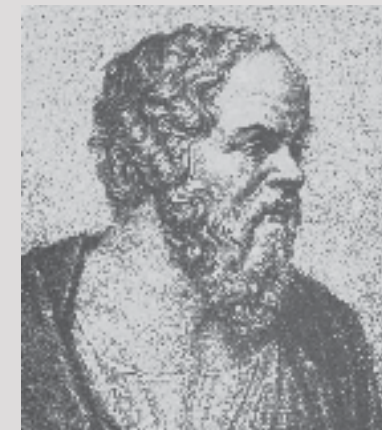
Speak with LOVE



We spend so much time communicating with each other – with our loved ones, friends, work colleagues, neighbours and the strangers who serve us in shops and offices, pass us on the street, or sit next to us in the bus or train. We are a social species, so communication is critical for our survival.

There are many layers and levels of human communication that we will explore together in future issues; from body language to listening, and from the way our energies resonate with each other to silent heart-to-heart communion.

In this issue, we explore the way we speak. The spoken voice is the transmission of sound from one being to others. It therefore is an expression of our inner being. Here are some tips from three wise men throughout the ages.



SOCRATES

470 - 399 BCE



One day an acquaintance met the great philosopher Socrates and said, “Do you know what I just heard about your friend?”

Socrates said, “Before you talk to me about my friend, take a moment and filter what you’re going to say.

“The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?”

“No,” the man said. “Actually I just heard about it.”

“Now, how about the second filter, the filter of goodness? Is what you are about to tell me about my friend something good?”

“No, on the contrary.”

“So,” Socrates continued, “you want to tell me something bad about him, but you’re not certain it’s true.

There is one filter left: the filter of usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my friend going to be useful to me?”

“No, not really.”

“Well,” concluded Socrates, “if it is not necessarily true, not good and not even useful, why tell me at all?”

Second, right speech through
the eyes of the Buddha.



BUDDHA

Between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE



Right speech always consists of five characteristics:

It is spoken at the right time.

It is true.

It is sweet.

It is useful and helpful.

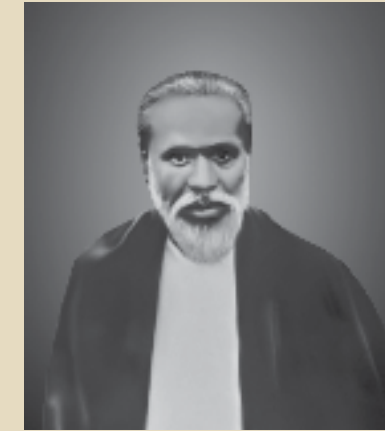
It is kind and compassionate.

If we cannot perform right speech, it is better not to speak. Right speech brings happiness, harmony and wisdom to life.

Speak only those words by which we would not torment ourselves nor harm others.

Speak only pleasant words, which are acceptable to others.

Third, the human voice as the manifestation of the very vibration of our existence, from the great 19th-20th century Guru, Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh.



RAM CHANDRA (LALAJI)

1873 - 1931



Sound is the manifestation of consciousness.

Let the flow of your conversation be a current that is even and in tune with the current of Reality. In this way, you will touch the hearts of those people listening.

How?

Remove all sharpness, so that your speech doesn't carry any kind of weight, like a current of still air.

It should be soft, cultured, smooth and balanced. A person whose tongue is cultured and polite has a large, pure and noble heart.

Be free of anger and free of emotional outbursts in speech. The heart is so tender that it begins to wilt even with the slightest disturbance.

To develop such softness, create extreme humility in temperament, so that you are filled up with such a feeling of love that you have no inclination to hurt anybody's heart, and your words will not hurt anybody's heart ●

Entropy in HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

KAMLESH D. PATEL

KAMLESH D. PATEL explains how the second law of thermodynamics plays out in our relationships, leading to disintegration and breakdown, and shares with us the inputs needed to overcome entropy, bringing stability and harmony.



“ *We need input to stabilise any relationship, to iron out the wrinkles or differences, so that we don't harbour and store things forever.* ”

What is entropy?

Let's try to understand it practically. You bring a book home from the library, and then your father gives you another book as a gift. Your girlfriend gives you magazines, and you have music CDs. They all pile up on a small table in your room, so now there will be enough clutter on your table. The rest of your room is also in a disorganised state: your clothes are here, your socks are there and your towel is hanging somewhere. This is a disintegrated system; the system has gone haywire.

You get frustrated with the mess and clean everything up. You put each book where it belongs, wash your laundry and make your bed. Now the room looks cleaner than before, until again you start bringing more books and things, and again the system disintegrates and becomes disorganised. To keep things in order requires constant energy input.

So entropy is the degree of disorder or randomness in any system. The second law of thermodynamics says that entropy increases with time. It reflects the instability of a system over a period of time if there is nothing to stabilise it.

In human relationships, we have interactions day after day and these relationships also become higgledy-piggledy. We let things build up in our inner chambers. These inner chambers become more and more disorganised as we store more and more, just like the books and clothes in our room. We keep harbouring things, and one day what we harbour explodes, unless we do something about it. We need input to stabilise any relationship, to iron out the wrinkles or differences, so that we don't harbour and store things forever.

But do we have to do this every time we make a mistake? Do we have to offer another person ice cream or candy to always pacify them? This would mean a constant investment to maintain a relationship.

When constant input is required every time there is a fight or an argument with a friend or family member, you will require greater input each time. You may even have to buy them a Mercedes one day, if you can afford it! At the same time, it is our business to love



“The conclusion is that it is the love that you have in your heart that is the input that stabilises relationships.”

each other, whatever the cost. You will get hurt in the process, no doubt, and there will be a lot of energy consumption from your side, but if you are prepared for it the relationship will improve.

In a family, if you have to tolerate each other, then constant input is required. In situations where you have to give constant emotional input it is a broken family, even though you may be together.

In contrast, when there is love amongst all, and when acceptance is there, then you do not have to go on offering ice cream or going to some paradise vacation spot to patch things up. It is taken for granted that you accept each other with love. The conclusion is that it is the love that you have in your heart that is the input that stabilises relationships. Things are okay. There is a greater level of acceptance.

I am not talking about tolerance. Tolerance may be a great virtue, but when you feel, “I can’t tolerate this person’s mistakes,” love will iron out everything, so that it is okay. From where does this love come? From a pure heart; from a truthful, genuine heart.

“When zero input is needed, it means that it is the most stable relationship, the most stable family, where I don’t have to explain myself. ... Where there is love, there is no need for explanations.”

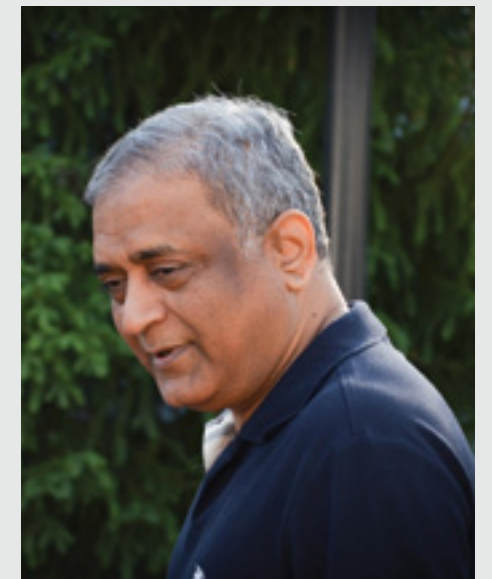
Distrust kills a relationship, but in families where we are taught to love, to sacrifice, to accept and to remain pure, we are able to let go of everything. We can remove the incompatibility, by understanding this principle of entropy.


When the constant state of my being is love, then the need for constant input disappears and the constant input is zero. When zero input is needed, it means that it is the most stable relationship, the most stable family, where I don’t have to explain myself. There is no need for, “I did this because...”, “I didn’t want to do this because...”. Where there is love, there is no need for explanations ●

About Kamlesh Patel

From an early age, Kamlesh Patel was interested in spirituality and meditation, and eventually came to the feet of his Guru in 1976 while still a student. He is now the fourth spiritual guide in the Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga meditation.

Kamlesh is married with two sons, and is a role model for students of spirituality who seek that perfect blend of Eastern heart and Western mind. He travels extensively and is at home with people from all backgrounds and walks of life, giving special attention to the youth of today.



A photograph of three children in school uniforms standing outdoors. On the left is a young girl with braids, wearing a red cardigan over a white shirt. In the center is a girl with braids and a bindi, wearing a red sweater with a school crest and an orange backpack. On the right is a boy wearing a dark blue sweater with a school crest and a yellow backpack. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a blurred green field and a building.

What is this
'we' of ours?
It is our
heart.

RAM CHANDRA OF
FATEHGARH

Inspiring & Ethical Businesses

The younger generation of entrepreneurs in the 21st century have their own ideas about business. They aspire for excellence and success, but also value the need for ethical business models that bring value, goodness and interconnectedness with others. Here are some examples of projects that will inspire you.

Me to We

Craig and Marc Kielburger

'Me to We' was started in Toronto, Canada, by Craig and Marc Kielburger, who believe that we can all make a difference in the world. The vision of 'Me to We' is to empower people to transform local and global communities by shifting from 'me' thinking to 'we' acting.

It is an innovative business that aims to make an impact by working together to create sustainable change with everything we do, from choosing travel that leaves a positive footprint on the planet, to making purchases that give back. The philosophy behind 'Me to We' is that we are all connected and together WE change the world.

'Me to We' combines best business practices with increasing social awareness and leadership programs for youth. Their commitment to help improve cultural, community, economic and environmental outcomes is at the centre of their business. Every product sold makes a direct, measurable impact in a community, so they can build a better future.

'Me to We' has been received many prestigious awards for its model of social entrepreneurship, from the Skoll Foundation to the Mars Institute, and the national Ernst & Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

<http://www.metowe.com>



The Importance of Trust

Emmanuel Sumithran Gnanamanickan

Emmanuel is the project manager of the Niligris-Wynaad Tribal Welfare Society, a small NGO based on the borders of Kerala and Tamil Nadu in Southern India providing basic health care, education, and support to four different tribal groups in the region.

He says, “Life cannot move on without trust. ... It is the bottom line of life. Life is not all about earning money, life is not all about being rich, and life is not all about being better than the other. Life is much more than that. What stays in life and what one needs in life is love, and if you can give that, you automatically get it back unconditionally.

“Until every person on the planet feels concern, appreciation, and accountability to every other person on the planet,” Emmanuel asks, “have we really earned the name Global Village?”

www.globalonenessproject.org/videos/theimportanceoftrust

The Wake Up Project

Jono Fisher

Jono Fisher started the Wake Up Project in Sydney, Australia, after he took a break from a stressful marketing role in a corporate office. He has never looked back. He meditates and looks after his health, and has built a business based on wisdom, kindness and compassion, sending kindness cards to people all over the world. The Wake Up Project is now a celebrated movement and Jono is a successful speaker, thought leader and entrepreneur with an ability to inspire audiences with his honesty, warmth and humour. He was recently the introductory speaker at the Dalai Lama’s Sydney talk for 10,000 people and has won multiple awards.

He says, “I continue to love simple ideas.” ●

<http://wakeupproject.com.au/about/>

Ubuntu...

“Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language... It is to say, ‘My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in what is yours.’ -Desmond Tutu

Ubuntu is a philosophy originating in Southern Africa that reminds us how we’re all connected. Our being, our life, depend on each other. The world is waking up to this inherent wisdom of life’s interconnectedness. How can we effectively incorporate this knowing into our lives and our business practices? How can this understanding positively inform our daily choices?

LIFE'S LESSON:

PROPELLING ONESELF UP

Serge Nicolai

If we want to go up, we cannot ignore the following self-reinforcing spiral:

DISCIPLINE
EFFORT
WISDOM

It is daily discipline that allows sustained efforts in any field.

It is sustained effort that creates wisdom. Think of a master builder and a master flautist.

It is wisdom that creates the understanding of the need for an ever-evolving discipline.

DISCIPLINE in youth
EFFORTS in middle age
WISDOM in old age

DISCIPLINE for the morning
EFFORTS for the day
WISDOM for the evenings

DISCIPLINE for action
EFFORT for devotion
WISDOM for perfection

Tuning the Soul

PIERRE RAVAN

Music and dance have always been ways for us to express the connection we have with each other, the universe and Absolute existence: from Bach to the Soweto Choir, from John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* to George Harrison's *My Sweet Lord*. PIERRE RAVAN explores the relationship between music, spirituality and his work as a DJ with the youth of today.

Q: You are a successful DJ who also lives a spiritual life. What does spirituality mean to you?

We read that spirituality is about living inwardly and being in the 'present' moment. What does that really mean in practical life? Where is that 'inside' in us where we should live? How can we feel it? Can we ultimately reach it?

The answer is simple: Spirituality is the science of the heart. When we learn to connect with it we will find that everything is there. Most amazingly we find out that we are all connected to each other through our hearts. When we tune ourselves to the same frequency, we will be in the same vibratory plane where we are all one. It is like being in a big nightclub and tuning ourselves to the sound that the DJ is playing, enjoying ourselves.

When we have less resistance in our hearts, we let go and become a part of that journey. Then we become unified as one single entity, lost in the music. But what is the force behind this unity? It is obviously love; having no prejudice towards others.

Q: Is it challenging to have a disciplined spiritual practice and also be in the club scene?

To live spiritually, you need to overcome desires. You can enjoy good food and good life, but you cannot be driven by them. The art is to live in the world but not be driven by temptations, and that is a tough call because at the human level we are tempted and we have desires. There is nothing wrong in saying something is beautiful, but wanting to possess it all the time is something else. So it is all about attitude towards life.

Attitude is important in everything, even your meditation practice. If you don't have the right attitude you will still cheat people, because you still have that element of impurity in you. If you go to a dance club and judge people because you meditate and they do not, that is wrong. First of all you did not have to go, and also there you can be an example. Without even opening your mouth, people will recognise something special about you and be attracted by that.

People respect you a lot when they see that on one hand you are with them, but at the same time you



have your own priorities. For example they say, “It is 4 a.m. and he goes to his room to meditate, to reset what is happening in his system before sleeping.”

As a musician you are exposed to so many things - sex, drugs and alcohol. I am convinced that even highly elevated people who can resist alcohol and drugs would still struggle with sexual attraction, as it is a strong pull. So it has been the downfall of many. The trick is not to lose sight of where you are going, so you do not lose the inner connection with that anchor.

Q: What do you hope to achieve?

We need to find a way of balancing the inner and outer life, and I feel that spirituality is the only way. I think balance in life is a huge art. So if spirituality teaches people how to achieve that, the work is done. I feel it is achievable.

If I were to achieve one thing, one state, it would be that I am at peace with myself. I think that is the ultimate.

Whether I am a teacher, a banker, a gardener, a baker, or whatever, I am here to fulfil the call of Nature. We do not have to be a priest or a master to become the conduit of Nature’s work.

There are a lot of beautiful souls out there, but we do not have the capacity to realise it. It is in our inability to see this that we judge the world and people. Wherever we find ourselves we need to be like a candle to see and attract people. Sometimes I feel that people on the dance floor are more connected than those in an ashram. It is not about where you are.

We need not give up life and joy. No! Without joy, good humour and laughter there is no spirituality. Spirituality is joy. We misunderstand spirituality. It is the freedom of a bird with the two wings of balance. It is hard work! Life is work!

If I were to achieve one thing, one state, it would be that I am at peace with myself. I think that is the ultimate. In that, ‘balance’ is vital; outer and inner balance. The outer deals with material life, with work, society, family, etc. Then I find an inner way, a guide, something in me, in my heart to which I give my full trust and faith. This is not giving up freedom. If I have faith, and the willpower to use that faith, and the patience and I do the work, I realise, “Wow! Life is not so difficult!”

The moment we are in balance and in tune, then we go, “Ahhh! I see things so differently,” and we wonder, “How come I could not see this before?” We no longer see problems; we see things totally differently, and our level of acceptance goes up. We accept fully with our heart, although not blindly, and when that happens, everything changes again. So life is a fascinating school!

I think a Master is a person who is in tune with Nature, so he can see and feel Nature. He does not



even know what he knows. That is so beautiful. He is so in tune that he is not even aware. It is so spontaneous. To me the ultimate goal is to become one with yourself, where you are so much in tune with yourself that you are not even aware.

Q: How does all of this relate to your work as a DJ with the younger generation?

People who come to a dance club come for different reasons. One is to get relief from the pressure and tension of life. Now imagine if they could find an alternative means of relief, intoxication and trance. By turning inside and connecting to the Source inside themselves, they can find it. That is the real ecstasy. And my experience is that the more we rely on drugs to achieve trance, the more we lose our ability to do it naturally.

Youth need to learn that while they are here to enjoy life, they also need to make that inner

connection. Meditation is the first step.

If you don’t know yourself, understand yourself and love yourself, then what is life? Knowing why am I here ... all this comes from within.

Q: Thousands of people dance at your concerts. What drives you?

I never understood love. I feel I am so much in love. If you ask me with what, I don’t know. I feel there is a power that affects me deeply. I have learnt that love is love. You cannot even describe it. I realise that love is the only way. Until we develop love in us, life is a big struggle.

Q: Tell us about music. How are music and spirituality connected?

I love this saying by Hazrat Inayat Khan that, “Music is nothing less than the picture of the Beloved.”



“Music is nothing less than the picture of the Beloved.”
Music is ultimately about tuning the soul.

Music is ultimately about tuning the soul.

Through music you can work and connect with many people, because when they come to listen and dance they have no resistance. In a club they are totally open. That is why I see music as a very potential means for connecting and that is why at forty-six I am still a DJ. After each concert I need to rest for one week because I give my everything.

Q: Tell us more about your work as a DJ.

For the past twenty-five years, I have been involved in the world of music and nightlife. I consider myself a successful DJ and producer and I am trying to be part of the evolution of

the club scene. I have met so many beautiful souls who gather in that place I call the club, where language and preaching are not involved. Through music they celebrate life, joy and love.

If we look at the roots of the club culture, we find that the main purpose was to create an atmosphere where people could put aside all their differences, leave behind their problems, and come to a place with no resistance, letting themselves being carried away by the music. Was that achieved? Did they get satisfaction? The answer in most cases is no. Why? Because drugs and alcohol were there. Instead of learning to connect inwardly through the heart to the main Source of Life, people relied on a false feeling of temporary intoxication and ultimately the inner connection was lost. This is far away from feeling the true peace and ecstasy.

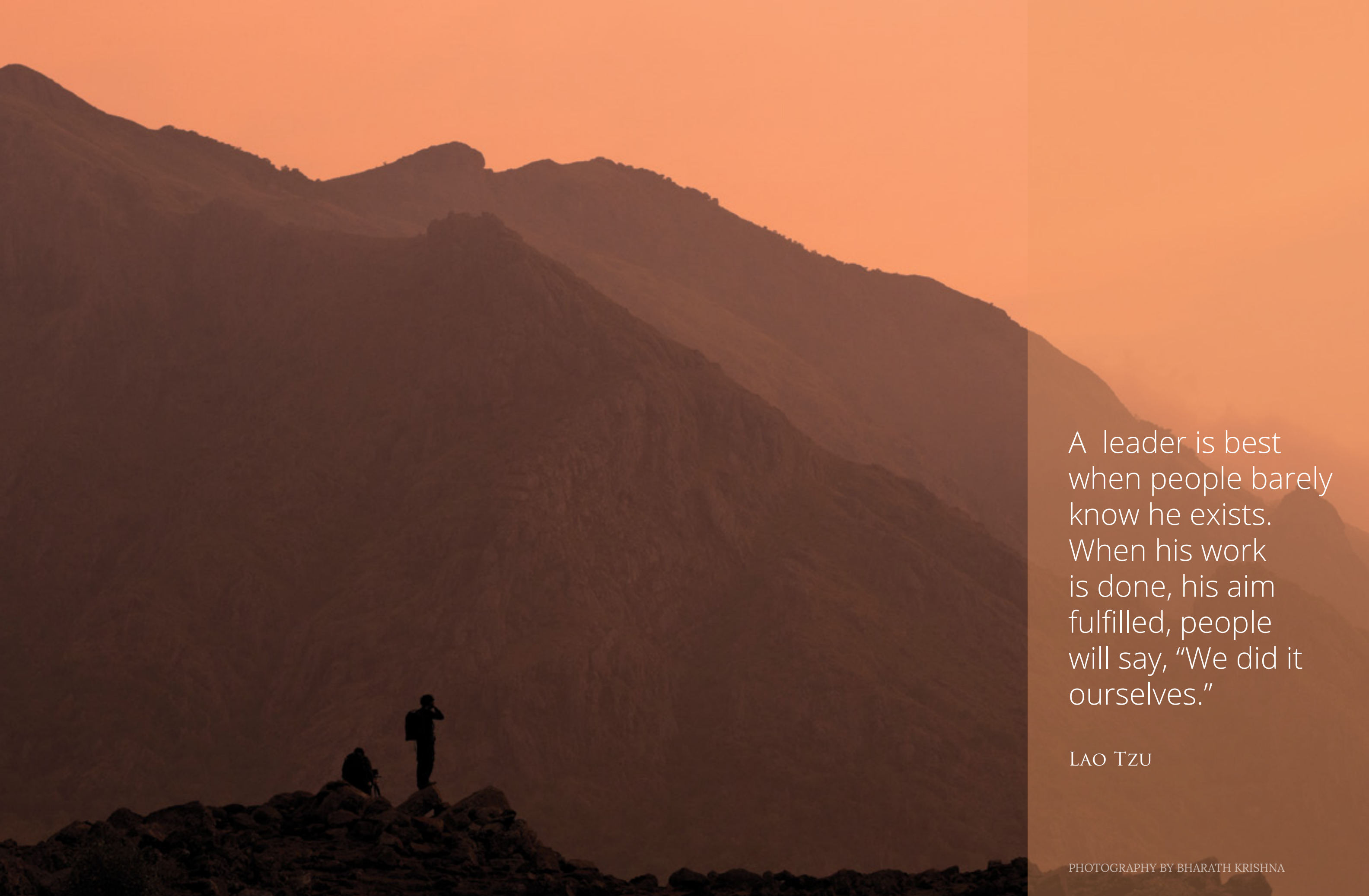
What is the solution to restore this frequency?

As far as my own experience as a DJ is concerned, I feel that clubbing can be like a group meditation where no one is being judged. Through music, people tune their hearts to the same vibratory dimension. By looking inside, the real intoxication which is permanent and subtle can be achieved. That can happen only when there is love, for themselves and for everybody around – all connected to the same source of existence.

We can be courageous, experience the inner Self and reach this ecstasy, simply by tuning to the heart ●

By looking inside, the real intoxication which is permanent and subtle can be achieved. That can happen only when there is love, for themselves and for everybody around – all connected to the same source of existence.

INTERVIEWER: AMIR IMANI

A photograph of a mountain range at sunset or sunrise. The sky is a warm, orange glow. In the foreground, two people are silhouetted on a rocky ridge. One person is standing and looking towards the mountains, while the other is sitting. The mountains in the background are layered, with the closest ones being darker and the ones further away appearing lighter due to the atmospheric haze.

A leader is best
when people barely
know he exists.
When his work
is done, his aim
fulfilled, people
will say, "We did it
ourselves."

LAO TZU

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BHARATH KRISHNA



TAGORE

*The Voice of India's
Spiritual Heritage*

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a mystic, an educator, a social reformer and contemporary thinker, a profoundly original writer and translator, a musician and composer, and an artist. He is most well known to the world as a poet, and received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 for his book of poetry, *Gitanjali*.

He was the voice of India's spiritual traditions to the rest of the world at the turn of the 20th century. His fame reached luminous heights, taking him around the world on lecture tours and tours of friendship.

Mahatma Gandhi was his devoted friend, and from time to time he participated in the Indian nationalist movement, though in his own visionary way. For Tagore was not jingoistic, having grown up

in a family atmosphere in which Sanskrit and ancient Hindu texts were combined with Islamic traditions and Persian literature. As a result, the citizens of India and Bangladesh equally identify with his work. He described his family as a "confluence of three cultures: Hindu, Mohammedan and British." He valued openness and the happy coexistence of many cultures and religions.

He believed that human beings could easily absorb different cultures in constructive ways, saying, "Whatever we understand and enjoy in human products instantly becomes ours, wherever they might have their origin. I am proud of my humanity when I can acknowledge the poets and artists of other countries as my own. Let me feel with unalloyed gladness that all the great glories of man are mine" ●

*We try to realise the essential unity of the world
with the conscious soul of man;
we learn to perceive the unity
held together by the one Eternal Spirit,
whose power creates the earth, the sky, and the stars,
and at the same time irradiates our minds
with the light of a consciousness
that moves and exists in unbroken continuity
with the outer world.*

from *Sadhana, the Realisation of Life*, 1916,
chapter 'The Relation of the Individual to the Universe'



THOUGHT AND PURPOSE

JAMES ALLEN



Until thought is linked with purpose, there is no intelligent accomplishment. With the majority, the barque of thought is allowed to 'drift' upon the ocean of life. Aimlessness is a vice, and such drifting must not continue for him who would steer clear of catastrophe and destruction.

They who have no central purpose in their life fall an easy prey to petty worries, fears, troubles and self-pitying. All of these are indications of weakness, which lead, just as surely as deliberately planned sins (though by a different route), to failure, unhappiness and loss, for weakness cannot persist in a power-evolving universe.

A man should conceive of a legitimate purpose in his heart and set out to accomplish it. He should make this purpose the centralising point of his thoughts. It may take the form of a spiritual ideal or it may be a worldly object, according to his nature at the time being. But whichever it is, he should steadily focus his thought-forces upon the object which he has set before him. He should make this purpose his supreme duty, and should devote himself to its attainment, not allowing his thoughts to wander away into ephemeral fancies, longings and imaginings. This is the royal road to self-control and true concentration of thought.

Even if he fails again and again to accomplish his purpose (as he necessarily must until weakness is overcome), the strength of character gained will be the measure of his true success, and this will form a new starting point for future power and triumph.

Those who are not prepared for the apprehension of a great purpose should fix the thoughts upon the faultless performance of their duty, no matter how insignificant their task may appear. Only in this way can the thoughts be gathered and focused, and resolution and energy be

developed, which being done there is nothing which may not be accomplished.

The weakest soul, knowing its own weakness, and believing this truth that strength can only be developed by effort and practice, will, thus believing, at once begin to exert itself. Adding effort to effort, patience to patience, and strength to strength, it will never cease to develop, and will at last grow divinely strong.

As the physically weak man can make himself strong by careful and patient training, so the man of weak thoughts can make them strong by exercising himself in right thinking.

To put away aimlessness and weakness, and to begin to think with purpose, is to enter the ranks of those strong ones who only recognise failure as one of the pathways to attainment; who make all conditions serve them, and who think strongly, attempt fearlessly and accomplish masterfully.

Having conceived of his purpose, a man should mentally mark out a straight pathway to its achievement, looking neither to the right nor the left. Doubts and fears should be rigorously excluded. They are disintegrating elements, which break up the straight line of effort, rendering it crooked, ineffectual and useless. Thoughts of doubt and fear never accomplished anything

and never can. They always lead to failure. Purpose, energy, power to do, and all strong thoughts cease when doubt and fear creep in.

The will to do springs from the knowledge that we can do. Doubt and fear are the great enemies of knowledge, and he who encourages them, who does not slay them, thwarts himself at every step.

He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered

“ *The will to do springs from the knowledge that we can do. Doubt and fear are the great enemies of knowledge, and he who encourages them, who does not slay them, thwarts himself at every step.* ”

failure. His every thought is allied with power, and all difficulties are bravely met and wisely overcome. His purposes are seasonably planted, and they bloom and bring forth fruit which does not fall prematurely to the ground.

Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes creative force. He who knows this is ready to become something higher and stronger than a mere bundle of wavering thoughts and fluctuating sensations. He who does this has become the conscious and intelligent wielder of his mental powers ●

Chapter 4, from *As a Man Thinketh*, 1902

“He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure. His every thought is allied with power, and all difficulties are bravely met and wisely overcome.

JAMES ALLEN (1864 – 1912) was a British mystic and philosopher, known for his inspirational books and poetry and as a pioneer of the self-help movement.

Born in Leicester, England, to a working-class family, he left school at fifteen to support the family, after his father died. In 1903 he retired to devote himself to writing and moved with his wife and daughter to a small cottage in Devon, where he spent the rest of his life.

As A Man Thinketh has influenced many contemporary writers and has inspired millions to recognise that our visions can become reality, simply through the power of thought.



The Beauty of the

INNER UNIVERSE

Over the years I have learned that my experience is different every time I sit to meditate. I look forward with anticipation to what it would be like on a given day. I have found that when I meditate I access a part of myself that keeps me honest – my heart. Meditation acts like a mirror that shows me what I am carrying in my heart. When I connect with it I feel grounded and go into a space where I quieten the mental chatter, slow down and feel ‘endless’ in existence, connected to all around me.

CICI SAFAVI

When I was young I read poetry, and one sentence awoke in my heart the nostalgia of a forgotten state of being:

“I would like to be a simple puddle of water to reflect the sky.”

To get back to simplicity and transparency would allow Infinity to reflect itself in me. Meditation awakens in me the longing I had of becoming that simple and humble being, yet rich with the immensity of the universe. That spiritual longing is there in us. The awakened state is not only for the Buddhas, it is for all of us to meditate and let ourselves be fascinated by the beauty of our inner world.

In today’s world we tend to look at the outside, seeing people in two dimensions: he is big or small, fat or thin, beautiful or ugly. We don’t see the depth, because this can only be seen with the eyes of the heart: if we don’t see our own depth we can’t see it in anybody else. I discover this universe within through meditation.

BENEDICTE HERVY

Life is meant to be simple. Charlie Chaplin observed: “We think too much and feel too little.” We complicate life with our over analysis of it. Many a time I have asked myself, what does meditation actually give me? Why do I take time out from my schedule to sit and meditate on the heart? The answer is inevitably linked to gaining that space within. I guess that’s why the wise men of yesteryear have said that the essence of life cannot be known by the five senses. To know it, we need to connect and dive deep into ourselves. This experience is the best teacher.

DURGA V. NAGARAJAN

Meditation

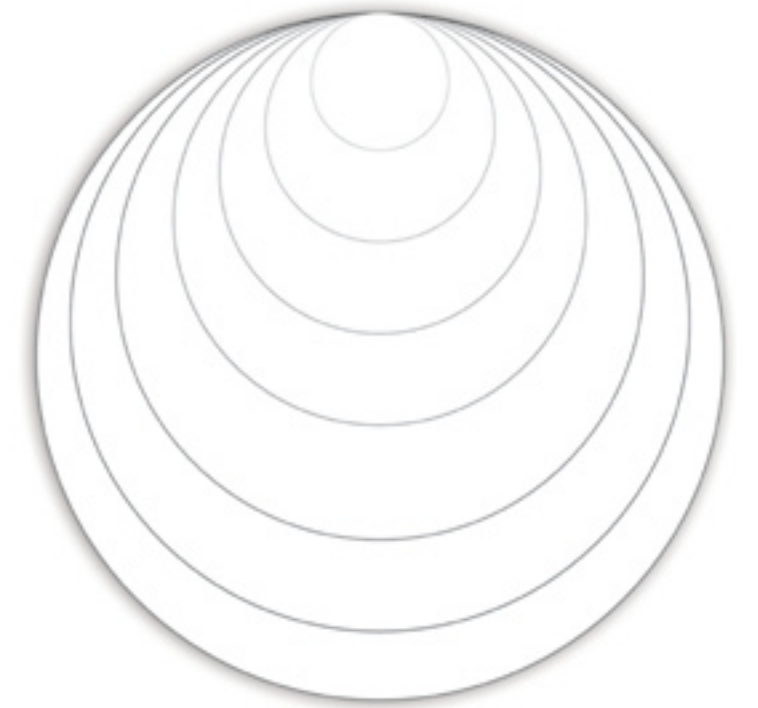
KAMLESH D. PATEL

Meditation is often defined as thinking continuously about one object of thought. We often get stuck on this definition, however, and lose the real purpose of meditation. Meditation must reveal the true nature of that object upon which we are meditating. Such revelation comes not as a thought, but as a feeling. Therefore, meditation is a process in which we shift from thinking to feeling. It is a journey from the complexity of mind to the simplicity of heart. It is for this reason that most methods of meditation involve the heart.

Though we can easily remember an image or an idea, it is difficult to recollect a feeling. Have you ever tried to recollect the taste of a meal you had many years back? You may vividly remember the place where you ate. You may even remember its ambience, but the actual taste of the food can never be retrieved. Why? It is because feeling is always in the present, in the now. Therefore, we cannot be happy with the feeling of a good meditation from eons back. Of course, the memory of a great revelation in meditation is good, but it is akin to someone who hits the jackpot once in his lifetime and is a beggar for evermore. The feeling we derive in meditation must become a permanent affair.

Yet, even feeling has its limitation. The heart is never truly satisfied with feeling. At some point, feeling becomes a burden, whether it is the feeling of pleasure, of joy, or even of bliss. Feelings are difficult to handle. In true meditation, we enter into absolute nothingness, a complete void of experience.

If you examine consciousness, you will find that it has a variety of states, just as water has different states. We have waking consciousness, with which we interact with the world. The consciousness of a person whose attention is only focused outwardly perceives only the outside world, accordingly. When we are asleep, we enter into the dreaming consciousness, and in deep sleep, our consciousness goes very deep. In meditation, our consciousness is moving towards the innermost Self, which is the core of our existence. As we traverse through the various states of meditation, we enter into a special state of consciousness where we are, at once, at the depths of our being, while being simultaneously aware of the things around us.



Meditation is a process in which we shift from thinking to feeling. It is a journey from the complexity of mind to the simplicity of heart.

A true seeker of Reality, though inwardly meditating, is meditatively active in the worldly sense as well.

This contradiction between the attraction towards the Self within and the pull of our awareness towards its outer periphery is only valid so long as there is no all-encompassing meditative state that expands throughout all states of consciousness, whether waking, meditating, or sleeping. A person in such an expanded state of consciousness is unable to differentiate between worldly and spiritual activity, as all is done in a purely meditative state ●



Interconnectedness

The infinite vibratory levels, the dimensions of interconnectedness are without end. There is nothing independent. All beings and things are residents in your awareness.

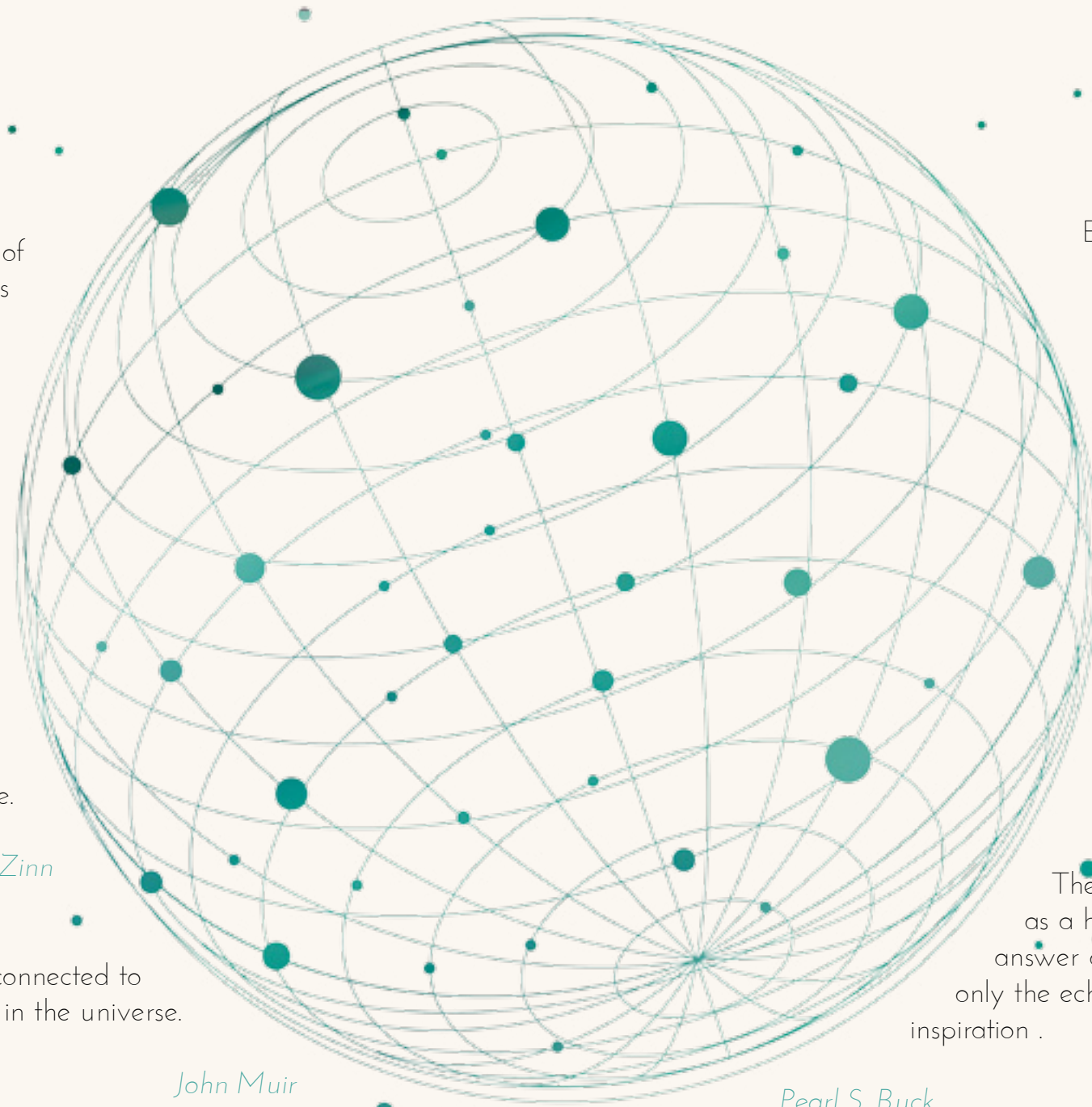
Alex Grey

Perhaps, ultimately, spiritual simply means experiencing wholeness and interconnectedness directly, a seeing that individuality and the totality are interwoven, that nothing is separate or extraneous. If you see in this way, then everything becomes spiritual in its deepest sense.

Jon Kabat Zinn

Tug on anything at all and you'll find it connected to everything else in the universe.

John Muir



Everything in our world is sacred and interconnected - and we're in the midst of an epochal shift to recognizing that truth in every realm of human endeavour. It's a magnificent time to be alive and participate in this evolutionary leap.

Stephen Dinan

Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

Martin Luther King, Jr

The person who tries to live alone will not succeed as a human being. His heart withers if it does not answer another heart. His mind shrinks away if he hears only the echoes of his own thoughts and finds no other inspiration.

Pearl S. Buck

HUMAN EVOLUTION

BRIGITTE SMITH



The beings seen in my pictures are symbols of Higher Spirits helping human beings to evolve and to become more conscious. They first appeared in my meditations. The caps on their heads are open on top in order for them to receive guidance. So far, I am unable to simply 'do' a picture; I have to wait until it comes. This is a totally different process to my usual professional way of working. After some anxiety, I had to accept that I am simply a servant and can only apply my will within the service. That state developed into a very grateful happiness.

PRAYER FOR THE BALANCE OF THE PLANET:

.....
Since the spiral is a symbol of human evolution, these Spirit helpers are trying to balance the situation on the planet using prayer.



IN SEARCH OF
HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS:

In 1900 Greek sponge divers found an antique shipwreck. Within it was something known as the Antikythera Mechanism, the first known analogue computer. Scientists could only X-ray it one hundred years later to discover the inner mechanism, and it is thought to possibly come from the school of Archimedes in Corinth or the famous ancient library of Pergamum. This inspired me to show this eternal urge in human beings to search and to strive. The released cranes are the freed thoughts.

INITIATION:

Here the Spirit helper is giving an olive branch to a soul being initiated into learning. The Spirit helpers are mostly clad in forms of nature.



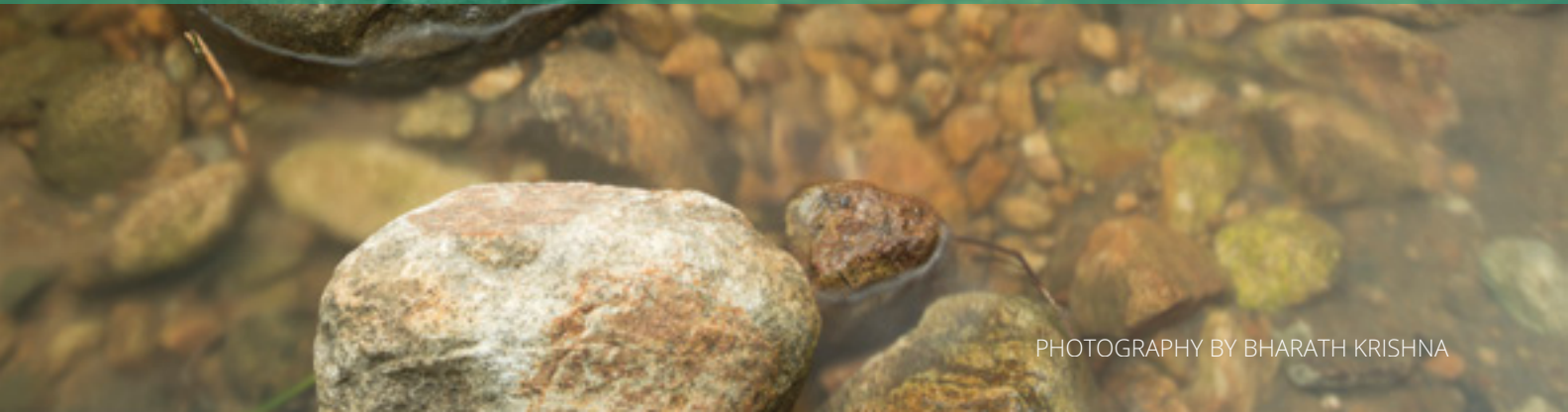
EMERGENCE:

Here a human being, not yet conscious, is being born out of plant-existence into the beginnings of consciousness.



Sometimes, if you stand on the bottom rail of a bridge and lean over to watch the river slipping slowly away beneath you, you will suddenly know everything there is to be known.

-A. A. MILNE, *The Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*



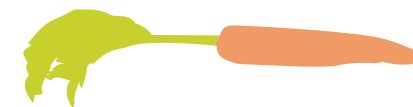
Nature's Bounty

Did you watch the 1999 movie, *Simply Irresistible*? While few film critics would consider it a cinematic gem, the delightfully whimsical theme deserves a deeper look. Sarah Michelle Gellar plays restaurant owner Amanda Shelton. When Amanda buys crabs from a mysterious man at a street market, one of the crabs escapes in the kitchen and becomes her magical cooking mascot. Suddenly, with the wave of an animatronic claw, whatever she feels while cooking in her restaurant is transferred to the patrons dining there – they laugh and cry and fall in love along with her. The result is that they are enchanted by their deep emotional experiences and the restaurant succeeds wildly, especially when she is happy!

While this fantastical outcome is portrayed in over-exaggerated Hollywood style, there is a lot to the idea that the energy with which we cultivate and prepare food is transmitted to the person eating it.

Yogis believe that the moment of eating should be almost like meditation, feeling so grateful for having food on the plate. If you eat in such a state of gratitude and love, and the food is prepared with love, then can you imagine the goodness in that food?

Try cooking with love. Try eating with love and gratitude and feel the difference. And enjoy these articles in which the authors share their joyful approaches to growing, buying and eating food.



in tune with nature

ELIZABETH CRICHTON

I first discovered Permaculture in 2008. I had no idea what it was all about but immediately felt at home with the simple, delightful, welcoming folk and very good vibes all round.

I was fascinated by the concepts presented, the simplicity, the wonderful and creative ways people had implemented ideas, and the concern for people in every sense. It all tied into my own value and belief system. I was most impressed that permaculture is all about working with nature rather than against it, integrating all human activities into a whole system.



I discovered that permaculture has a foundation of:

- Care of the earth: provision for all life systems to continue and multiply,
- Care of people: provision for people to access those resources necessary to their existence, and
- Share surplus: it sets limits to consumption.

The concept of Permaculture was developed in Tasmania in the late 1970s by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, and from this humble beginning, Permaculture has spread to just about every corner of the globe, and has been adapted for a large range of climates. Permaculture is a holistic design system for creating sustainable self-managing living environments and its design principles are used to create pathways to reasonable and sustainable usage of the earth's natural resources.

www.permacultureprinciples.com

Soon I realised I needed knowledge and skills. So I booked myself into an Introduction to Permaculture course. Gosh what a revelation! Even though the 'gardening' aspect of permaculture is one very small part of it, it was from this course that I set about transforming my entire garden and home. The local group helped me to dig swales, and water tanks were installed as well as solar panels on my roof.

Permaculture replicates nature. Studying how forests mature from plants growing in succession is fascinating. On a bare piece of land, weeds grow first, then small bushes and herbs, pioneer plants which fix nitrogen in the soil to help other plants to grow, and so on, until a canopy layer of tall trees is reached. Thus forests are built up of seven layers, and this is what we replicate in Permaculture when planting out a food forest. This I have done in my garden, front and back, so I now have over seventy fruit trees as well as my veggie patches for daily use.

In order to minimise work and maximise production, the system is integrated so that everything has a purpose and works together. Animals are a part of this integrated system as they do much of the work. For example, my chickens are useful for cleaning up the bugs, producing manure for fertiliser and producing eggs.

A principal idea is to form a closed loop so that things are recycled. Composting all living matter and using worm farms ensures good nutrients are fed to the plants and at minimum cost.

What fun it is to eat directly from the garden, knowing that it is all organic – no pesticides or herbicides to compromise my health. And all this on a little less than a quarter acre suburban block ●

References:

www.permaculturenews.org/2011/10/21/why-food-forests/
www.permacultureprinciples.com

“Permaculture integrates people into Nature's design. A permaculture design provides us with shelter, food, water, income, community and aesthetic and spiritual fulfilment within a balanced and healthy biological community.

DAN HEMENWAY

Back to the EARTH

VIJI BALASUBRAMANIAN

In the movie *Kumki*, a must-watch Tamil movie about the love between a mahout, his elephant, and a village belle, the chieftain of a tribal group tells the government officials waiting to buy out his land, “You’d all better watch out! In a few years from now, at the rate you are all going, you are going to end up eating the stones and mud that makes buildings.” He alluded to the fact that there may be no earth left to cultivate edible crops. The pathos, sincerity, and anger in his voice struck a deep chord in me.

I remembered my young days, when my grandmother would painstakingly cultivate her garden and bring the veggies into her kitchen to cook in earthenware. Grandfather would preserve seeds in cow dung plastered to the mud walls and exchange the heirlooms with farmers the year after. The remaining cow dung would be mixed and used as methane gas to run the stoves of the homes. The food was yummy and tasty and the atmosphere was, oh, so natural!

My days in New York and Chicago brought me the simple pleasures of the Farmers’ Market – home-baked breads, jellies, fresh fruits and veggies. The joyful feeling of being nourished by our earth!

The best part of a meal in my household is to see my children sincerely close their eyes before

eating and offer thanks. Sometimes they softly say, “Please let it not be beetroot again,” but they always end with an offering of gratitude, “Thank you for giving me this food that helps me be strong.”

Watching the serene expressions on their faces always reminds me that eating is much more than just relishing, chewing and swallowing food. It is a nourishing activity that connects us to our roots, to the earth, and to the magnificence of Nature that provides for us so we may live well in body, mind and spirit. If we choose to do so, eating can be an uplifting act of meditation.

Modern farming methods have led to the burgeoning of supermarkets and the availability of food in many

processed forms. The farmers are often forgotten, especially those who use traditional and safe practices to cultivate foods. This is an alarming trend, as “We are what we eat.” The younger generation face the danger of being disconnected from farmers, from farming practices, and sometimes even from the earth. I am grateful that we take my children to farms, where local produce is cultivated and available for sale. They know local farmers, who bring with them the joy of being in tune with Nature. Now, whenever they can, my husband, ten-year-old daughter, and five-year-old son are quick to point out opportunities to recycle, compost and work with the earth.

Recently, a small child asked me, “How does a mango tree produce such yummy fruit when all we give it is some water?” I paused and of course had to go back to Mother Nature – the sunshine she gives and the nutrients in her soil. The biggest advantage of living a life that is in tune with Nature is that we

discover that we are an integral element of a whole. We are filled with wonderment, with awe and with reverence. In parallel, the more connected we are with the food we eat, the more likely we are to promote soil restoration, seed preservation and the use of natural crop and animal husbandry practices. We then have safe food on our plates, and this means healthier bodies and healthier minds for generations to come.

“This Earth is not a gift from our parents, it is a loan from our children,” is a Kenyan proverb, and I have often pondered on the significance of this statement as well as ways in which to protect and enrich this loan. Always, I have come back to the same starting point – to be in tune with Nature ●



New Ways to Use



COCONUT OIL

You may be familiar with the incredible health benefits of coconut oil. Here are a few tips on how else to use this gift of nature.

AT HOME:

Gently rub onto cuts and burns, once the initial heat is relieved, for its natural antimicrobial properties.

FUN IN THE SUN:

Use as a natural SPF 4 sunscreen.

OUT AND ABOUT:

Apply as a natural lip balm.

AT WORK:

Add as a delicious coffee creamer.

TREAT YOURSELF:

Mix with cacao powder, honey, and a pinch of sea salt for a tasty chocolate truffle spread. Try it with a pinch of cardamom or cayenne!

NEUROPATHY

Coconut can help relieve neuropathy; it can improve circulation and restore feeling to limbs where numbness has set in.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

Besides lowering blood sugars, in some cases 2-3 tablespoons of coconut oil per day have completely reversed symptoms of type 2 diabetes.

Some Health Benefits

SWEETENER

Coconut sugar is also a low Glycaemic Index sweetener.

GI IN FOODS

Coconut flour reduces the GI of foods in which it is used.

INSULIN RESISTANCE

A diet rich in coconut oil protects against 'insulin resistance'.



Look deep into
nature, and then
you will understand
everything better.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAJESH MENON



Listening to Nature

Invite your friends or your parents or grandparents to come for a walk with you somewhere in Nature. First, read the story aloud together wherever you go - in a garden or a park, at the beach, or in the countryside.

Story from the Srimad Bhagavatam

King Yadu was taking a walk in the forest when he met an old man who had lived there for many, many years. After spending some time with him, the king found this man to be very learned and wise and wondered how he had learnt so much, living alone in the forest.

"I have had twenty-four teachers," the old man answered. "They taught me everything I know."

The king was surprised, "Who are these wise teachers? What are their names and where can I find them? I too want to learn."



The sage, with a twinkle in his eye, started naming all of them:

"The first is air. Just like air is not affected by odours, good or bad, I try to remain unaffected by good or bad situations.

"Look at the mountain far away. It taught me that I can rise above all difficulties and that I can stand straight and tall.

The sage dipped his foot in the rivulet flowing beside him. "Water is pure, clean, sweet and soothing.

"Then there is tree: it teaches one to be generous and to give without expecting in return.

"The moon teaches us to keep watch over the needs of friends, even in the darkest of times.



"Fire teaches us to be fearless and self-controlled and burn away all evil.

"The ocean teaches us to be calm and poised in knowledge, and not overflow nor dry up.

"Mud teaches to absorb good things and to keep our minds open.

"Stars teach us to aspire for the highest and shine even when it is dark.

"Bees shows us to accept the essence of everyone."

The old sage said, "God created all these things in Nature, but was not satisfied. So he created human beings to use their wisdom to learn from them."



After you have finished the story, go for a quiet walk and look around. See what you can add to the list. Listen. Listen to the flowers, the leaves, the insects, the earth, the rocks, the trees, the birds, the sky and the water. What do they tell you?

Afterwards, draw, paint or write about your discoveries ●

Contribute and Win

Please send whatever you create:
written articles as Word documents, and
paintings and drawings as scanned images (>300 dpi)
along with your name and address, to:

[contributions@
heartfulnessmagazine.com](mailto:contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com)

Prizes will be awarded to three very inspiring, original or beautiful entries.



THE KING

who removed

the Veils of ILLUSION

PART II

Dear readers,

You will remember King Vikram's story about the adventures of the four friends, and his final question: "Tell me, with whom should the young girl spend her life?" Here are some of our readers' thoughts:

- *The one the girl falls in love with because she has her own desires, story and soul too.*
- *No one owns this girl. Let her heart speak in time; after all, she's just become alive! Whoever has patience to wait for her to come to her own decision is best suited to be a partner in love and relationship.*
- *The priest as he gave life to that figure.*
- *The Goldsmith who made and gave necklaces, bangles and earrings to the girl carries the real feelings of a life-partner or husband, and so he deserved to be her husband. The other people have worked upon the girl as creator, protector and life-giver - All of these feelings are of Father, brother and God himself. And so, they are not the suitable match for her.*
- *None of the four should marry the girl, as it will disturb the harmony among friends.*

Now, Queen Abol-Rani remained silent behind the four veils that hid her from view. Her maids-in-waiting were also present in the reception room, and they too were listening, smiling mischievously and whispering. Not daring to address the queen directly, King Vikram had narrated his story to the queen's earrings. They answered him that it was certainly the one who gave her life who should become her husband.

Queen Abol-Rani could not refrain from uttering a cry of disappointment upon hearing the answer. She said, "He who gave her life loves her as God is love. One who crafted her loves her like a creator, like her father. The one who clothed her protects her with the love of a brother. It is the one who adorned her with jewels who loves her for who she is. In truth, the girl should marry the goldsmith!"

Then she continued, "It is said that our heart is like a violin that vibrates with love by reproducing the notes it heard during childhood. It reproduces them in all our love relations. Thus we learn to love. Our heart is like a violin with a few inherited strings. We resonate to all forms of love always with the same strings. We have to discover new strings for our violin, learning the nuances of love until we find the most subtle form of love."

The queen had hardly uttered these words than the first veil fell and only three veils remained behind which the queen was hidden from the eyes of the king.

A little disturbed by the words of the queen, King Vikram asked permission to retire for a few moments to meditate. Listening to the warm, rich voice of the queen, he felt a powerful vibration in his heart, like a cosmic Om. He felt connected with his inner Self, in resonance with everything that feels right. This time it was no longer the curious king who was responding, but his heart that began to beat at the rhythm of his fate with the quiet confidence of the intuition of the heart.

A few minutes of meditation were enough to inspire him with a new story in response to the queen's wishes. "I have heard your request, O queen. Please will you allow me to answer with another story?"

Only silence answered him. "So if you do not want to answer me, my queen, I think your necklace will!" The girls were enjoying the conversation, smiling and giving each other knowing looks, while the necklace jingled and replied, "I am listening to you, O king."

So King Vikram began a new story.

“In a certain town, there lived a shopkeeper, with his wife and two sons. After a while, the wife gave birth to a daughter and they named her Chandraprabha, which means moonlight. When Chandraprabha grew up, she was the most beautiful girl in the kingdom. Suitors began to arrive at the merchant’s house to ask for her hand.

Among all of them, the shopkeeper chose a strong, skilled craftsman who could build wonderful flying machines that carried people to heaven. The same day, the wife, who did not know the decision of her husband, promised her daughter to a healer who often helped her and could bring people back to life. The first son, who had no idea what his parents had done, promised his sister to a mighty warrior. The second son ignoring the actions of the others, promised his sister to a young musician who had known the girl since childhood.

When the merchant, his wife and sons all met that evening, they discovered that each of them had promised the girl to a different fiancé. They were dismayed and greatly embarrassed.

Observing the position of the astral bodies, the astrologers determined a favourable day for the wedding. On that day, the artisan, the healer, the warrior and the musician all arrived at the house of the merchant, but the graceful Chandraprabha was nowhere to be seen. The whole family started to look for her, as it was not her habit to go without informing anyone. No one could find her and the waiting grew longer and longer; all were concerned. “What if something has happened to our little girl,” thought her father.

A neighbour finally arrived carrying the dark news: the lifeless body of the beautiful Chandraprabha had been found, as she had been fatally bitten by a snake.

“Alas! What misfortune.” moaned the mother. “Alas, my beloved daughter, I will never see you again.”

The whole family fell into total despair. Then the mother remembered the healer and asked, “Is there a way to bring her back to life?”

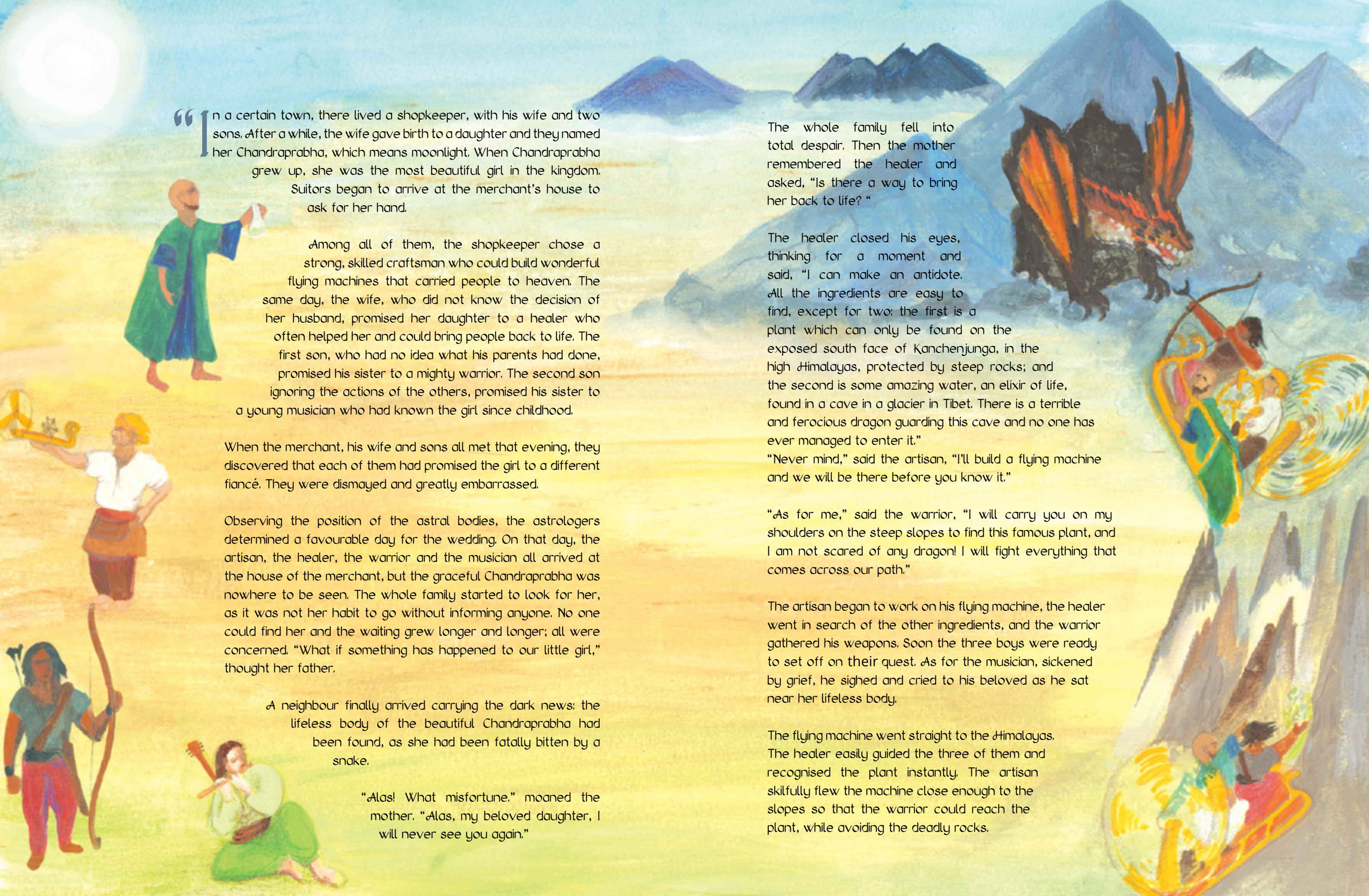
The healer closed his eyes, thinking for a moment and said, “I can make an antidote. All the ingredients are easy to find, except for two: the first is a plant which can only be found on the exposed south face of Kanchenjunga, in the high Himalayas, protected by steep rocks; and the second is some amazing water, an elixir of life, found in a cave in a glacier in Tibet. There is a terrible and ferocious dragon guarding this cave and no one has ever managed to enter it.”

“Never mind,” said the artisan, “I’ll build a flying machine and we will be there before you know it.”

“As for me,” said the warrior, “I will carry you on my shoulders on the steep slopes to find this famous plant, and I am not scared of any dragon! I will fight everything that comes across our path.”

The artisan began to work on his flying machine, the healer went in search of the other ingredients, and the warrior gathered his weapons. Soon the three boys were ready to set off on their quest. As for the musician, sickened by grief, he sighed and cried to his beloved as he sat near her lifeless body.

The flying machine went straight to the Himalayas. The healer easily guided the three of them and recognised the plant instantly. The artisan skilfully flew the machine close enough to the slopes so that the warrior could reach the plant, while avoiding the deadly rocks.





Next the company flew swiftly to Tibet and reached the glacier. At the entrance of the cave, the dragon threw himself on them with a dreadful fury, but the warrior stood fearlessly before him, brandishing his weapons. With incredible power, he shot an arrow fitted with a half-moon tip, killing the dragon instantly. Carefully they collected the precious elixir and started their journey home.

On their return, the warrior took the girl in his arms, and the healer poured a few drops of the potion he had prepared onto her lips. The artisan was anxiously watching, and the musician was praying. Suddenly Chandraprabha's chest moved and she opened her eyes. Miracle of miracles, she was alive! Everyone began to dance with joy, and her parents and brothers were so happy to see Chandraprabha healthy and sound.

After much rejoicing the question arose: which one of the four contenders was the worthiest and should take the girl's hand in marriage?"

What do you think? In truth, to which of the four suitors should Chandraprabha be married and why?

Will you find the right answer and bring down the second veil of Abol-Rani? Please send your answers to contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com

Next month, we will listen to the end of this story and the next one from King Vikram ●

To be continued...

Relax Here and Now

Sit comfortably and close your eyes very softly and very gently.

Let's begin with the toes. Wiggle your toes. Now feel them relax.

Relax your ankles and feet. Feel energy move up from the earth ... up your feet to your knees relaxing the legs.

Relax your thighs. The energy moves up your legs ... relaxing them.

Now, deeply relax your hips ... stomach ... and waist.

Relax your back. From the top to the bottom the entire back is relaxed.

Relax your chest ... and shoulders. Feel your shoulders simply melting away...

Relax your upper arms. Relax each muscle in your forearms ... your hands... right up to your fingertips.

Relax the neck muscles. Move your awareness up to your face. Relax the jaws ... mouth ... nose ... eyes ... earlobes ... facial muscles ... forehead ... all the way to the top of your head.

Feel how your whole body is now completely relaxed.

Move your attention to your heart. Rest there for a little while. Feel immersed in the love and light in your heart.

Remain still and quiet, and slowly become absorbed in yourself.

Remain absorbed for as long as you want, until you feel ready to come out.





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