

Spiritual Guidance

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

February 2012 e-Newsletter

Our soul intention for this e-newsletter is to create a positive, uplifting, inspiring and spirit-filled message (in amongst the conventionally-perceived journalism practiced today). We extend this offering to you and hope, if only for a moment in time, we provide a hint of another reality that is there for your embracing. Enjoy!

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You are invited to share this e-newsletter with those family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances you think may be interested.

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If you have a newsworthy item that you would like added to the e-newsletter, please forward your submission to newsletter@servinyourjourney.com.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OFFERINGS:

1. PERSONAL STORY OF SPIRITUAL LESSONS

For-giving

There are some words in the English language that, when looked at from a different perspective, have a whole new meaning (pun intended). This simple ability to present a word so that we see things differently is only the beginning of how we can change our perception of the world around us.

One such word is 'disease'. Dictionary.com defines 'disease' as "a disordered or incorrectly functioning organ, part, structure, or system of the body resulting from the effect of genetic or developmental errors, infection, poisons, nutritional deficiency or imbalance, toxicity, or unfavorable environmental factors; illness; sickness; ailment." This, I suppose, is what most people think when they see the word 'disease'. What happens when you see 'disease' as 'dis-ease'? Hmm...interesting. 'Dis-ease' suggests you may not be at 'ease' or peace. Spiritual and natural healers alike suggest that all 'disease' is of the mind. Heal the mind and the body will heal too. This may explain the extraordinary stories we hear about people who miraculously heal themselves from 'diseases' that are thought to be terminal, with little or no allopathic medical intervention.

And what about the word 'everyone', a commonly used word in the English language? For those who aspire to the spiritual concept of 'oneness', look at 'everyone' as 'every-one'. When looked at as 'every-one', doesn't the word 'everyone' bring on a whole new meaning?

This brings me to the word I want to focus on for this passage. Forgiveness offers us tremendous opportunities for inner peace, joy and love in our lives. From a spiritual perspective, forgiveness is essential for spiritual growth and unlocks a door—it is a key—to higher levels of consciousness.

I was recently having breakfast with a spiritual seeker and we began to talk about forgiveness, or forgiving people. My brother confessed the word 'forgiving' did not resonate well with him. He expressed that the word 'forgiving' was fraught with Christian dogma. Even though I think forgiveness is one of the great gifts Christianity has offered to humankind, I understood my brother's apprehensions about the connection between the word 'forgiving' and Christian teachings.

We went on to talk about forgiveness and 'forgiving' more. He expressed concern that the concept of forgiveness assumed you had done something wrong to begin with and that he wanted to get past all that dogma to something more creative and healing-oriented. I certainly understood where my brother was coming from. A Course in Miracles teaches that forgiveness is the realization that what you thought happened in the past actually never did. Therefore, what you thought needed forgiving never actually needed it in the first place.

My brother went on to express joy that he saw 'forgiving' as 'for-giving'. And light bulbs of joy went off in my heart. Indeed... 'for-giving'. Yes, we are here on this great journey called life for 'forgiving'. But what would happen if everyone focused on being here in this time 'for-giving'? If we truly embodied and embraced 'for-giving', we would never have to worry about 'forgiving'. Because we would be wired 'for-giving' instead of taking, we would create and manifest the conditions that would be devoid of any actions that would require 'forgiving'.

Words are only words. But sometimes when we see things differently, we see a whole new perspective on life. And sometimes words are part of that new perception and perspective.

Can 'forgiving' be replaced with 'for-giving'? I think so, my friends. For-in-giving we receive. And in giving and receiving we create and manifest our heart's purest desire—joy, inner peace and love.

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

2. CONTEMPLATIVE THOUGHTS*

"True friendship is to liberate someone from pain. True friends will caution each other and help each other stay safe from suffering. Friendship isn't about sharing doubts and criticisms. A true friend would do NOTHING that brings someone down. Today let me be a true friend by uplifting my friends and protecting them from negativity."

"The more we transform ourselves the more our life shows the results. Any level of change begins within the self. When I begin to change myself, stepping into my self respect and my highest expression, this begins to show in my life. The drama of life opens new doors for me as I am now ready to step through. Today let me revel in watching my life change."

"The greatest power now in the world is the power of purity. Purity is the innocence and goodness inside each soul. This power is expressed in moments of kindness, quiet heroism and generosity. This is the power that will transform a world in need of love. Today let me express the power of purity within myself."

"Acceptance is the first step to transforming unwanted habits of thought and emotion. When I just accept things, people etc. that come along my way I will start noticing how the chatter of my mind stops the thoughts of judgment, jealousy and dislike. This gives me an experience of lightness and freedom from waste thoughts. Today for the entire day let me practice acceptance."

"Try on a new outlook. It feels good to try on new clothes or a new hairstyle. In the same way, trying on a new outlook also feels nice, bringing newness to my life. Today let me explore a new outlook by being open to seeing the world in new ways."

"Through my thoughts I am either generating power or losing power. Positive thoughts generate power and negative thoughts waste it. Today let me ensure I am generating power for myself and for others around me by creating elevated and refined thoughts."

"Be still. Although my body may be moving, I can hold stillness inside that radiates out to the world. In a world where everyone is moving fast, my determination to remain still inside becomes a refreshing oasis of calm. Today let me practice being still."

"Division is the result of not having a vision of unity. When I purify my vision, I see clearly how we are united by a subtle thread of love. I see the spiritual connection between all souls and I no longer experience division. Today let me experience unity with all people by seeing beyond division."

"In a world that bounces from action to reaction, expression to opposition we are surrounded by polarizing opinions. The soul feels pulled in all directions. A state of duality internally pulls me apart. However when I find my centre point - the centre of myself - I find a quiet place that is untouched by the push and pull of daily living and the tensions of a tense world. Today let me be whole, beyond polarity by staying in my centre."

"Spirituality is relocating my experience of myself outside the physical domain. Rather than trying to fit spirituality into a human box - reducing its power to the physical only, I can expand my consciousness beyond the physical. Today let me explore who I am beyond the physical sensations and limitations of my body."

"Waste thoughts such as worry, guilt, regret, criticism take no time to be created, they are constantly occurring as a result of what I see, feel or do. However waste thoughts take a lot of my time and energy to sustain, often engaging me in constant interaction with them even when I wish to be thinking of other things. Only by creating powerfully positive thoughts can I reduce the dominance of waste thoughts in my mind. Today let me create powerful and inspiring thoughts and observe their nurturing impact."

"By stilling the mind you can hear your own inner voice. It takes effort to listen with your 'inner ear' to the still small voice that is the wisdom of your heart. Everyone has this voice but few can hear it amidst the noise of incessant thinking and emotional turmoil. Meditation is a way of slowing and quieting the antics of the mind so I can hear my own voice. Today let me slow my mind and listen to my own wisdom."

"Our own perfection moves away from us when we look at the weaknesses of others. If I indulge in looking at the weaknesses of others it is very likely that my inner peace and harmony will be lost. Others move forward on their journey when we see their strengths. Today let me see strength in others."

"When I discover my inner core, the quiet inner "being" that is me, I also discover a deep inner happiness that is untouched by the outside world. We have all become conditioned to need a cause for happiness. Today I am happy because of good weather or because of an anticipated meeting with a friend or a shopping expedition. However, in reality, when I am in touch with myself I realize I don't need any reason or cause to be happy, I JUST AM ! Today let me be happy for NO reason!"

"The real lessons of life do not need to be remembered because they cannot be forgotten. Real learning has nothing to do with remembering things. That's what makes real learning a joyful, an awakening and an empowering experience. Life is my school, every scene is a workshop, my teachers are all around me and every interaction carries a potential lesson to be discerned and learned. Today let me treasure real learning."

"To seek approval is to try to prove yourself. The thought that I must prove my worth is one of the most undermining thoughts possible. I do not have to prove my worth, for each soul, including me, is inherently valuable. When I start to experience and appreciate myself in this way, it creates a deep feeling of love and care that permeates through all my relationships and interactions. Practicing this awareness will awaken a deep love for the self and others. Today let me become aware of my own worth."

"The more sensitive you are to the accuracy of the drama of life, the more you refine the art and skill of reading between the lines. Each person's experience of life's drama is highly subjective because we are each unique. However when I understand that each scene of the drama has a secret meaning hidden in it just for me, I can then find it and use it to benefit myself. Today let me observe the drama and understand the personal meaning of each scene for me."

"Overcoming expectation is the key to freedom. One of the ways we attempt to fulfill our basic needs for love, happiness or peace is through expectation. By expecting others to fulfill my needs, I have slowly lost my own mastery and become dependent. True freedom is to have no dependencies and a lot of kind connections. Today let me be truly free by letting go of expectations."

"When I am able to regenerate myself after a tiring experience or a period of lower mental/emotional energy it is because I have the creative power within the self. To draw upon this wellspring of original, unpolluted energy within me, gives me the power to regenerate myself. Today let me tap into the flowing stream of fresh energy within myself."

"When I lose touch with my own truth I begin to replace it with beliefs about myself and others. Some of these beliefs may have truth in them, but some will be created based on my fears, insecurities or hurts. When I begin to live my life on the

basis of these beliefs, I create experiences that reinforce these beliefs and drift even further from truth. Today let me remind myself of truth by remembering who I really am; a pure, peaceful, being of light living in a human body."

"Be the actor not the role. We all play many roles in life; mother, teacher, lawyer etc. When I carry the awareness of these identities into my every action, I become that role. Having the awareness that I am the actor within this role allows me to not be constricted by the role but to step out of it when I wish. I am much more than any role I play even the ones I love the most. Remembering this about myself is one step towards freedom. Today let me consider myself the actor within the role."

"Make internal alignment your spiritual effort. The difference between what I value and how I act is the gap between my true self and ego. To watch my actions throughout the day and see how they are on or off track is to keep myself accountable to my highest self. This focus on personal accountability is the highest spiritual effort. Today let me experience an internal alignment with my highest self."

"Recognize the treasure hidden in the people's hearts. Today many hearts are closed with fear, anxiety and stress causing one to miss the beauty stored in each one. When I look at another human being and recognize their inherent beauty the heart begins to soften and open up. Today let me practice seeing hidden treasures in everyone."

"Real beauty, at the deepest human level, is when we are touched by the beauty of another's being. The fundamental characteristic of the power of presence that emanates from a beautiful being is 'radiance'; it is the radiant light of their consciousness. Today let me be aware of the radiant light of others' consciousness."

"Identify with the quiet strength inside. There is a quiet, self-assured portion of me that holds fast during tumultuous times. This is my true identity. When I locate my true identity inside I can always find strength. Today let me redirect myself to this quiet strength inside and have my outlook refreshed."

"Keep noble and virtuous thoughts in the mind and keep the awareness of being a seed for your future. Then in a world of increasingly meaninglessness, we will find meaning within ourself. Today let me remember that spirituality is the simplicity of living inside the noble qualities and thoughts that are my original nature."

"It is only when someone is completely free within themselves that their 'presence' can be felt in all directions. They never attempt to 'escape' into something on their mind. That doesn't mean they are mindless, more likely they are masters of their mind, able to use this 'tool of creativity' accurately and when appropriate. They have a clear inner awareness of their self, quite distinct from their mind. And yet they know that their mind is integral to their consciousness."

"Within the self, within our consciousness, we can summon up the 'screen of our mind' and use it to perform a specific task such as creating a vision, or creating a list of options to act or juxtaposing two different ideas or concepts, or visualise the future etc. And then, when the task is finished, we can instantly dissolve the screen, or send it into the background of our awareness. Unfortunately most of us don't learn how to do this. Instead we keep many mental screens running in our consciousness and create the habit of jumping from one to the other without properly closing the previous screen, the previous story."

"When there are many mental screens running on our minds, we get lost in the stories. We imagine something we are watching on our mind is being threatened so we create thoughts of anxiety and worry. Or we keep running the outer world on the screen of our mind and lose ourselves in the lives of others. All these become inner habits that distort, defocus and diminish the radiant power of our consciousness, our self, our very being ! This is what tends to dilute the power of our presence."

* *Complements of the Brahma Kumaris* (<http://www.bkwsu.com/index.html>).

3. POEM

The Way of Chuang Tzu

The man in whom Tao
Acts without impediment
Does not bother with his own interests
And does not despise
Others who do.
He does not struggle to make money
And does not make a virtue of poverty.

He goes his way
Without relying on others
And does not pride himself
On walking alone.
While he does not follow the crowd
He won't complain of those who do.
Rank and reward
Make no appeal to him;
Disgrace and shame
Do not deter him.
He is not always looking
For right and wrong
Always deciding "Yes" or "No".

Thomas Merton

4. QUOTE or QUESTION

"No thirst for gain, no fear of loss: Lo, peace is yours." (Sri Chinmoy)

5. A TRADITIONAL IRISH BLESSING

My Irish roots reveal themselves in this blessing that I offer to you and your loved ones. Follow this link to the video...
http://www.e-water.net/viewflash.php?flash=irishblessing_en.

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6. THE GREAT BELL CHANT (THE END OF SUFFERING)

Read by Thich Nath Hanh and chanted by Brother Phap Niem, this video offers a wonderful, meditative opportunity to bring you inner peace. The creators of this video/audio track were Gary Malkin, the composer/arranger, producer, and collaborator Michael Stillwater. The work came from a CD/book called Graceful Passages: A Companion for Living and Dying. Follow this link to the video and more information... <http://vimeo.com/6518109>.

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

CONTRIBUTING SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND TEACHERS:

Spiritual Guidance is honored to collaborate with other Spiritual Guides and Teachers to serve your personal journey toward enlightenment. If you would like to be a contributing Spiritual Guide and Teacher to this e-newsletter, please contact Spiritual Guidance (our contact information is at the very bottom of this e-newsletter).

7. RICHARD HARVEY – WHY YOU CANNOT FOLLOW AN INDIVIDUAL PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Dear Richard, I have decided to make peace with my ego self. I struggled and fought with it for so long. I tried therapy and spiritual practices. I lived in a monastery. I became accomplished at various forms of yoga, martial arts and holistic practices. I have read widely, both modern and traditional psycho-spiritual books and teachings. As the years of disappointment and lack of any real attainment, manifested as psychological inertia and spiritual stagnation, have accrued I despair of any change or transformation ever taking place. Making peace with my ego seems to be the only way for me. Why can't you follow an individual path to enlightenment?

There are three stages of human development. One way of understanding them is in regard to the ego self, or the individual sense. In the first stage you awaken by discovering yourself, you wake up to not only conscious and subconscious emotional-behavioral patterns, but also to the hidden dynamics of the unconscious. No short cut exists for this kind of work. It takes as long as necessary. For some it is measured in stubbornness, for others in ignorance. Further obstacles can be denial, refusal, lack of love, anger, frustration, depression, obstinacy (different to stubbornness), self-importance or even the enjoyment of life as it is (complacency?).

When the seeker has penetrated the confines of exclusively egoic existence, he or she awakens for the first time in this life. Only then does the seeker see that the life before this awakening was largely, even wholly, unconscious sleeping. The ability to be present is now possible along with the capacity for true compassion, deepening real relationship and existence guided by heart and spirit. The outcome of this second stage is the complete flowering of the human personality. All tendencies and potentials are fulfilled and completed and the seeker faces the beginning of the third stage, the spiritual threshold to liberation and realization.

The end of the second stage is a further or second awakening. It is the awakening out of the egoistic concerns and it is a point of surrender. The ego has not been shed completely by any means and egoic identification persists even to higher stages of spiritual attainment, although it must eventually be entirely overcome. But towards the end of the second and the beginning of the third stage the individual point of view becomes increasingly unimportant. The personal attachments, which have been shed during the processes of the first and second stages, open up a new freedom, a new perspective beyond fear and desire.

So far this process of awakenings and authenticity has revolved around attachments and ever more subtle egoistic identification and it continues to do so through deepening spiritual practice. At no point in the psycho-spiritual quest do you give up or let go into a compromise with the ego, because egoic forces are the symbol of everything that is unreal, while the psycho-spiritual journey is direct and unwavering dedication to what is true and divine. This is the discovery which awaits every seeker on the psycho-spiritual path – the gift of the real treasure of life. You cannot follow an individual path to enlightenment. The ego will always keep you confined to suffering for its own sake and accompanying self-aggrandizement, delusion and unhappiness. The state of Self-realization has no conditions; it is real and Self-sourcing. Because it includes all and everything it does not participate in identification, separation or division. Therefore, the ego state is transcended in the third stage of human development – Self-realization – for the simple reason that the ego was never real in the first place. Living in the first and second stages of human development are merely stations along the way to human completion. This completion occurs in the third stage through total commitment to the spiritual path: method, practice, discipline and, most of all, relationship; movement through transcendent planes of existence, surrender, trust and faith, spiritual vision and the absolute reality of the in-visible world is witnessed and finally the transcendent unity of the divine, the conditionless condition of spontaneity and truth, love, bliss.

Ego compromises bear no relation whatsoever to this spiritual state of fullness. There is no place for the imaginary in the supremely real existence. Today many are finding compromise with the ego tempting, because of the human ego's ethos of effort and gain, which says something along the lines of "I have done my spiritual apprenticeship, meditated and been disciplined. I have worked hard, so now I want something back." But when limitations arise the spiritual aspirant must go further... always. Nothing less than everything must be consigned to the spiritual fire; nothing more than everything is the treasure that awaits you.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Richard Harvey is a psycho-spiritual psychotherapist and spiritual teacher with almost 35 years experience. He maintains an international private practice via Skype and telephone and gives workshops, retreats and training courses at his personal growth centre and family home set high on the slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains in Andalucia, southern Spain. He is the author of *The Flight of Consciousness* (Ashgrove 2002), as well as several other books and many articles aimed at both inspiring and offering practical guidance on the process of realizing our true selves. Richard can be reached by phone at (0034) 680 741 108 or (0034) 958 953 033, by email at richard@therapyandspirituality.com, or via his website at www.therapyandspirituality.com.

8. SHERRY HARRIS, MSW, RSW, CHt, LM – THE FORTY DAY PRAYER

This is one of the most amazing tools I continually offer my clients, friends and myself. As I have used it for so many years and modified it along the way, I am unable to tell you where it originated. What I can tell you is that it works in mystical and wonderful ways. This prayer is to be used when there is something unresolved between yourself and another. It is very useful in cutting the cords of anger, guilt, shame, grief, fear and blame that lie between two people. It restores harmony and comfort as no other prayer I have ever used. It goes like this:

Dear _____,

I thank you for all you have done for me.
I ask your forgiveness for all I have done to you.
I release you to your highest good and me to mine.
Go in love and light and peace.

Love,

People often say that they are the one who has been abused so why should they be telling the other person they are sorry. I explain it to them thusly. This prayer works at the highest level of healing where we are all joined as One. What I do to myself, I do to another. It also addresses the fact that we live in a Divine Universe that only has our best interests in mind. Every thing that happens to me is for my best good as it will propel me forward in some way to be more, to learn more, to understand more, to be more compassionate.

There are no victims regardless of the happenings between two people. You, at the Soul Level, signed up for everything that has happened to you. Everything has been designed for you to grow. With that in mind, it is more honest to thank the players in our life who have also signed up to help us grow while simultaneously learning their own lessons. It is like a Divine Dance, a most wonderful play we scripted and filled with actors only to forget when we arrived here that we arranged this prior to incarnation. You have probably heard that our biggest teachers are the ones that bring us the most discomfort. It is absolutely true. When we graduate from this life we will meet our spirit team on the other side and thank them for playing their roles so well we had no choice but to grow, learn, and evolve.

Use this prayer once a day by addressing it silently or out loud to the person you wish to do healing with. Do not do this in person or tell them you are doing it. Say it from your heart, not from a resentful mind. If you miss a day, start over. Commitment and continuity are important for the healing between the two of you to happen. Only do one person per prayer. In other words do not go... Dear X. Y and Z. Do the full prayer for each person. You may say many prayers at the same time or focus on one person at a time. I recommend focusing on one person at a time. You will know who you need to start with.

You will be amazed at what will fall away if you make the commitment to do The Forty Day Prayer. The other person will never know what hit them, they will simply begin to feel very differently and more heart-focused. The negative and restricting cords between you will melt away. Try it. What have you got to lose?

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Sherry Harris, MSW, RSW, CHt, LM is a psychotherapist and spiritual coach, counsellor, teacher and minister. She also enjoys being a loving channel for God's healing energy. She may be reached at 613-236-8852 or by email at harris.sherry@gmail.com. Her websites are www.sherryharrisconsulting.com and www.sherryharris.thevoiceforlove.com. Sherry's hours include evenings and weekends and she provides an insurance receipt covered by most insurance companies.

9. DOUG HENDERSON, Ph.D – WE USE THEM UNTIL WE NO LONGER NEED THEM – PART 4 of 10

This is part 4 of a 10-part series by Doug. If you are interested in all 10 parts as one long article, you can contact Doug directly via his contact information at the end of this article.

The very first thing I would like you to know is – Everyone is doing the very best that they can ---- with the information they have accepted. Now, that codicil or addendum – “with the information they have accepted” - is the key part!

Now, let's just shift gears and back up in time.

How many of you have heard of a fellow by the name of **Walter Russell**? Walter Russell was born on May 19, 1871 and transitioned May 19, 1963. Isn't it interesting how he came in and transitioned on his birthday!

Russell was quite the fellow. He was a philosopher, painter, sculptor, architect, scientist, author and teacher. Everything he did, he did extraordinarily well. When he decided to paint or sculpt, he did so for Presidents of the U.S.A.

From the time he was 7 years old, every year on his birthday he received down loads of information about the universe and how it functioned. The downloads every 7th year were major. His book, The Universal One, explains a great deal

about how the Universe Functions. His book, "The Secret of Light, Makes the point that there is information in light. He also, said that our Universe is musical and that it is based on octaves.

Michio Kaku, PhD the co-founder of string theory is saying the same thing – our Universe is musical, and it is based on octaves and he goes on to say that Mankind resonates at the lowest octave.

The Heart Math Institute is saying that 96.6 % of all of our thoughts are negative thoughts – or thoughts of attack, self-doubt and self-sabotage. All attack is self attack. The blame that we would deny and project onto others is really nothing more than a projection of our own inner torments.

Dr. David Hawkins, who has written 7 books on Consciousness is saying that ever since recorded history 93 % of all historic events have been acts of war.

Do you think that these two events are unrelated?

Hawkins goes on to say that the Human mind does not have the ability to determine truth from non-truth. Now, when Hawkins says that, he is referring to the egoic mind and according to the Heart Math Institute that is where we spend 96.6% of our time.

In addition, anthropologists have noticed that over the last several thousand years our brain is shrinking. The pineal gland which is now the size of a pea, used to be the size of a golf ball. Now, the pineal gland is considered by many as the spiritual center of the brain.

It seems that over thousands of years the ego may have re-invented it self and evolved, to the detriment of our right brain and it's Spiritual Nature. Once simply a mechanism for flight or fight, at some point it seems as though the ego pondered it's future and decided to transition from constant concern for safety; - to constant worry, anxiety, fear and retaliation from fear. I mention this because it appears that at one time our brain was whole and we recognized our holiness. But as the ego evolved, the hemispheres of our brain split – the left hemisphere became dominant and the right hemisphere atrophied and the corpus colosum atrophied. In other words, our Spiritual Centre shriveled up. And now we are of split mind and have forgotten what it is we really are.

The ego's focus is on the body and it's strategy appears to be to keep man focused on the Lower Attractors because what it fears most are the Higher Attractors.

Lower Attractors are emotional states such as; Shame, Guilt, Apathy, Grief, Fear, Desire, Anger, and Pride, that Hawkins talks about in his Map of Human Consciousness.

Higher Attractors are emotional states such as; Courage, Neutrality, Willingness, Acceptance, Reason, Love, Joy, Peace and Enlightenment.

So long as, we feel we lack the ability to determine Truth from non-truth, there will definitely be a need for the pendulum!

But here is the point I want to make to you!

Both the body and the pendulum are communication and learning devices and we use them until we no longer need them! The best goal any of us can have is to evolve to a point where we no longer rely upon or need to use the pendulum!

Tune in to next month's newsletter for a continuation of Doug's article.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Doug Henderson, Ph.D, Humanities and Theology, is a Stress Management Consultant, Ordained Minister and Internationally Certified Quantum Biofeedback Therapist. Doug uses some cutting edge quantum technologies to assist clients to return to energetic balance and when they do – dis-ease drops away. Three years ago, Doug started a program called the "Tune Me Up Program" that is having extraordinary results raising clients levels of consciousness/awareness. Go to: www.quantumru.com to read unsolicited experiences. Seven years ago, Doug had 4 different cancers, refused conventional therapy and developed protocols that worked for him and his clients benefit from same. Doug can be reached by phone at 613-233-3888, by email at drdoug88@rogers.com, or via his website at www.quantumru.com.

10. GEOFF STRAW – TODAY I AM HEALED COMPLETELY

It is assured that you will be healed completely and that you will then facilitate healing for others. Therefore, repeat to yourself today: “Today I am healed completely.” With this powerful statement you affirm the work of Spirit in preparing you for the work to come. It is a reminder of the Power of the Holy Spirit and of your willingness to allow Spirit to work miracles in your life. Nothing is impossible with Spirit. Therefore, do not be afraid.

Healing continues in its many forms. It has many different faces and methods of appearance. It does not discriminate, but comes to you who accept its healing balm. Acceptance, therefore, is a major element in healing. It comes to those who accept help, who are truly open to receiving the healing waters. Think of how refreshing a swim in the lake or ocean has been for you. It seems very cold at first; at times you wondered if you would even bother. But when you take that plunge of acceptance and go in and under, it feels magnificent and very healing, very enveloping. Then it is a delight to be buoyed up in the water, where you are lighter and feel freer.

The healing waters: Spirit is sometimes represented by water, for this reason - it is life giving, life sustaining, healing, fluid. Be willing to wade in and allow Spirit to envelope you, heal you, lift you up to a higher plane, a different reality, and a different way of living. “I accept the healing water of Spirit today.”

Notice the peacefulness of “quiet”;
Being still with intention - for the purpose of going within;
Letting the water of Spirit wash over you, heal you.

This is your role, your “task” now, to simply let it be, allow it to happen, offer no resistance whatsoever to the process.

AND HEALING HAPPENS!
JOYFULLY
GRADUALLY
INTENTIONALLY
THANKFULLY
COMPLETELY
WONDERFUL HEALER!

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Geoff Straw is a Counsellor with private practice in Ottawa, Canada. Geoff can be reached by phone at 613-314-4450 or by email at gwstraw@sympatico.ca.

11. KATHRYN KIMMINS – THE POWER OF A SMILE

Move over misery. Happiness may love company even more. Researchers from Harvard Medical School and the University of California, San Diego, found that happiness may stem more from a group effort than from one person’s lifestyle and choices. The 20 year study of 5,000 individuals shows that a person’s positive emotional state is actually contagious, affecting not just her immediate social circle, but her friends’ friends, and even friends’ friends’ friends. The upbeat vibes ripple out to touch those she’s never met with the effects lasting up to a year.

Even better news? Sadness can’t hold a candle to this kind of emotional contagion. Scientific research shows that smiles and laughter actually trigger pleasure centers in the brain, even if artificially induced. Dr. Paul Ekman has opined that there is a brain pathway that allows you to generate your own emotions. French neurologist Dr. Guillaume Duchenne mapped 100 facial muscles in 1862. In the course of that work, he had something to say about smiling. He pointed out that false, or even half-hearted smiles, involved only muscles of the mouth. But “the sweet emotions of the soul,” he said, activate the pars lateralis muscle around the eyes.

He discovered that when lips part and turn up, the eyes crinkle up showing crows feet and the upper lip droops slightly, then there is heightened activity in the left anterior region of the cortex of the brain, which is the center for happy emotions. Your brain won’t be able to tell the difference whether you’re really laughing or just faking it. When you get upset or angry, give it a try, laugh it off and see the difference in yourself and those around you.

So why not start your own cheerful chain reaction? Do something today that lifts your spirits, and you’ll be sending out waves of contentment to those around you - - and beyond.

Even an induced smile can turn your gloominess into an upbeat mood. Try it now. How do you feel?

**'O, what is laughter,
What is this precious love and laughter
budding in our hearts?
It is the glorious sound
of a soul waking up.**

Hafiz

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: An enthusiastic and infectious positive speaker, Kathryn Kimmins energizes attendees and directs unforgettable laughter experiences. Kathryn's sessions dissipate stress while refocusing attendees. Cheeks get rosy; eyes clear and twinkle; impish grins are everywhere to be seen; the room rapidly fills with friendly smiles. Her educational and experiential classes serve to boost morale, improve retention, and encourage team-building and creativity. As a laughter specialist, Kathryn has appeared on CTS Network Television, CHCH Television, Hamilton Community News, Cable 14 News Hamilton and McMaster's radio station FM 93.3-CFMU. Kathryn can be reached by phone at 905-574-1765 or through her website at <http://www.laughyourselfhealthy.ca/>.

12. REGIENA HERINGA – NOTES FROM THE LIGHT – FEBRUARY 2012

Let not the harsh hand of those unaware of the Light, offend you. All that is hardened and fixed will give way to a more fluid manner of existence.

It is a natural process for matter and mind to assume greater fluidity so that friendships can be strengthened. The more fluid the mind, the greater the opportunity to contact and to share in the creative genius that rests quietly within all beings. We ask you to consider this: water in its liquid state has a greater potential to mix with other components than water in its frozen state.

We invite you to reflect on the subject of boundary and fluidity.

The nations of your earth are overlapping with a more enlightened philosophy and action. Through diverse language and means, societies are moving in similar directions as your world forges an essential Alliance with the life ideals and sacred principles founded by the Creator. Through this overlapping process of similar thought and deed, the resulting osmosis ensures that the communities of your planet readjust their values and actions to reflect this Great Alliance. From country to country, there is a significant flow through of respect, justice, equality, transparency, forgiveness and fraternity. You are witnessing here the melting of hardened energies which tenaciously insist on remaining in the eye of power. This eye of power is being blinded; personal power continues to disintegrate and the world soon begins to breathe once again the air of peace and True Alliance.

It must be remembered that, no matter the sphere or dimension, all existence is of a noble and divine order which can neither be suppressed nor erased. To your eyes, your Planet Earth and its inhabitants may seem to have lost their sacred direction. But that is not so. At this moment upon your fine world, a profound realignment can be observed of all conscious matter to a great and more expansive inhabited universe which has always lived within this Divine Alliance.

Hence, good people, we ask you to remain with fluid minds and hearts. In this manner you demonstrate to all in your world the thoughts and actions of encouragement and upliftment.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Regiena Heringa is a spiritual teacher, counselor and messenger and co-founder of the Institute for Spiritual Unfoldment and Interworld Studies (ISUIS). Through her writings, meditations groups, teaching, music and painting, and in concert with those beings of higher vibrational dimensions, Regiena facilitates the expansion of mind and heart in all who wish to participate in the creation of the sacred new world. For more information, kindly visit ISUIS at www.nextagemission.com or write Regiena at rheringa@bell.net.

13. BORIS GLIKMAN – WAKING UP TO LIFE

Some time ago, a woman with a gun in her hand demanded of me and my companions that we provide good reasons why life is worth living. Otherwise she was going to terminate us.

I thought to myself: This is the very question that I've struggled with for so long and now I am being forced to provide a definitive answer. Do I make up some fancy reason and perhaps escape with my life? But if I lie, then my life is not really worth pursuing. How many times have I dreamed and read about this kind of a life-and-death situation and convinced

myself that I thoroughly understood it, assumed that I knew exactly what it felt like? And now finally it has happened for real and this time I cannot wake up nor close the book.

I realise that we all have to go some day, but what a pity it would be to go on a brilliantly sunny day like this, when the whole world is pulsating with life and every cell of my body is screaming out with the desire to live. How much more fitting it would be to leave on a cloudy, sunless day with the sky shedding cold tears. No, this doesn't feel like the right time to die! But when is the right time to die? How can one tell that one has accomplished all that one can accomplish on this Earth?

To make the most of my existence, I really should try to cram it all in, all of my life, into these last few remaining minutes, the way that I used to try to squeeze in all of the information just before the start of the exams. Now is the time to live my life to the fullest degree, like I never bothered to before.

Yet this fear of death that I am feeling right now is out of all proportion to the joy and satisfaction that life has brought me so far. Why does my life seem so dear and precious to me now? Is it because only now, on the threshold of death, does the vision of ideal life appear to me, life free of all the illusions that have previously brought me down, illusions that only the proximity of 'The End' can destroy?

Is it because that only now can I see life as it really is, free of all the grime that besmirches its true visage, free of all the trivial annoyances that make life such a tedious grind to bear in day-to-day existence?

It is as if during the day of my existence, life concealed her features with dowdy garb and only now, as midnight approaches, does she shed her frumpy dress and stands before me in all of her natural, radiant, shining glory.

In the distance, I saw my friends getting finished off -- obviously their answers weren't good enough. Almost certainly they all used the "My life is unique" defence and it didn't work.

Should I make my reasons stand out from theirs? But I am a person just like them. Wouldn't making my reasons more striking imply that my life is more valuable? Surely we all live for pretty much the same reasons and so my answer should be identical to theirs.

But what does the tormentor want from us? Honest, straightforward replies or singular, elaborate explanations? How can one justify one's existence? Where does one begin? I have no need nor reason to justify my past for it is already gone and she can't take it away from me. Nor can I justify my future for it hasn't yet occurred and is therefore of intangible and unknown nature. It follows then that I am only in a position to justify the now, the immediate moment during which I am alive.

Should I appeal to her humanity, her compassion? But what is morality, what is conscience but some intangible, nebulous substance that we can only hope has found a safe refuge in the breast of fellow man.

It was now my turn. I came in and faced the interrogator. In a voice devoid of any tone she commanded me to present my case.

"Life is hard, really hard sometimes" I replied, "and a lot of times I don't want to go on struggling against the unyielding, overpowering forces. Yet I want to continue living. That is all I can say. I want to live."

The interrogator gazed at me with an empty look, a look lacking any human expression, deciding on her answer.

Just as she was about to make her pronouncement, I woke up to life.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Boris Glikman is a writer, poet and philosopher from Melbourne, Australia. He says: "Writing for me is a spiritual activity of the highest degree. Writing gives me the conduit to a world that is unreachable by any other means, a world that is populated by Eternal Truths, Ineffable Questions and Infinite Beauty. It is my hope that these stories of mine will allow the reader to also catch a glimpse of this universe." Boris welcomes your feedback on his contributions and can be contacted by email at bozlich@yahoo.com.au.

14. DAVID PAUL – THE ART AND SCIENCE OF HEALING WITH MUSIC

The Lamas of Tibet who practice the Tai' Chi Gung system begun by Lao Tzu (known in India beforehand as Boganathar; the great Pranayama, Kundalini and Hatha Yoga Master) speak about the root of all illness in the human temple. They teach that disease in the physical body is an effect, not a cause. The true cause of illness can be traced back to a type of depression, and the root of this depression comes from the habit of thinking that you are separate from the divine.

The limiting mindset has the tendency to defend its position or run away. It might say, "I'm just fine! I don't need to grow or challenge my status quo. I'm comfortable with my limitations, thank you very much!" It takes courage to slow down and weigh the Lama's statement. To find out if they are correct, to be scientific about it, an experiment to test it might be valuable.

The basic Tai' Chi Gung standing exercises (www.rasaji.com) are both the basic laboratory and library of knowledge about health that the Lamas have passed down for millenniums. They come to us in a direct, unbroken lineage that goes back more than 3000 years. As you read on about music and healing, you might want to consider becoming a scientist and running your own test. Prove or disprove the ideas in your own body with your own direct experience.

Perhaps the easiest way to avoid the discomfort of freezing cold in the winter is to be sure you live on a tropical island near the equator. Perhaps the easiest way to deal with illness is to be sure you do prevent it from ever happening to you. Music is a simple, powerful tool for preventing illness, when it is understood and used properly. In ancient India, music was considered so important that the ruling class had musicians living with them, playing daily to maintain balance and harmony in their households.

There is a phrase in scripture... "If your eye be single, your body will be filled with light." It states the law of attraction and gives a simple set of directions to promote health. Put another way, if you dwell only on health, health will be the only thing that can be with you. If you're on the beach in the Bahamas, there's very little chance of snow. Could embracing health and eliminating disease be that simple?

It almost goes without saying that the Lamas know how to use the mind to promote health. They are quite ambitious with it. For example, they consider 90 years old about middle age. Growing into their mindset of profound health usually comes in stages. The first stage involves being more aware of what's going on. Sometimes we don't even know how much stress we have until we step out of our daily routine. Stress and tension held in the body blocks the flow of Chi or vitality. It leads to imbalances that can manifest as symptoms of disease. Once we're aware, we'll need to find ways to get that stress and tension out. The right music can be especially helpful for that. A third stage includes preventing the stress from coming back. A profound way to do that is to train your 'eye': your attention, to focus only on 'light': things that promote health. Listening to the right music keeps stress out because it affects the field that surrounds the body directly.

There is an exacting science of healing. The Lamas of Tai' Chi Gung are aware of it, and they have been protecting, preserving and passing down this knowledge from teacher to student for many centuries. The Lamas know that your physical body is surrounded seven feet in every direction (when you are healthy), by a magnetic field or spirit body that vibrates. This field houses your mind and your emotions. It interacts and influences the physical vehicle constantly. The quality of your thoughts, breath, movement, and nutrition determine the frequency of that vibration at any particular time. (Tai' Chi Gung 101) More importantly... these four sources of "nutrition" or Chi, influence the body over extended periods of time: weeks, months, years, decades. What you think, how you breathe, how well you move and what you take in as food nutrition are literally shaping the health you will have tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, and yes, even twenty years from now.

In Tibet, they have a saying, "Do the thing, get the power!" In order to alter your future health, it is necessary to take action to influence it. Many people are simply not aware that their world around them (Tai' Chi Gung 102) is influencing almost everything that they allow themselves to think and feel. It literally determines how they breathe, how well they move and what they eat. If left unchallenged, these habits alter the field (cause), and lead to consequences for physical health (effect). To be fair, these effects can be very positive as well as possibly negative. Most people do a combination of both. But if we're not aware of what truly influences health, how can we assist the natural healing process, let alone prevent disease with any certainty?

People instinctively use music for healing all the time. They use it to alter how they feel. Most are unaware that the music they listen to is altering the magnetic field around their physical bodies first, and then their physiology. Even so, it is obvious that music relaxes, or distracts, agitates, inspires, brings joy, happiness, motivates one to move, even draws people out of "depression".

How does music do that? The simple answer? Vibration! The magnetic field around the physical body is vibrating constantly. Music alters that frequency. It happens whether someone is aware of it or not. Most advertisers are well aware of this influence. But for someone pursuing music as a healing influence, its valuable to understand how to make it work better.

When a listener tunes in consciously, they allow themselves to resonate with the frequency or feeling of the music much more deeply. Master Lama Rasaji often says, "Tai' Chi Gung was given to the human race, so that they could learn how to be o.k. with their own peace." The feeling of peace already exists inside you. Peaceful music simply reminds you of something you already know. When someone listens to music and allows themselves to feel it, their field and their body take on that vibration. Most people do this with music almost automatically. When they allow themselves to feel the music, they alter their physiology very quickly.

The change is temporary usually, but persistent positive changes in the magnetic field accelerate healing. And it is also possible to prevent symptoms altogether by keeping the vibration of the body, mind and spirit far above what is required to manifest illness. The entire system of Tai' Chi Gung is designed to raise the spirit, mind and body to this higher, persistently healthy vibration. Music can be a beautiful way to compliment it. It may be snowing in Alaska in October, but if you're in the Bahamas on the beach, you won't be worried about it.

The bridge between the spirit body or magnetic field and the physical vehicle follows an orderly progression. The Lamas discovered that the vibrating field surrounding the body is connected to it by a series of specific pathways. The field connects to the physical endocrine glands through an ethereal system, a metaphysical gland system if you will, and the energy flows through the different systems of the body (nervous, circulatory, respiratory, etc.) through pathways called meridians. (The same ones used in acupuncture medicine.)

The Lamas often describe the progression of illness this way: Resisting the flow of energy or Chi in the spirit, mind or body causes pressure. When that pressure is held onto, it becomes tension. When tension is held in the body long enough, it causes stress. Over time, stress kills. Music can alter that cadence and reverse it. It literally changes the vibration of the field. It can raise the vibration of the physical body itself.

Sometimes, music will "speak" to a person's soul immediately. They'll feel chills run up and down their spine. A master musician can even draw the forces of nature up into the sound to increase its power and transforming effect. This is what David Paul has been taught to do over the 26 years of his training in Tai' Chi Gung with Master Lama Rasaji. The music he plays was created to resonate with the elements of nature (earth, water, fire and air) vibrating through the energy centers that connect to the endocrine glands. His music reaches inward to connect to emotions that promote health. Much of the inspiration for his music comes from nature itself. Students of Tai' Chi Gung are taught to spend time in nature daily because the elements of nature carry an immortal vibration, they raise the frequency of the magnetic field, they promote healing.

Different instruments have different functions also. The violin is an instrument of the heart. Violin music can be played with enough power to literally cut through tensions that have accumulated around the heart. These tensions are the precursor to illness. The tears occasionally come when the shell of sadness trapped around the heart is broken and released.

Music can resonate with someone's very soul. At times, the music is so beautiful, it touches so deeply, that tears of joy come, or a chill goes up the spine. That chill of inspiration is actually a release of Chi that is super charging cells, re-awakening vitality. A Tai' Chi Gung master cultivates these moments until they literally walk around in that state perpetually! Illness is just not on the radar when your body flows with the Chi of an exuberant, healthy 5 year old child. Music can bridge the gap to help people feel moments of heightened awareness. The experience of inspiration with music can be so powerful that people reconsider one of the most persistent unconscious beliefs on earth limiting humans and causing dis-ease... that they are somehow separate from the divine. When that happens, healing can begin. A true miracle is a 'change in consciousness'.

Please consider inviting David Paul to play for your organization, your friends, your community. It is his deepest desire to share what has been given to him so graciously over these years as a musician and a student of Tai' Chi Gung with Master Lama Rasaji.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: David Paul is a Tai' Chi Gung adept and current student of Master Lama Rasaji (www.rasaji.com), studying for more than 26 years. Mr. Paul is a music graduate of St. Olaf College, earned a Master's Degree at Rice University, played in a symphony full time for seven years, and now performs concerts of original music for healing, inspired by Tai' Chi Gung. David can be reached by phone at 904-294-7219, by email at davidpaul888690@gmail.com, or through his website at www.musicbydavidpaul.com.

OTHER GIFTS AND E-NEWSWORTHY ITEMS:

15. GOOD NEWS OF THE DAY

The stories below are reprinted from www.dailygood.org.

"It occurred to me a little too late that I was in a sketchy part of town. In anticipation of making it to my massage appointment, I had actually gotten off my bus five blocks before my stop. I was young and clearly a college student...I stuck out like a sore thumb in the southern town. Yet, even with my fingers trembling I was convinced that I would be perfectly safe, that I didn't have to rely on anyone for help. "It'll be okay Priya," I reassured myself, "You've dealt with 2,000 pound horses, so a dangerous person is nothing to you." In this real-life story, a young woman describes stumbling into a rough neighborhood and encountering two strangers who opened her eyes to the beauty we miss when we make superficial judgements about the people who cross our paths. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A18FF:12445D4F40F5539FA429730A79FF2BD2B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Observe your own judgments as they arise today, and experiment with consciously trying to step away from them.

The upcoming new year serves as a reminder of hope, possibilities, and new beginnings. As we prepare to step into 2012, here's a new tool to help turn our annual motivation outward, resolving to brighten the lives of others: Resolution12.org. Its organizer, a chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania named Rev. Chaz Howard, calls it "a public campaign to challenge people to make outwardly-focused resolutions to care for others, instead of inwardly-focused resolutions for self-improvement." This simple initiative connects a community of people who want to volunteer, help a loved one, recycle, and do dozens of other things to be kind to others. The endless possibilities are recorded online in people's own words, creating a shared space for declarations that translate into service and inspire others. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A1A70:12445D4F40F5539FC80CFC7A21133D51B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Rev. Howard's advice: to reflect and then "make a resolution that is not too big -- and doable. What is the little imprint you can make on the world?" For inspiration and to share, visit Resolution12 here. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A1A71:12445D4F40F5539FC80CFC7A21133D51B4B847859706E37D&>.

What we appreciate, appreciates. That's the way activist Lynne Twist explains a universal phenomenon: that the more we concentrate on something, the more we understand and learn, the more it expands our own boundaries. It also applies to the stories we surround ourselves with. In theory, stories of kindness are happening all the time, but the more we orient ourselves to them, the more we find all around us. For inspiration, here are 10 real-life stories from this past year -- remarkable stories by ordinary people, relating poignant acts of kindness in everyday life. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A1BC6:12445D4F40F5539F4B1AC68D6CF740D8B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Tune into acts of kindness around you -- as well as opportunities to put your own in action.

"For the first 58 years of my life, I would have to say that my relationship to my mother was a complex and difficult one. She was a huge personality, full of great passions, creativity, rages, and generosity. I remember saying to friends that I loved my mother in small doses, but that she didn't come in small doses. She was a force of nature." Celebrated filmmaker Mickey Lemle has shared the stories of some of the most evolved figures of our time. Here, in this candid and moving eulogy, he pays tribute to the extraordinary spirit of his mother Edna, and details the difficult but transformative journey he undertook -- to serve the person who brought him into this world, as she transitioned out of it. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A1E10:12445D4F40F5539F66BCD6377D18DD9CB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Make a special effort today to connect with your parents, children, or other loved ones you don't always stay in touch with.

One van. One father. One son. Thirty-one cities. 30,724 pounds lost among 1,516 participants. 1,255,740 views on YouTube. When Ben Davis makes a promise to his Meemaw, he means business. It was Christmas Eve of 2008 when Ben's grandmother expressed her concern for him simply by asking whether he was happy. "I was 360 pounds," Ben told me. "I was in a deep depression, I had lost a relationship as a direct result of the depression -- I was, in no way, happy -- and her inquisition that night ... it pushed me to really examine my life and spurred me to get it together. To get a grip and get my life back on track." Inspired, he went home that night and got his grandmother a last-minute gift: the URL of a Tumblr blog he had started to track his progress. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A1FC3:12445D4F40F5539F51B9A9B8DE01D8C5B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Take just one simple step today toward something you've always known was right for you.

The Dalai Lama has been telling us for years that it would make us happy, but he never said it would make us healthy, too. Maybe the Dalai Lama knew all along or maybe he's just finding out like the rest of us, but science is starting to catch up with a couple millennia of spiritual thought. In recent years, the investigation of compassion has moved beyond theology and philosophy to embrace a wide range of scientific fields, including neurology, endocrinology and immunology. New research shows that the practice of compassion has beneficial effects not only on mental health but on physical health, too. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A213E:12445D4F40F5539F53673A12B366FB61B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: For further inspiration, a short passage on putting compassion in action. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A213F:12445D4F40F5539F53673A12B366FB61B4B847859706E37D&>.

They've waited all night for a chance to see their newborn babies, whom the hospital is holding until the medical bills are paid in full. "Holding babies until payment is common in Indonesia," said Robin Lim, a midwife who founded birthing clinics in Aceh and the island of Bali. At this particular hospital in Bali, mothers who don't pay are allowed in twice a day to feed their baby and change their baby's diaper. Those fortunate enough to find the money may take their babies home. Others might relinquish their parental rights and place their babies up for adoption, Lim explained. "You worry, 'Will I be able to deliver this baby safely into the world?' But you shouldn't have to worry, 'How will I pay for it?' " said Lim, 54, a CNN Hero dubbed by locals as "Mother Robin." Follow this link to the video...

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A22E9:12445D4F40F5539F939C153277C44F46B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Be a compassionate advocate for someone who doesn't have as strong a voice as your own.

Most of us believe in positive self-talk. "I can achieve anything," we mouth to the mirror in the morning. We believe we'll do better if we banish doubts about our ability or our strategy and instead muster an inner voice that affirms our awesomeness. But not Bob the Builder. You might not realise it, but the overall-clad, stop-motion animated construction executive -- who debuted on CBBC in 1999 and whose television programme now reaches children in 240 territories and 45 languages -- is a management radical. His approach to directing projects, people and himself runs counter to the prevailing wisdom about business performance. Instead of puffing up himself and his team, he first wonders whether they can actually achieve their goal. In asking his signature question -- Can we fix it? -- he introduces some doubt. Renowned author Daniel Pink explains the latest research wisdom behind doubt. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A24F1:12445D4F40F5539F43B4F5DC8681DB50B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Working on a problem? Test out the wisdom of a little modest doubt.

"Recently, reader Rob asked me about my habit of waking at 4:30 a.m. each day, and asked me to write about the health benefits of rising early, which I thought was an excellent question. Unfortunately, there are none, that I know of. However, there are a ton of other great benefits. Now, let me first say that if you are a night owl, and that works for you, I think that's great. There's no reason to change, especially if you're happy with it. But for me, switching from being a night owl to an early riser (and yes, it is possible) has been a godsend. It has helped me in so many ways that I'd never go back." Leo Babauta of Zen Habits shares just a few reasons for becoming an early riser, as well as tips on making the shift. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2590:12445D4F40F5539FAAE169AA175F72A4B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: If you aren't an early riser already, try experimenting with some of Babauta's suggestions.

"There were many observers who said Gandhi was extraordinary, an exception to the limitations that hold back the rest of the human race. Others dismissed him -- some with great respect, others with less -- as just another great man who was leaving his mark on history. Yet, according to him, there was no one more ordinary. 'I claim to be an average man of less than average ability,' he often repeated. 'I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.' The fact is, while most people think of ordinariness as a fault or limitation, Gandhi had discovered in it the very meaning of life -- and of history." The late Gandhian scholar Eknath Easwaran shares further on Gandhi's faith in the power of the individual. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2633:12445D4F40F5539FA6C266F2BF3EC933B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: This classic 2-minute video inspires further conviction in the power of one. Follow this link to the video... <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2634:12445D4F40F5539FA6C266F2BF3EC933B4B847859706E37D&>.

"When I was around 7 years old, I saw a pair of ducks in my front yard. I knew ducks liked bread, so I decided to feed them before they had a chance to fly away. I didn't know it then, but these two ducks ended up being one of the most influential factors in who I've become today." Over the following months the ducks showed up regularly at the little girl's home -- quacking at her door for bread crumbs. But one morning, after a big storm, they appeared with a far more urgent request. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2997:12445D4F40F5539FCF1AD211CD8ED9C0B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Look out for cues today that announce your place in the family of things -- and take the cues.

"Millions of Americans have lost control over the basic rhythm of their daily lives. They work too much, eat too quickly, socialize too little, drive and sit in traffic for too many hours, don't get enough sleep, and feel harried too much of the time. It's a way of life that undermines basic sources of wealth and well-being -- such as strong family and community ties, a

deep sense of meaning, and physical health. Earn less, spend less, emit and degrade less. That's the formula. The more time a person has, the better his or her quality of life, and the easier it is to live sustainably." According to Juliet Schor, professor of sociology at Boston College, working fewer hours could save our economy, save our sanity, and help save our planet. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2ABF:12445D4F40F5539FA8A3B7F22497EE01B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Check your own rhythms, and if needed, infuse more balance into your routine.

The word vulnerable itself comes from the Latin 'vulnerare' which means 'to wound', and so at the root of vulnerability is our own sense of wounded-ness. To be authentic in a moment in which we feel wounded, we have to honestly acknowledge the places where we feel hurt and then muster up the strength to just be with the pain. If we can embrace this vulnerability, we can fully accept the discomfort and learn to observe our entire reality deeply and intimately -- just the way it is. It may seem like such opportunities are rare, but they're surprisingly accessible. Here are a few statements that crack open a beautiful vulnerability within everyday situations: 'I was wrong,' 'I don't know,' 'I am sorry,' 'Thank you,' and 'I love ...'. This article articulates the relationship between vulnerability and strength. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A2B63:12445D4F40F5539F5E5663AE42EDC9C7B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Be wisely vulnerable today -- express gratitude, admit fault, profess love, embrace the unknown.

"We live in a rural farm in India, don't have a TV at home, and have never bought our son a total of two toys. Most of his clothes are gifted by family and friends. He doesn't eat cookies, chocolates, carbonated drinks, or fast food. He must be one miserable kid, right? If I say, 'No,' one might respond with, 'Well, he doesn't know what he is missing and he is being brought up in an extremely protective environment.' Not true either. He knows the reasons and has willingly embraced them. His secret seems to be that everything has meaning for him. He is not chasing after anything and has no plans for tomorrow. He goes around as if he has an unlimited reserve of energy, curiosity, time, faith and willingness to be engaged with whatever and whoever comes his way. And he doesn't seem to be bothered by being alone." Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A30B9:12445D4F40F5539FD730406190B65081B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Explore your own inner world -- spend some time alone today.

The way Clay Taber looks at it, he's got three moms now. There's the woman who gave birth to him and raised him, of course. Then there's his fiancée's mother. And then there's the transplant nurse who, though practically a stranger, donated one of her healthy kidneys so that he might start married life untethered to a dialysis machine. Allison Batson first heard about Taber, now 23, in August 2010, when a charge nurse at Atlanta's Emory University Hospital told her "it looks like we've got an admission from Columbus, Ga. It's a 22-year-old in renal failure," Batson recalled. "It just tore me up." Taber was told that he could expect to wait 3 to 5 years. But Batson had another idea -- to offer him one of hers. "I know this sounds crazy, and it may never happen, but this young man reminds me of one of our kids," Batson told her husband. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A30E3:12445D4F40F5539F8801B7F0D982800BB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Blow someone away with an unexpected gift today.

"For nearly 25 years I've lived off and on in Mozambique. Time has passed, and I'm no longer young; in fact, I'm approaching old age. But my motive for living this straddled existence, with one foot in African sand and the other in European snow, in the melancholy region of Norrland in Sweden where I grew up, has to do with wanting to see clearly, to understand. The simplest way to explain what I've learned from my life in Africa is through a parable about why human beings have two ears but only one tongue. Why is this? Probably so that we have to listen twice as much as we speak. In Africa listening is a guiding principle. It's a principle that's been lost in the constant chatter of the Western world," shares author Henning Mankell in this insightful NY Times article. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A33FB:12445D4F40F5539F14776FBA32855F4FB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: For further reflection, a powerful short story on listening by Paula Underwood, a leader of the Iroquois nation: "If You Really Pay Attention". Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A33FC:12445D4F40F5539F14776FBA32855F4FB4B847859706E37D&>.

"Creativity is paradoxical. To create, a person must have knowledge but forget the knowledge, must see unexpected connections in things but not have a mental disorder, must work hard but spend time doing nothing as information incubates, must create many ideas yet most of them are useless, must look at the same thing as everyone else, yet see something different, must desire success but embrace failure, must be persistent but not stubborn, and must listen to experts but know how to disregard them." Author Michael Michaelko shares more about "creative thinking": igniting natural creativity through inspiring techniques and practical examples. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A359F:12445D4F40F5539F8874D67B8BFB016DB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Maintain a conscious intention today to ignite your own natural creativity and artistry.

"There is always humming from somewhere. It is usually low and musical as patients try to distract themselves from phantom limb pain that is not at all phantom. It is 13 days after the earthquake. I am coordinating a 12-member team at St. Marc's hospital, a government facility on the west coast of Haiti." In this gripping piece, poet-doctor Sriram

Shamasunder covers life and death, resilience, compassion, healing and hope as he describes the experience of working in Haiti directly after the earthquake. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3740:12445D4F40F5539F86CD160B0B9E168CB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Spend healing time this week with someone who is in the hospital or coping with illness.

"If you are like me, sometimes I am so busy trying to catch up, stay even, or take the lead that I lose perspective. When things are going well, I am on top of the world. Yet then when bad luck hits or I see others achieving things I wish I could, I get down on myself. It's at times like these that I refer back to three parables from different cultures that have help me better keep my perspective." In this article Fast Company blogger Mark McNeilly explores the timeless wisdom of a Zen koan, a Chinese parable and an Italian proverb. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3AC8:12445D4F40F5539F51C22744FE810645B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: The next time you are in danger of losing your perspective in a given situation, spend a few moments reflecting on the wisdom of one of the stories shared in this article.

"Some of his patients are sent to him by local hospitals, especially in hopeless cases; when, for example, amputation seems to be the only option. Sergio Castro is seen by many as the last hope. People come to him with gangrene, hoping that they will be able to keep their limbs, for he has achieved what some perceive as "miracles". Sergio is not a doctor; Sergio's somebody who really cares about people. And his clinic is actually not a clinic, but a museum of traditional indigenous costumes. Sergio has been working within the indigenous Mayan communities of Chiapas, the poorest and most deprived State of Mexico, for the past 40 years. Initially, his contribution was agricultural work, and helping to build water infrastructure before he began offering medical care. Like all true healers, Sergio didn't choose to become one. He was chosen, elected by the people who needed his help; and unlike many proclaimed healers, he's never asked a dime for his services." Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3B79:12445D4F40F5539F6A897DC2370F98D5B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Write Sergio a note of gratitude and/or support. Follow this link...

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3B7A:12445D4F40F5539F6A897DC2370F98D5B4B847859706E37D&>.

"It's often said that every song, every poem, every novel, every painting ever created is in some way 'about' love. What this really means is that love is a central theme, an underlying preoccupation, in humanity's greatest works. But what exactly is love? How does its mechanism spur such poeticism, and how does it lodge itself in our minds, hearts and souls so completely, so stubbornly, as to permeate every aspect of the human imagination? Today, we turn to 5 essential books that are 'about' love in a different way -- they turn an inquisitive lens towards this grand phenomenon and try to understand where it comes from, how it works, and what it means for the human condition." Cultural curator Maria Popova shares further. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3F98:12445D4F40F5539FD137B5652CB14C8EB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: An insightful piece on "giving somebody your heart -- the real you, your presence, your true attention. This is the hard thing to do. The risky thing to do." Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A3F99:12445D4F40F5539FD137B5652CB14C8EB4B847859706E37D&>.

"Simon Dale is a family man in Wales, the western part of Great Britain. His interest in self-sustainability and an ecological awareness led him to dig out and build his own home -- one of the loveliest, warmest, most inviting dwellings you could ever imagine. And it cost him only \$4,700. Can you imagine a more charming entrance than this? " Read and see more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A470B:12445D4F40F5539F7D4DEB4DFF7A883FB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Have you ever wanted to live a different life? Take a small step in that direction today.

Architect Paolo Soleri is regarded as a visionary, much to his dismay. His thought and vision combines the ethical and the metaphysical in terms of how to structure and build our cities. He says, for example, "We have reached the point where we understand the appearance of self-awareness is one of the most incredible things that's happened in the universe. So, slowly we are developing some kind of responsibility to do in the universe what it has allowed us to do." To him, ultimately, this would be a form of service. In his words, "Service, number one, to ourselves. Number two to the biosphere. Number three to reality." To survive, we must, as he says, "develop more knowledge, more tolerance, more wisdom, and become aware of what we call love or compassion." It's not the language of an ordinary architect. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A4829:12445D4F40F5539F7EC2C81B533F2E0FB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: As humans, we are constantly architecting: designing, building, creating. Today, make an effort to make that more conscious.

Sometimes the greatest lessons come unexpectedly, and from the smallest moments. 7-year-old Owen Shure's heart-warming letter to a football player is a perfect example. The Twittersphere buzzed with reactions to the San Francisco 49ers' Kyle Williams fumbling the ball in a tight moment in the playoffs. Some responses were downright vitriolic. But hopefully Kyle also saw this touching story from Ben Mankiewicz: 'He was crying, saying of Kyle Williams, with the distinct sobs of a seven-year-old between each word, "But... why... did he... have to... fumble?" [...] Trying to get his son to stop crying, Michael asked him, "If you feel this way, how sad do you think Kyle Williams is?" Owen paused a second, then

asked his dad, "Can I write him a letter to make him feel better?" Nisha Srinivasan shares her reflections on Kyle's letter. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A4B8B:12445D4F40F5539FE42F234F2EE141AEB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: The next time you're upset with someone, flip the frame and let them know how you would feel in their shoes.

16. HOW RANDOMNESS RULES OUR LIVES

Reprinted from *InnerNet Weekly* via www.iJourney.org.

I remember, as a teenager, watching the yellow flame of the Sabbath candles dancing randomly above the white paraffin cylinders that fueled them. I was too young to think candlelight romantic, but still I found it magical-because of the flickering images created by the fire. They shifted and morphed, grew and waned, all without apparent cause or plan. Surely, I believed, there must be rhyme and reason underlying the flame, some pattern that scientists could predict and explain with their mathematical equations.

"Life isn't like that," my father told me. "Sometimes things happen that cannot be foreseen." He told me of the time when, in Buchenwald, the Nazi concentration camp in which he was imprisoned and starving, he stole a loaf of bread from the bakery. The baker had the Gestapo gather everyone who might have committed the crime and line the suspects up. "Who stole the bread?" the baker asked. When no one answered, he told the guards to shoot the suspects one by one until either they were all dead or someone confessed. My father stepped forward to spare the others. He did not try to paint himself in a heroic light but told me that he did it because he expected to be shot either way. Instead of having him killed, though, the baker gave my father a plum job, as his assistant. "A chance event," my father said. "It had nothing to do with you, but had it happened differently, you would never have been born." It struck me then that I have Hitler to thank for my existence, for the Germans had killed my father's wife and two young children, erasing his prior life. And so were it not for the war, my father would never have emigrated to New York, never have met my mother, also a refugee, and never have produced me and my two brothers.

My father rarely spoke of the war. I didn't realize it then, but years later it dawned on me that whenever he shared his ordeals, it was not so much because he wanted me to know of his experiences but rather because he wanted to impart a larger lesson about life. War is an extreme circumstance, but the role of chance in our lives is not predicated on extremes. The outline of our lives, like the candle's flame, is continuously coaxed in new directions by a variety of random events that, along with our responses to them, determine our fate.

--Leonard Mlodinow, in *The Drunkard's Walk: How Randomness Rules Our Lives*

17. SEEKERS OF ULTIMATE MYSTERY

Reprinted from *InnerNet Weekly* via www.iJourney.org.

Every seeker of Ultimate Mystery has to pass through interior death and rebirth, perhaps many times over. Our contemporary world desperately needs persons of boundless generosity who dedicate themselves to great ideals and who wish to transform themselves and contribute to the transformation of the world. A great vision is what gives ordinary daily life its direction and invests it with purpose.

Seekers of Ultimate Mystery have to share in the agony of our time. Only trust can make this experience transforming for themselves and for others. As the sense of alienation from Ultimate Mystery, from human values, and from oneself is very deep in our time, so also participation in that experience is bound to be very deep. It may involve an inner poverty so intense and so complete that no word can describe it, except "death." But this spiritual death leads to an inner resurrection of one's true self that can move not only oneself, but the whole human family in the direction of transformation. From this perspective, the spiritual journey is the very reverse of selfishness. It is rather the journey to selflessness.

What needs to be emphasized by seekers today is the contemplative dimension of human nature, whether they identify the aim of their search as liberation, transformation, enlightenment, nirvana, divine union or whatever. [...] The growth of the contemplative dimension leads to the stable perception of the presence of Ultimate Mystery underlying and accompanying all reality as a kind of fourth dimension to ordinary sense perception. To dispose oneself for this awareness, one needs a discipline that engages all the faculties and a structure appropriate to one's life circumstances that can sustain it.

To begin with, one needs to cultivate a practical conviction of the primacy of being over doing. Our society values what one can do and this becomes the gauge of who one is. The contemplative dimension of life is an insight into the gift of being human and inspires a profound acceptance and gratitude for that gift. [...]

Our culture is at a critical point because so many structures that supported human and religious values have been trampled upon and are disappearing. To find a way to discover Ultimate Mystery in the midst of secular occupations and situations is essential, because for most people today it is the only milieu that they know. Humanity as a whole needs a breakthrough into the contemplative dimension of life. The contemplative dimension of life is the heart of the world. There the human family is already one. If one goes to one's own heart, one will find oneself in the heart of everyone else, and everyone else, as well as oneself, in the heart of Ultimate Mystery.

– Fr. Thomas Keating in Contemplative Outreach newsletter, June 2010

18. DIGNITY OF RESTRAINT

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

A word that tends to disappear from common vocabulary is restraint: foregoing certain pleasures, not because we have to, but because they go against our principles. The opportunity to indulge in those pleasures may be there, but we learn how to say no. This of course is related to another word we tend not to use, and that's temptation. Even though we don't have to believe that there's someone out there actively tempting us, there are things all around us that do, that tempt us to give in to our desires. And an important part of our practice is that we exercise restraint.

What's good about it? Well, for one thing, if we don't have any restraint, we don't have any control over where our lives are going. Anything that comes our way immediately pulls us into its wake. We don't have any strong sense of priorities, of what's really worthwhile, of what's not worthwhile, of the pleasures we'd gain by saying no to other pleasures. How do we rank the pleasures in our lives, the happiness, the sense of well-being that we get in various ways? Actually, there's a sense of well-being that comes from being totally independent, from not needing other things. If that state of well-being doesn't have a chance to develop, if we're constantly giving in to our impulse to do this or take that, we'll never know what that well-being is.

At the same time, we'll never know our impulses. When you simply ride with your impulses, you don't understand their force. They're like the currents below the surface of a river: only if you try to build a dam across the river will you detect those currents and appreciate how strong they are. So we have to look at what's important in life, develop a strong sense of priorities, and be willing to say no to the currents that would lead to less worthwhile pleasures. As the Buddha said, if you see a greater pleasure that comes from forsaking a lesser pleasure, be willing to forsake that lesser pleasure for the greater one. Sounds like a no-brainer, but if you look at the way most people live, they don't think in those terms. They want everything that comes their way. They want to have their cake and enlightenment, too; to win at chess without sacrificing a single pawn. Even when they meditate, their purpose in developing mindfulness is to gain an even more intense appreciation of the experience of every moment in life. That's something you never see in the teachings. The theme is always that you have to let go of this in order to gain that, give this up in order to arrive at that. There's always a trade-off.

This is why so much of the training lies in learning to put this aside, put that aside, give this up, give that up. Developing this habit on the external level makes us reflect on the internal level: Which attachments in the mind would be good to give up? Could our mind survive perfectly well without the things we tend to crave?

When you're meditating, the same process holds. People sometimes wonder why they can't get their minds to concentrate. It's because they're not willing to give up other interests, even for the time being. A thought comes and you just go right after it without checking to see where it's going. This idea comes that sounds interesting, that looks intriguing, you've got a whole hour to think about whatever you want. If that's your attitude toward the meditation period, nothing's going to get accomplished. You have to realize that this is your opportunity to get the mind stable and still. In order to do that, you have to give up all kinds of other thoughts. Thoughts about the past, thoughts about the future, figuring this out, planning for that, whatever: you have to put them all aside. No matter how wonderful or sophisticated those thoughts are, you just say no to them.

--Thanissaro Bhikkhu

19. WHY DO SOCIAL WORK?

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Q: "I want to do social work, but I don't know how to start."

Krishnamurti: I think it is very important to find out not how to start, but why you want to do social work at all. Why do you want to do social work? Is it because you see misery in the world-starvation, disease, exploitation, the brutal indifference of great wealth side by side with appalling poverty, the enmity between man and man? Is that the reason? Do you want to do social work because in your heart there is love and therefore you are not concerned with your own fulfillment? Or is social work a means of escape from yourself?

Do you understand? You see, for example, all the ugliness involved in orthodox marriage, so you say, "I shall never get married," and you throw yourself into social work instead; or perhaps your parents have urged you into it, or you have an ideal. If it is a means of escape, or if you are merely pursuing an ideal established by society, by a leader or a priest, or by yourself, then any social work you may do will only create further misery. But if you have love in your heart, if you are seeking truth and are therefore a truly religious person, if you are no longer ambitious, no longer pursuing success, and your virtue is not leading to respectability-then your very life will help to bring about a total transformation of society.

I think it is very important to understand this. When we are young, as most of you are, we want to do something, and social work is in the air; books tell about it, the newspapers do propaganda for it, there are schools to train social workers, and so on. But you see, without self-knowledge, without understanding yourself and your relationships, any social work you do will turn to ashes in your mouth.

It is the happy man, not the idealist or the miserable escapee, who is revolutionary; and the happy man is not he who has many possessions. The happy man is the truly religious man, and his very living is social work. But if you become merely one of the innumerable social workers, your heart will be empty. You may give away your money, or persuade other people to contribute theirs, and you may bring about marvellous reforms; but as long as your heart is empty and your mind full of theories, your life will be dull, weary, without joy. So, first understand yourself, and out of that self-knowledge will come action of the right kind.

--J. Krishnamurti

20. SEEING IS AN ACT

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

The question is not what to do but how to see. Seeing is the most important thing -- the act of seeing.

I need to realize that it is truly an act, an action that brings something entirely new, a new possibility of vision, certainty and knowledge. This possibility appears during the act itself and disappears as soon as the seeing stops. It is only in this act of seeing that I will find a certain freedom.

So long as I have not seen the nature and movement of the mind, there is little sense in believing that I could be free of it. I am a slave to my mechanical thoughts. This is a fact. It is not the thoughts themselves that enslave me but my - attachment to them. In order to understand this, I must not seek to free myself before having known what the slavery is. I need to see the illusion of words and ideas, and the fear of my thinking mind to be alone and empty without the support of anything known. It is necessary to live this slavery as a fact, moment after moment, without escaping from it. Then I will begin to perceive a new way of seeing. Can I accept not knowing who I am, being hidden behind an imposter? Can I accept not knowing my name?

Seeing does not come from thinking.

It comes from the shock at the moment when, feeling an urgency to know what is true, I suddenly realize that my thinking mind cannot perceive reality. To understand what I really am at this moment, I need sincerity and humility, and an unmasked exposure that I do not know. This would mean to refuse nothing, exclude nothing, and enter into the experience of discovering what I think, what I sense, what I wish, all at this very moment.

Our conditioned thought always wants an answer. What is important is to develop another thinking, a vision. For this we have to liberate a certain energy that is beyond our usual thought. I need to experience "I do not know" without seeking an answer, to abandon everything to enter the unknown. Then it is no longer the same mind. My mind engages in a new way.

I see without any preconceived idea, without choice. In relaxing, for example, I no longer choose to relax before knowing why. I learn to purify my power of vision, not by turning away from the undesirable or toward what is agreeable. I learn to stay in front and see clearly. All things have the same importance, and I become fixed on nothing. Everything depends on this vision, on a look that comes not from any command of my thought but from a feeling of urgency to know.

Perception, real vision, comes in the interval between the old response and the new response to the reception of an impression. The old response is based on material inscribed in our memory. With the new response, free from the past, the brain remains open, receptive, in an attitude of respect. It is a new brain which functions, that is, different cells and a new intelligence. When I see that my thought is incapable of understanding, that its movement brings nothing, I am open to the sense of the cosmic, beyond the realm of human perception.

--Jeanne de Salzmann, from "The Reality of Being"

21. THREE WORDS OF WISDOM: "DON'T WE ALL?"

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

One evening I was parked in front of the mall wiping off my car. I had just come from the car wash and was waiting for my wife to get out of work. Coming my way from across the parking lot was, what society would consider, a bum. From the looks of him, he had no car, no home, no clean clothes, and no money. There are times when you feel generous but there are other times that you just don't want to be bothered. This was one of the "don't want to be bothered" times.

"I hope he doesn't ask me for money," I thought. He didn't. He came and sat on the curb in front of the bus stop and he didn't look like he could have enough money to even ride the bus. After a few minutes he spoke. "That's a very nice car," he said. He was ragged but had an air of dignity around him.

I said, "Thanks," and continued wiping off my car.

He sat there quietly as I worked. The expected plea for money never came. As the silence between us widened something inside me said, "Ask him if he needs any help." I was sure that he would say yes, but I held true to the inner voice.

"Do you need any help?" I asked. He answered in three simple but profound words that I shall never forget. We often look for wisdom in great men and women. We expect it from those of higher learning and accomplishments. I expected nothing but an outstretched grimy hand. He spoke three words that shook me.

"Don't we all?" he said.

I needed help. Maybe not for bus fare or a place to sleep, but I needed help. I reached in my wallet and gave him not only enough for bus fare but enough to get a warm meal and shelter for the day. Those three little words still ring true. No matter how much you have, no matter how much you have accomplished, you need help too. No matter how little you have, no matter how loaded you are with problems, even without money or a place to sleep, you can give help. Even if it's just a compliment, you can give that.

You never know when you may see someone that appears to have it all. They are waiting on you to give them what they don't have. A different perspective on life, a glimpse at something beautiful, a respite from daily chaos, that only you through a torn world can see. -- Cal

22. AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

After many months of illness, the resulting financial troubles, and the love and generosity of dear friends, family members and even strangers that helped me and my children through those difficult times, my life regained balance.

On a trip to the grocery store I spotted a young couple hitchhiking with two puppies. They were obviously tired and discouraged and had made a sign, which simply read, "Just Food."

Praying that they would stay, I hurried into the grocery store and bought a bag full of nutritious foods, puppy chow for the dogs along with items I needed.

To my relief they were still there when I came out. I drove up beside them and the young man approached at my beckoning him. I handed him the bag full of groceries, saying, "this is for you..." then the bag of chow, "this is for your puppies", and then a ten dollar bill, "And here's a little money."

His kind, young face registered disbelief as he thanked me. I felt close to tears at his reaction. I knew exactly how he felt. And to be able to help! I looked into his eyes and said, "I've had people help me when I was struggling. God bless you."

23. IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

I was driving home from school one hot summer day when I realized that my car was not working right. I kept driving and prayed that it would hold out the 3 hours that I still had to go. Seconds later, everything in my car died and I barely made it off to the shoulder.

Knowing absolutely nothing about cars, I popped the hood and proceeded to check the oil (since that's the only thing I knew how to do). As I was doing this, two older men in a truck pulled behind me and asked if I needed help. Of course, I couldn't turn them down since I was so far from home. They could see that I was shaken up and told me to get back in the car and they would take a look to see what was wrong.

After some investigating they informed me that it was my transmission and they could jump my car enough to make it to the service station (just a mile up the road). After charging my car, they led me to the station and went in to tell the mechanic what was wrong. They came back out seconds later to tell me the mechanic was out on a break and probably wouldn't be back (it was a tiny town and was the only station for miles); however, there was a shop with auto parts and would see if they had the right part. They went ahead and purchased the transmission for me and said they could again jump my car enough to drive it up the road to their place where one of them had a shop where he worked on tractors.

I again followed them up the highway to his shop and they began working on my car while I sat in the driver's seat and prayed. After working for about an hour, trying to get the old transmission out and the new one in, they realized that they had gotten the wrong Transmission and would go back into town and get the right one. While they did that, they sent me into the house where his wife had a little hair salon. She offered me something to eat and drink while I waited and just kept me calm with her constant chatter. An hour later the two men appeared again saying that it was all finished and seemed to be running smoothly. I hopped in my car and sure enough everything was working perfectly again.

I couldn't thank them enough for their kindness. I wrote them a check for the transmission and tried to give them more, but they wouldn't accept it, just saying that they would hope someone would do the same thing for their daughter.

I cried and sang and prayed the entire 3 hour drive home... I just couldn't believe that two men would take 4 hours out of their day to help a complete stranger. I still think about that day and how lucky I was.

24. HOPE AND JOY IN A WAL-MARK CAR PARK

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Wal-Mart parking lots can be a very busy place with cars and vans backing out while other vehicles wait impatiently to get the next spot. It can get a little congested at times and I have certainly seen many hurried people lacking in patience. I have occasionally been that hurried person.

The other night when I left Wal-Mart I was in a lot of pain from some chronic health issues and I just wanted to wave a magic wand on be sitting on my couch with the groceries all put away. I would love to have a magic wand like that! I started to get irritated when a woman and her child stopped dead in the middle of the parking lot to chat and hug with a friend while I was trying to back out! They seemed oblivious to my need to get moving.

Then I had one of those "light bulb" moments. When our eyes finally met, instead of giving them the why don't you move look, I gave them a huge smile. It was then that they realized they could move to the side and chat (they appeared to have been truly lost in the moment up to that point). I was able to back out but still could not move forward because of other vehicles. I took the opportunity to enjoy their interactions until I could move. There were more hugs and then a goodbye.

As I drove away, tears fell softly on my cheeks. I never got to hug my husband before he died. But, this was not a "pity me" cry. It was an awakening of my spirit to the joy and hope that still exists. It is always there. We just have to be intentional in creating it or looking for it.

25. THE POWER OF A SIMPLE COMPLIMENT

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Yesterday I went to our local grocery store. I often go to their deli counter, and I understand that it can get a little hectic for the workers. So normally none of them ever take the time to smile or seem overly friendly. But yesterday it was completely different. I was pleasantly surprised to be greeted with a very welcoming smile by the young man behind the counter. He never sighed heavily or slumped back and forth (like some of the workers do) like he didn't want to be there. He was all by himself and quite a long line. But not once did he act concerned about it. He just did his job efficiently and acted very kind the entire time.

I was so impressed that I approached the manager, who was working nearby. I explained to her that I often visit the deli counter and I have never been greeted with such kindness. She agreed with me that he was a wonderful person and she thanked me for sharing my feelings with her.

As I was walking away, I could hear her approaching the young man with, "I just got a wonderful compliment about you." I couldn't hear everything she was saying, but I know that she did thank him. I couldn't help but smile! I worked in a grocery store many years ago, and it isn't easy work! I remember how good it felt when you would hear nice things from a customer and manager, because it was a rare occurrence.

Later I realized that I had forgotten to get onions, so I had to pass by the deli counter. There was no one there, except the diligent young man. He didn't say anything, he just smiled at me. I realized that I hadn't done a huge deed that day, but that small deed made a small difference to someone. I love seeing people smile. I just received my smile cards and I wish I had one with me that day. Maybe I will drop one off at the deli a different day! It's amazing how good I felt after that.

So, friends, the next time you are in a grocery store, retail store, restaurant, or anywhere that someone is working hard, letting them know in some way can mean so much. I hope you get a smile out of it like I did!

26. ON PASSING AROUND SMILES...

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

One of my intentions for 2011 was to continue surrounding myself with a community of individuals that helped bring the best out in me. By the end of 2011, naturally and serendipitously, I was introduced to group of individuals that gets together one Wednesday per month to meditate and discuss a passage.

After my second month of joining this great group of individuals, I sat down with a couple of the organizers, to get to know one and other better. What I assumed would be a lighthearted getting to know one and other session, became an a heartfelt discussion with presence.

It felt like a therapy session. I poured my heart and soul into my confusions and challenges with figuring out my next steps with life and they listened and communicated so openly. They felt like long lost elder brothers giving me guidance. While one of them was leaving, he gave me a bag of these delicious cookies and told me I need to give them out. Later on, the other one provided me with these cards that say "Smile. You've just been tagged!"

At around 12:30 AM Thursday morning, I began my expedition to give out cookies to strangers in NYC. I first offered a cookie to the front desk security guard, he looked in the bag and took the biggest cookie he could find and said thank you. I thought well that's the biggest cookie in the bag, that's a bit selfish. Nonetheless, I smiled and was happy to give him a cookie.

Lesson 1: Mind = Autopilot. I noticed my mind is on autopilot! Even when I was trying to give out a bag of cookies, I was judging the receivers! Although, I was happy to give the cookie, I still had expectations: What cookie will they take? A big one? A small one? A couple? How will they respond? With gratitude? Indifference? Skepticism?

I offered another cookie to this woman standing at the desk, she declined by saying “I don’t eat cookies, but thank you.” I smiled and laughed in my head.

Lesson 2: Not Everyone Wants Cookies (Rejection). I had a feeling some people would think it was odd that a random man was giving them cookies. Here were my assumptions of other people: They would think I put ruffis in the cookies. They would think there was a catch. Women would think I was hitting on them. At the end of the day, everyone had a different view of receiving a cookie — no one view was more correct than the other.

Lesson 3: Persistence. During my cab ride home, I offered the driver a cookie. He declined. I offered again. He declined. I offered again. He declined. I offered again. He accepted and said, “thank you, thank you very much, thank you very much, Sir.” I am not sure why I was so persistent, but I had a feeling he wanted a cookie but was being really kind.

The next morning, I had a bag of at least 15 cookies left. I thought to myself, how am I going to get rid of these cookies. For some reason I started the morning thinking it might be difficult to give away cookies.

I gave one out to a lady picking oranges from the grocery store. She was glowing and excited. I was glowing.

I got to the 1 station at 23rd and 7th, I offered one to the station agent. He started laughing and smiling from ear-to-ear, but he declined. I felt amazing. I had made someone smile and laugh.

I began offering cookies to people on the uptown subway. I got some strange looks, a couple rejections and a couple laughs and smiles. I felt amazing.

I gave some out at an acting studio in midtown. The actors could not have been happier.



Lesson 4: Confidence. Giving away cookies, gave me confidence. Every time I would try to give a cookie, I would be scared of being rejected. But, the interesting thing was that every time I gave a cookie — whether accepted or not — I received something different: a laugh, a feeling of happiness, a sense of friendship with strangers and confidence to give more.

Lesson 5: The more I give, the happier I will be? I think so 😊

27. WHERE IS JEREMY’S EGG?

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Jeremy was born with a twisted body, slow mind, and chronic terminal illness that had been slowly killing him throughout his young life. Still, his parents had tried their best to give him as normal of a life as possible and sent him to St. Theresa's Elementary school.

At the age of 12, Jeremy was only in second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris often became exasperated with him. He would often disturb the class by squirming in his seat, drooling, and making grunting noises.

Sometimes, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, he just irritated his teacher. One day, Doris called his parents and asked them to come to St. Theresa's for a consultation.

Jeremy's parents sat quietly in the empty classroom in front of Ms. Doris, and she exclaimed to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five year gap between his age and that of the other students!"

Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. He really likes it here."

Doris sat for a long time after they left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying?

As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. "Oh God," she said aloud, "here I am complaining, when my problems are nothing compared with that poor family."

From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him.

"I love you, Miss Miller" he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris's face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-why, that's very nice, Jeremy. Now please take your seat."

Spring came and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of them a large plastic egg. "Now," She said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?" "Yes, Miss Miller!" The children responded enthusiastically. All the children responded except for Jeremy. He just listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises.

Had he understood what she had said about Jesus's death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in a large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs.

In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. When plants peek through the ground, we know that spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg Miss Miller" she called out.

The next egg had a beautiful butterfly in it, and one had a rock with moss on it. Then Doris opened the fourth egg, it was empty! Surely it must be Jeremy's she thought, and of course, he did not understand the instructions.

She put that egg down so she wouldn't embarrass him. Suddenly Jeremy spoke up and said " Aren't you going to talk about my egg? Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy-your egg is empty!" Jeremy look into her eyes and said softly "Yes, but Jesus's tomb was empty, too!"

Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him. "Do you know why his tomb was empty?" "Oh yes!" Jeremy exclaimed "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then his father raised him up!"

The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the school yard, Doris cried. The cold inside her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the funeral were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his Jeremy's casket, all of them empty.

28. ANGELDOG

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

My wife and I were out on the perimeter road that runs around where we live. Two dog walkers passed by and we heard one of them say, "Never seen that dog around here before."

We looked down the hill and saw an old black labrador stumbling painfully up the hill. It reached us, and its legs kinda fell out from under it.

We bent down, talked gently to the mutt and patted it. I checked and there was a collar. There was a phone number on the collar, but no one answered.

The dog was so painfully thin that there seemed nothing between its ribs and its pelvis but spine. It didn't have many teeth left and, well, it just seemed done.

My wife ran home to get some of our dog's food and mush it up in some milk while I tried to entice the dog to come along with me.

By the time she got back, I was only half way home. So, we sat down on the pavement while our new friend made short work of the food.

Eventually we got her home. We gave her a blanket, more food, kept her warm and wondered what to do next.

After phoning and phoning we got a response from the number. A lady came around with a bunch of flowers for us. She explained that Tara had been her father's dog. She was very old and should probably be put to sleep, but the lady just couldn't bring herself to do it.

She was so glad we had found her because Tara was almost blind and almost deaf. If she had wandered onto the road ...

So, Tara was safely returned home.

That morning, my wife were outside because I was leaving. She was trying to talk me into coming back, but I wasn't hearing anything that made that sound likely.

I was about to turn and go - when an old, worn out dog walked between us and collapsed. Suddenly we had something more important than our problems to worry about. There was a creature in need right before us and we had to work together to help it.

We did help it. And here am I writing the story in my own home, amongst my own family.

In the song "Love Is Not A Fight" Warren Barfield talks about marriage and its trials. At one point he sings, "And if we try to leave, may God send angels to guard the door."

Sometimes angels come disguised as dogs.

29. BROKEN BODIES, BROKEN MINDS, AMAZING SPIRITS!

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Yesterday I went to the nursing home to visit my step mom's grandma.

She just got out of the hospital recently where she underwent some serious operations. I wanted to surprise her after work so I stopped by for a quick visit.

When I got there she was happy to see me. We hugged, kissed and exchanged greetings. Then I heard a woman crying. It was my great grandma's roommate. The curtain was drawn so I could not see her. She started calling out a name that wasn't mine but she was definitely talking to me, begging me to go to her side of the room.

I ignored her at first and continued visiting with my great grandma. Then she started begging and saying, "Please, come see me!" So I went to see her.

When I drew the curtain back she looked so old and frail but flashed me the biggest smile! She opened her arms wide for me to hug her so I bent low and gave her a hug. She held me so tight and would not let go. I had to force myself to pull away from her and I hated doing it. I sat on her bed and talked with her for a few minutes. She kept calling me by the other name but I did not correct her. She told me stories like I had been there when they happened.

Eventually I went back to visit with my great grandma. Then the other woman started crying again, saying, "Please, come back." She eventually dozed and when she woke up again she said some of the most beautiful and heartwarming prayers I have ever heard. My great grandma told me how they prayed together at night.

I stopped by the nurse's station and the nurse told me that the lady suffers from Alzheimer's, otherwise known as dementia. I mentioned the name she had called me. The nurse told me it was the lady's daughter's name. Then I understood why she wanted me to go visit with her.

It was a heart-breaking experience but it gave me a new perspective on life.

We will all get old someday. Some of us will have broken minds like my great grandma's roommate and some of us will have broken bodies like my great grandma. But what was beautiful was the fact that both ladies, one 86 and the other 90, did not have broken spirits.

As I was leaving I promised I would go back and visit the lady, even after my great grandma moves back to her home state.

30. THE LAW OF GARBAGE TRUCKS

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Sixteen years ago I learned an important life lesson, in the back of a New York City taxi cab.

I hopped in a taxi, and we took off for Grand Central Station. We were driving in the right lane when, all of a sudden, a black car jumped out of a parking space right in front of us.

My taxi driver slammed on his brakes, skidded, and missed the other car by mere inches! The driver of the other car, the guy who almost caused a big accident, whipped his head around and started yelling bad words at us. My taxi driver just smiled and waved at the guy. And I mean, he was actually friendly!

So, I asked him, "Why did you just do that? This guy almost ruined your car and could've sent us to the hospital!"

And this is when my taxi driver told me about what I now call, "The Law of Garbage Trucks."

"Many people are like Garbage Trucks. They run around full of garbage, full of frustration, full of anger, and full of disappointment. As their garbage piles up, they need a place to dump it, and if you let them, they'll dump it on you. When someone wants to dump on you, don't take it personally. Instead, just smile, wave, wish them well, and move on. You'll be happier because you did."

Wow. That really got me thinking about how often do I let Garbage Trucks run right over me? AND, how often do I then take their garbage and spread it onto other people: at work, at home, on the streets? It was that day I resolved, "I'm not going to do it anymore."

Since then, I have started to see Garbage Trucks everywhere. Just as the kid in the *Sixth Sense* movie said, "I see dead people," I can now say, "I see Garbage Trucks." :)

I see the load they're carrying ... I see them coming to drop it off. And like my Taxi Driver, I don't make it a personal thing; I just smile, wave, wish them well, and I move on.

31. AURORA BOREALIS

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Few things take our breath away so easily, so seamlessly as images of our world. Sit back for the next two minutes and let the spectacle of our cosmos fill your senses. The deep emotional relationship we feel to our planet is evident. Happy new year! Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2681>.

32. THE POWER OF MUSIC

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Jack Leroy Tueller's decision to play his trumpet for the last remaining German sniper threatening his unit so moved the sniper that he couldn't shoot, and surrendered the next morning. By choosing to play "his love song" Jack recognized the fear and loneliness common to all of us. Now 90, he shares his precious story with us. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2794>.

33. POWER OF ONE

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Sunday, October 2 marks both the United Nations' International Day of Non-Violence and the birthday of one of its biggest proponents: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. This week we pay tribute to the concept and the man by re-introducing our subscribers to the "Power of One." We honor the values and practice of the nonviolent civil actions that changed a nation - and indeed, the world. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=14>.

34. 365 GRATEFUL

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Is it possible to harness the power of gratitude through a photo? That's just what Hailey Bartholomew did with her 365 Grateful Project, not only changing her life, but the lives of countless others by inspiring them to create their own gratitude projects. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2494>.

35. POWER OF FAILURE

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Brooding over your failures? Watch this video which lists a few people who used their failures to drive themselves to remarkable heights of success! Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=1670>.

36. LIFE IS EASY

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

"Life is easy" says Jon Jandai. "Why do we have to make it so difficult?" After pursuing "success" in Bangkok for several years, Jo dropped out of university to return to village life. There, he went back to the life he knew as a child, working 2 months of the year to grow rice (with an additional 15 minutes a day to grow vegetables), dug a couple of fish ponds, built his own homes using earthen bricks, and gave up buying clothes (he has so many clothes from friends and visitors that he has to give them away). Jo contends that to be happy, we cannot just rely on money; we have to reconnect with each other. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2747>.

37. KINDNESS BOOMERANG

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

What goes around comes around. This charming short film depicts the ripple-effect of kind acts -- the way in which receiving an unexpected moment of generosity from a stranger can cause us to become more aware of the needs of those around us and to take action to become a vector of goodness. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2748>.

38. THE GENTLE AND FORGOTTEN ART OF BLESSINGS

Watch this video for a beautiful and profound message on the gentle and forgotten art of blessings. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BkT6-CDIjw&mode=related&search>.

39. 2012: YEAR OF POWER – LEE HARRIS

Follow this link to a wonderful, inspiring video about the year ahead of us... http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJJ_AM5C4ns.

HEART AND SOUL ADVERTISEMENTS:

Consistent with Spiritual Guidance's philosophy, mission and vision (refer to <http://www.servingyourjourney.com/about.html> for more details) Spiritual Guidance offers free advertising in this e-newsletter to those persons and organizations interested in promoting their spiritual-related products, services or events. If you do choose to advertise in this e-newsletter, Spiritual Guidance requests you submit your text ad (no graphics please) to newsletter@servingyourjourney.com by the 25th of the month, for distribution in the following month's e-newsletter. If you would like to be informed of an analysis of the audience/demographic reached by this e-newsletter, please contact Spiritual Guidance (our contact information is at the very bottom of this e-newsletter).

40. SPIRITUAL RESOURCES

Check out the resources on the Spiritual Guidance website's resources page (www.servingyourjourney.com). There is a plethora of articles, poems and meditations, books, organizations, practitioners and videos to browse.

In addition, the resources page contains a listing of almost 400 spiritual centres and retreats throughout North America (some international centres and retreats are represented). In parallel with the master list of spiritual centres and retreats, Spiritual Guidance maintains two other indexes. The first is an index by region, state or province throughout North America. The second index is by faith tradition, denomination or community including, but not limited to:

- Buddhist centres, temples, priories, and monasteries
- Christian retreat centres, abbeys and monasteries; including monastic communities such as the Jesuit, Oblate and Benedictine communities (includes denominations such as Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Baptist, Protestant, Pentecostal, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc.)
- Eco-wellness and nature-oriented-and-focused centres and retreats
- Hindu and other ashrams
- Jewish retreat centres
- Shaman centres
- Sufi retreat centres
- Taoist retreat centres
- Theosophical retreat centres
- Non-sectarian, non-denominational, inter-faith community centres and retreats (e.g., Brahma Kumaris, Sri Chinmoy, etc.)

If there is a specific spiritual centre or retreat you have in mind and/or are looking for, or you would appreciate some assistance in narrowing your search or exploring options (based on faith tradition, denomination, community, region, state, province or city), please contact Spiritual Guidance. We will be honored to assist you. Our contact information is at the very bottom of this e-newsletter.

41. SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND SOUL COACHING

Spiritual Guidance can work with you to serve your individual needs, whether to receive spiritual guidance, engage in dialogue about your life, or explore and develop your spiritual practice. Spiritual Guidance works collaboratively with aspirants to guide them through an exploration of their life to realize inner peace, joy, love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness.

Guided sessions are typically held one-on-one at a location comfortable for the individual requesting guidance. Your guide may encourage a first meeting in a neutral, public setting to explore whether *Spiritual Guidance* can assist you at this time in your spiritual journey. Spiritual Guidance also offers spiritual exploration and life coaching services via an **international Skype practice**.

Each guided session may include a variety of activities—not limited to talking, walking, hiking, meditation, guided imagery and/or readings—that the individual requests and feels comfortable with. The purpose of these activities is to create a comfortable atmosphere for the individual to listen to their soul and explore their spiritual existence.

Hourly and daily rates, dependent on the nature of the guidance or coaching requested, can be discussed with Spiritual Guidance.

Please contact Spiritual Guidance if we can be of service. Our contact information is at the very bottom of this e-newsletter.

42. SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOPS



Spiritual Guidance Presents

“Exploring Spirituality”

This personal exploration workshop will facilitate, embrace and celebrate the opportunity to explore spirituality. You will have the opportunity to discover: What is spirituality to/for me? What are the characteristics of spiritual living and spiritual people? What are the impediments to spiritual growth? What spiritual practice is possible and what works best for me? To add another interesting element to the workshop, you will have the opportunity to participate in meditation and guided imagery exercises to nurture and facilitate your experience. (\$165, 6 hours in duration)

“The Laws of Spirit”

We live our lives surrounded by the ‘laws of the land’. Many of these laws are intended as a basis for social order. However, these human-made laws pale in comparison to a higher order of laws that weave themselves into our daily existence and broader human fabric. This exploratory workshop will examine these higher orders of law—the laws of spirit—in three parts:

Part 1 will see you review some of the more prominent laws of spirit.

Part 2 will have you identify the laws that are most relevant to your life path.

Part 3 will give you an opportunity to work through exercises to help you more closely examine the laws identified in Part 2 and how to address your core issues, hopefully with greater ease.

All of the material in this workshop is based upon the ambitious work of Dan Millman in his book “The Life You Were Born to Live: A Guide to Finding Your Life Purpose”. (\$125, 5 hours in duration)

“Forgiveness”

Forgiveness offers us tremendous opportunities for inner peace, joy and love in our lives. From a spiritual perspective, forgiveness is essential for spiritual growth and unlocks a door—it is a key—to higher levels of consciousness. For those

who recognize that their inability to forgive themselves and others is holding them back from the inner peace they seek, this workshop will be most beneficial. You will also benefit from attending if you want to develop tools to help others learn how to forgive. In this workshop we will explore what forgiveness is and, more importantly, how to forgive through a series of self-exploratory exercises. We will discuss some of the common reasons we choose not to forgive and examine some practical tools and approaches to forgiveness. (\$125, 5 hours in duration)

To register your interest for any of the above workshops, please contact Rev. Robert Meagher at 613-204-0299 or rmeagher@servinyourjourney.com.

All workshops will skillfully blend personal reflective time with facilitated reflection circles to provide the opportunity for discussion with other participants.

Unless otherwise stated, all workshops will be held at the Subud Centre, 357 Wilmont Avenue, Ottawa (at Churchill Avenue, one block South of Scott Street). Please bring any food, snacks and/or refreshments you will need throughout the day. There are kitchen facilities available, with running water, and a fridge you can keep your food, snacks and refreshments in.

You are invited to wear comfortable clothing and consider bringing with you additional layers, such as a fleece, shawl or blanket. The sedentary nature of the day may result in you wanting to add layers to stay warm. Also consider bringing your favorite cushion or pillow for sitting on the floor.

* The cost of the workshop includes a workbook that you will use throughout the day and then take home with you.

43. SPIRITUALITY DISCUSSION GROUPS

Spiritual Guidance leads discussion groups on spirituality in Ottawa, Canada. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in these discussion groups, please contact us at rmeagher@servinyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299. You can also register your interest on the 'Services' page of the Spiritual Guidance website (<http://www.servinyourjourney.com/page04.html>).

44. A COURSE IN MIRACLES STUDY GROUP

A Course in Miracles is a self-study course in personal and spiritual transformation. Spiritual Guidance nurtures a community of students who study *A Course in Miracles*. If you or someone you know would like to participate in this community, please contact us at rmeagher@servinyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299. You can also register your interest on the 'Services' page of the Spiritual Guidance website (<http://www.servinyourjourney.com/page04.html>).

45. SUPPORTING SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Spiritual Guidance is an interfaith ministry initiative based in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada that works with people to explore their spirituality. We offer four primary services:

- Spiritual exploration and life coaching
- Spiritual programming (e.g., discussion groups, study groups, workshops, etc.)
- Public speaking
- Traditional ministerial services focused on visitation with the sick, infirm and dying.

To learn more about the above-mentioned services, refer to the Services page of our website (www.servinyourjourney.com).

In addition to the above, Spiritual Guidance maintains an ambitious index of resources on the resources page of our website. We fulfill requests for specific resources to help aspirants on their personal journey toward enlightenment. Spiritual Guidance also creates and distributes this monthly e-newsletter to interested persons throughout the world.

The majority of the above services are offered from the heart, with participation based on in-kind donations and free will offerings. Some recipients of this e-newsletter and other services offered by Spiritual Guidance have expressed gratitude for Spiritual Guidance's presence in their lives and have voluntarily offered donations to support Spiritual Guidance's ministry work. If you would like to support Spiritual Guidance by making a monetary donation:

1. Please go to the home page of our website (www.servingyourjourney.com) and click on



the  button toward the bottom left of the home page.

OR

2. Please follow this link to make a donation via Paypal (https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=GRP5RLXSVRDFS). If the donation link does not work when you click on it, please copy and paste the link into your web browser.

OR

3. Please make your cheque payable to “Spiritual Guidance” and mail it to:

679 Cooper Street
Ottawa, ON K1R 5J3
CANADA

Please note that Spiritual Guidance is not a registered not-for-profit or charitable organization at this time. Therefore, we will not be able to provide you with a receipt for taxation purposes.

Love and gratitude for your support and generosity.

46. INTERFAITH DIALOGUE SERIES



Spiritual Guidance
and
St. Paul's Eastern United Church
Presents

“Interfaith Dialogue Series”

Wednesdays, January 25, February 1, 8, 15, 2012
6:30 – 8:30pm

The Royal Oak (Lower Level)
(161 Laurier Ave. East, Ottawa – Between Cumberland Street and King Edward Ave.)

Interfaith ministry seeks the common ground among the faith traditions as a seed for love, inner peace and world peace. We celebrate all the great faith traditions including, but not limited to: Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; and Taoism. We believe that celebrating all faith traditions can facilitate and promote wholeness, integration and interconnectedness.

This Interfaith Dialogue Series will celebrate the diversity and common ground among the faith traditions through a facilitated workshop style dialogue series. Participants can look forward to a dialogue based upon rich, exploratory questions using the World Café facilitation methodology. Bring your curiosity for discussion and dialogue about the interfaith issues that matter to you.

Cost: In-kind donation and/or free will offering.

Registration: Please contact Rev. Robert Meagher at 613-204-0299 or rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com.

You are invited to wear comfortable clothing and consider bringing with you additional layers, such as a fleece or shawl. The sedentary nature of the event may result in you wanting to add layers to stay warm.

47. UNIFY EARTH

The biggest live entertainment (Sacred) event that has ever happen on Earth has begun. It will be held on December 21, 2012, at Chichen Itza, Mexico, at the exact moment when the Earth, the Sun and the center of the galaxy are in perfect alignment, and it will be broadcast via TV, internet and mobile streaming. This cosmic alignment only happens once about every 26,000 years, and it is expected that two billion plus people will be watching this event as it unfolds.

Some of the groups that have aligned with **Unify Earth** at this moment are Cirque Du Soleil, Google, Live Earth and Live Aid, and they will feature Sting, Carlos Santana and many other luminaries. It is just beginning.

But most importantly, the Itza Mayan Council of Elders from the Yucatan has approved this event and will be intimately a part of the ceremonies, and the ceremonies that they perform at the moment of the alignment will be REAL, and will fulfill the Mayan Prophecy. It is the Mayan calendar, the most accurate calendar on Earth, that predicted the timing of this cosmic cycle, and it is the Mayan people who are being honored during this event.

Cirque Du Soleil will present the creative aspect of this event, and they will be giving simultaneous presentations all over the world, but focused on Chichen Itza, the Heart Center of the Mayan people. It is a story about humanity's journey throughout the ages that brings fantasy and reality together and takes the viewer on an epic musical media experience.

But deeper than the outer display, Unify Earth will begin March 21, 2012, to educate the world as to what the date of December 21, 2012, means from a Mayan Prophecy point of view: not the end of the world as many have believed, but the beginning of a new cycle of human consciousness expansion. This will be the most important moment of human experience since we were conceived, and a moment of great beauty. It is a time to celebrate!!! For what follows that event is inevitable, the birth of a new humanity.

Unify Earth's purpose is to get 2 billion plus people into their hearts simultaneously at the very moment of this cosmic alignment, which allows us to dream a New Dream for Humanity. It is our choice to continue on the path of darkness, or to turn abruptly and face the brilliant Light that is all around us. This will be the moment for us to take a stand for Life, and for you to be there in your beautiful Tiny Space of Your Heart creating a new world for all of us, our children and all Life on Earth.

Remember to breathe.

In Lak'ech

48. CENTERING PRAYER 6-DAY INTENSIVE RETREAT

"Embodying the Silence – A Deeper Surrender"

Monday, March 12 at 5:30 p.m. (eat before you come) to Sunday, March 18, 2012 at 2 p.m.

Scarboro Mission, 2685 Kingston Rd, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Facilitated by Susan Rush, Coordinator, Contemplative Outreach New Mexico

Eligibility: at least one year's regular practice of Centering Prayer

Cost: overnight resident: \$625; commuter \$445 (includes non-refundable fee of \$50)

Register: send contact info & full payment to Elyse Strathy, 91 Glenview Ave, Toronto, ON, N4R 1P9, CANADA

Further information: contact Elyse Strathy at 416-482-1619 or strathy@sympatico.ca

49. TOUCHING THE ETERNAL – A PERSONAL TRAINING COURSE

Richard Harvey/Therapy & Spirituality

A Personal Training Course which Presents Richard's Three Stages of Awakening in its Newest, Most Complete Form to Date

"The essential secret is that we are consciousness and consciousness is eternal. Freedom from separation and attachments involves living into this secret until it becomes our central reality... beyond fear and desire."

TOUCHING THE ETERNAL

Part I: Personality, Ego-attachments and the Relative World

Group Event: a 4-day Interactive, Ego-destroying, Soul-repairing, Spirit-kindling Experience in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in southern Spain

24-27 Feb 2012

Richard Harvey has produced a psycho-spiritual and holistic approach to the problems of the inner world for human beings in modern times. Ego-forces are now so powerful and insidious that, unless we are keenly developed in inner vision and awareness practice, we cannot gauge the hazard for modern humanity in the present era. The creative powers of being are almost entirely submerged beneath the need for self-aggrandizement, blame and guilt, animalistic lower energy concerns, selfishness and self-concern. Only an inner and spiritual revolution of radical, profound inquiry can bring about a transformation of sufficient proportions. This takes great courage, application and persistence. The process involves the loss and heroic ordeal of all that we hold dear for Truth or God, Compassion and Love. These transforming aspects of the Divine are almost totally eclipsed today, but there is hope if we can take responsibility for our awakening, liberation and realization using intelligent, inspired and authentic means.

Richard's Three Stages of Awakening comprise a Divine Psychology and in the group event **Touching the Eternal** it is presented in three parts:

Touching the Eternal Part I: Personality, Ego-attachments and the Relative World on 24-27 Feb 2012

Touching the Eternal Part 2: The Work of Authenticity, The Ego and True Purpose, Surrender of the Self on 27-30 Apr 2012

Touching the Eternal Part 3: Spiritual Practices, Transcendence and the Divine Person on 22-25 Jun 2012

You may take any part separately as a complete course in itself or all three parts as a complete training. For practitioners, teachers and healers: this course offers ideas, methods and challenging concepts that should help and embellish your chosen approach. However in Part 3, the Spiritual Practices are specific and intended to be affective in the spiritual process of transcendence and attaining to the divine. If you already have a spiritual method and philosophy that is adequate for your aspirations, we respectfully ask you not to attend Part 3 of **Touching the Eternal** since that part is for people who wish to engage sincerely with a new radical transforming spiritual method.

Venue: Cortijo Llano de Manzano <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/location-alpujarras-spain.html>

Price and Booking: 400 euros. Booking via 100 euros deposit, the balance is payable at the beginning of the event. Reduced prices for couples booking together or people who genuinely are unable to afford the full price. Deposits are non-refundable unless the event is cancelled in which case you receive a full refund.

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/bookings.php>

Flights and Travel: see <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/travel-information-alpujarras.html>

Accommodation: the event is non-residential. For details of nearby accommodation to suit different budgets see "Accommodation" at <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/travel-information-alpujarras.html>

Interview on the Three Stages of Awakening: <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/interview-stages-awakening.html>

More at <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/human-awakening.html>

Richard Harvey/Therapy and Spirituality Links:

WEBSITE

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/>

SOCIAL MEDIA

http://www.linkedin.com/profile/edit?trk=hb_tab_pro_top

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Therapy-and-Spirituality/138888839521420>

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/profile.php?id=100002284631345>

ARTICLES

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/articles/>

BOOKS

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/books/>

<http://www.amazon.com/-/e/B004WC4YQI>

WORKSHOPS/COURSES

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/calendar-workshops-courses.html>

BIO

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/about-richard-harvey.html>

Full details of this and other workshop events are at <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/workshops.html>

Contact details: Richard Harvey/Therapy and Spirituality

Mob: (00 34) 680 741 108

Tel: (00 34) 958 953 033

E: richard@therapyandspirituality.com

W: <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/>

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Richard Harvey

Mob: Spain (0034) 680 741 108

Tel: Spain (0034) 958 953 033

www.therapyandspirituality.com/

50. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF ISLAM

Tuesdays, February 7 — 28, 2012

7:00 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.

Scarboro Missions, 2685 Kingston Road , Scarborough, ON, Canada
(SW corner of Brimley Ave/Kingston Rd.)

Inquiries: 416-262-7135
416-262-7135, ext. 296
interfaith@scarboromissions.ca
www.scarboromissions.ca

No admission fee. No registration required.

Feb. 7: The Prophet Muhammad & The Origins of Islam

by Shaykh Imran Ally, Imam of the TARIC Islamic Centre (Toronto); Muslim chaplain for University of Toronto (Mississauga) and Peel Police.

Feb. 14 Living the Message of the Qur'an

by Dr. Katherine Bullock, President, The Tessellate Institute; President, Compass Books; Lecturer, the University of Toronto. She accepted Islam in 1994.

Feb. 21 The Five Pillars & the Six Principles of Islam

by Imam Dr. Hamid Slimi, President and Founder of Faith of Life Network; Imam of Sayeda Khadija Centre; Chairman of the Canadian Council of Imams; TV Host & Producer.

Feb. 28 Islam as a Way of Life

by Shaykh Yusuf Badat, Imam of the Islamic Foundation of Toronto (Scarborough); Professor of Islamic & Arabic studies.

51. TEACHING ON MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

with Zasep Tulku Rinpoche



DATE and TIME: Thursday, February 9, 2012 @ 7:00pm (\$15 suggested offering)

PLACE: Institute of Traditional Medicine , 553 Queen St. W. 2nd floor, Toronto, ON, Canada

Register at: info@itmworld.org.

The Venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche is an internationally respected teacher of Tibetan Buddhism. Born in 1948 in the Kham Province of Tibet, Zasep Rinpoche was recognized by Kagyu, Sakya and Gelug Lamas, as a highly realized teacher. He was enthroned as the 13th Zasep Tulku Rinpoche at Zuru Monastery at the age of five. After the Chinese army invaded Tibet in 1959, he fled to India .

52. THE SONG OF GOD IN OUR MIDST: MUSIC AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE KEY OF JAZZ

by Tom Reynolds

Friday, February 3, 2012 (7:30-9:30 p.m.) and Saturday, February 4, 2012 (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at Emmanuel College, Toronto, Canada.

This concert and day-long program explores the relation between jazz performance and spirituality, using both music and spirituality to reveal creative ways of thinking differently about transformation in everyday life and religious practices.

Cost: \$100 for Friday and Saturday program (includes lunch); concert only is \$35, or \$25 in advance.

Registration Deadline: January 26, 2012

To Register: contact Betsy Anderson at 416-813-4096 or betsy.anderson@utoronto.ca

Additional information: www.emmanuel.utoronto.ca

53. ENNEAGRAM AND SPIRITUALITY I—EMBRACING OUR HABITS AND REACTIONS

by Dr Miriam Frey

The first of two workshops for those interested in becoming more fully alive to whom they are meant to be, exploring our reactions that seek comfort, security and the approval of others rather than embracing the largeness of life.

Saturday, February 25, 2012 (9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, 100 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

Cost: \$90 includes materials. \$80 each if you register with a friend.

Registration Deadline: February 11, 2012

Register: contact Miriam at 519-880-9684 or email: mfrey@sentex.ca

54. ENNEAGRAM AND SPIRITUALITY II—BECOMING OUR TRUE SELVES

by Dr Miriam Frey

The second of two workshops for those interested in becoming more fully alive to whom they are meant to be; exploring the summons of our soul.

Saturday, March 24, 2012 (9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, 100 Benjamin Road, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

Cost: \$90 includes materials. \$80 each if you register with a friend.

Registration Deadline: March 10, 2012

Register: contact Miriam at 519-880-9684 or email: mfrey@sentex.ca

55. WOMEN'S GATEWAY RETREAT

Queen of Apostles Retreat Centre, 1617 Blythe Road, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Friday, March 2 (7 p.m.) to Sunday, March 4, 2012 (2 p.m.)

Retreat Facilitators: The Rev. Carol Langley and Wendy Passmore

Cost: \$225.00 includes: 2 nights accommodation (private room), 5 meals, and materials.

To register: send \$40.00 non-refundable deposit to: The Rev. Carol Langley, 100 River Rock Cres., Brampton, Ontario, Canada, L7A 2W5.

Further information and/or brochure, call 905-846-2952 or e-mail: cclangley@sympatico.ca.

56. SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SUPPORT: PRACTICAL WISDOM AND GUIDANCE FOR ALL CAREGIVERS

by Dr Anne Simmonds

Saturday, March 3, 2012 (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) at St Peter's United Church, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada.

This is an *Emmanuel at a Distance* program – contact Gillian Schell at gschell@laurentian.ca.

Cost: \$50 (half price for students)

Registration: Betsy Anderson at 416-813-4096 or betsy.anderson@utoronto.ca.

Additional information: www.emmanuel.utoronto.ca.

57. HOLY GROUND: PASTORAL CARE OF THE DYING AND BEREAVED

with Dr Anne Simmonds

Friday, March 23 to Sat March 24, 2012 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily) at Emmanuel College, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

This two-day workshop provides participants with an opportunity for reflection on their professional and personal concerns and experiences regarding death and grief and an opportunity to enhance their ability to provide pastoral care to the dying and bereaved.

Cost: \$175 includes lunch and coffee breaks. Deadline: March 15, 2012.

Registration: Betsy Anderson at 416-813-4096 or betsy.anderson@utoronto.ca.

Additional information: www.emmanuel.utoronto.ca

58. HONOURING DREAMS: MESSAGES OF HEALING AND HOPE

at Five Oaks Centre, Paris

Friday, March 16 at 5:30 p.m. (begins with supper) to *Sun Mar 18* at 12:30 (ends with lunch)

Facilitated by Miriam Frey

Together we will explore the symbolism, levels of meaning and types of dreams that aid in spiritual awareness. There will be opportunity for personal rest and reflection as well as interactions with others. Bring your dreams and active imagination.

Cost: \$295.00 includes tuition, meals and accommodation.

Register online at www.fiveoaks.on.ca or email: registrar@fiveoaks.on.ca or call 519-442-3212.

59. FREE E-BOOKS FROM HEALING INTERNATIONAL

There are now 90 free e-books on our website for you to freely download
I think it worthy of comment that I have today uploaded even more free e-books to our website:-

<http://www.ebookdownloadsforfree.net>

all of which, may be freely downloaded directly on to your home computer.

I am very grateful to everyone who has willingly sent me their e-books to include on our website.

I have received a lot of emails from people who have already downloaded many of the e-books and they have all been very appreciative that these e-books have been made readily available to them.

Happy reading

Have a wonder-full joy-filled day

With many healing blessings

Geoffrey Keyte

E-Book Co-ordinator

<http://www.ebookdownloadsforfree.net>

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

Spiritual Guidance

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

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