

Spiritual Guidance

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

April 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@servingyourjourney.com

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OFFERINGS:

1. PERSONAL STORY OF SPIRITUAL LESSONS

Choice

The past few years have been one of significant and magnificent transformation for me. I have gone from a material- and financially-egocentric lifestyle and existence as a senior manager / executive in corporate Canada to that of simplicity and contemplative (somewhat monastic) living as an interfaith minister and caregiver for my partner.

During this type of transformation (an ongoing process) much changes in the world around you. From a concrete perspective, what you buy, where you shop, what you do with your free time, and even the people you spend time with, all transforms. The way you look at life also joyously morphs into something quite unexpected.

The concrete things—what you buy, where you shop, etc.—become secondary. What comes to the fore is how life offers to you an expanded meaning. It is this expanded meaning that results in realizing you have a choice to ‘see’ life differently. What once may have been a source of upset, anger, resentment, sadness, or any other host of negative emotions, can now bring about relief, peace, joy and a plethora of other positive emotions.

I recently had coffee with a friend who has maintained a connection with me during the transformation of the past few years. As this friend waxed poetic about all the tragedies, unrest, disasters and calamities taking place around the world, I offered a different perspective on these same world events—simply suggesting there may be another way of looking at these events.

In a fit of anger, my friend blurted out “Oh come on! You’re in denial!” I smiled, gave my friend a hug, and went on to share the following...

First, I acknowledged my friend’s comments by saying “Yes, you may be right. I may be in denial about all the bad things happening on this planet at this time.” I went on to suggest that “if I am in denial about what bad things are happening on this planet at this time, then it is possible that those who only see the bad may be in denial about what good is happening on this planet at this time.” I went on to share that “if there are those who only see the negative and those who only see the positive, and those who lay somewhere in the middle of that continuum, then logic may dictate that it is a choice how we see the world around us.”

We have the power to choose what we see in any given moment. Life has taught me that I am much better off seeing the good in bad circumstances; I am better off seeing the blessing and hope in what may be considered disasters or calamities; I am better off seeing seeds of peace in conflict and war; I am better off seeing the Holy instant while staring in the face of a separated soul.

We have been given a gift to make choices about our life. It has also been said "salvation is given to us as our birthright; we only need to reach out and gratefully accept it."

What choices will you make in your life? How and what will you 'see'?

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

2. CONTEMPLATIVE THOUGHTS*

Spiritual DNA is unique to each person. Although we all have all the spiritual virtues and powers that make us uniquely human, each of us has a special blend of virtues and powers, a unique potion that cannot be replicated. Today let me pay attention to the unique blend of qualities in each person I meet.

Before actors go onto a stage, they first prepare their own state of mind to fit the character they are playing and the role they must perform. In the same way, I can prepare my own inner state of mind before I step onto the stage of the world's drama. When I awaken in the morning, I can take a couple of minutes to remind myself of my deepest purpose and my highest spiritual aim. Today let me prepare myself to play my role well and with dignity.

Our lives are more complicated and complex than ever. What can I simplify today - my home, perhaps my thoughts, my life? Simple means easy, simple means asking, "Is this really necessary?" Simple means keeping it short but sweet. Simple means keeping the focus of my attention on what I need to do now. Today let me keep it simple.

Understand the importance of time by not wasting it. One of the ways we can waste time is to go back into memories of the past, reliving old hurts, wrongdoings and wounds. When I value time I realize how important it is to fill the present moment with beauty and joy. It requires willpower to put a full stop to thinking too much about the past. Today let me apply a full stop to the past and fully be in the present moment.

Every action has its seed in a thought and every thought is a creation of the thinker, the spiritual being. I choose what thoughts I want to create. As is my thinking so are my actions and also my experience in life. Today let me go within, touch the stillness and pureness that lies at the core of my being and ensure that every thought I create is of benefit to myself and to humanity.

Situations pass, they cease to exist, but they continue to be alive in the mind. Today let me leave these useless waste thoughts in the past and only keep the ones that are inspiring and contributing to my well-being.

The drama of life is a mirror reflecting whatever is inside of me. When I comb my hair in front of the mirror I don't reach out and comb the mirror, I comb the hair on my head then look to see that the reflection in the mirror looks good. In the same way when I look out at my life I see a reflection of myself. Today let me create a beautiful life as an accurate reflection of my beautiful inner world.

Spiritual power makes a person more contented, gracious and well mannered. To be a spiritual authority is very different than physical authority, which expresses itself through dominance. Spiritual authority expresses itself as gentleness, kindness, equanimity and dignity. The more I pay attention to the reality of my spiritual nature the more my spiritual power increases. Today let me increase my spiritual power.

An action that hurts me or another person is a wrong action. At the spiritual level any action that makes another feel disrespected or worthless is a wrong action. Throughout my day, in subtle ways, I may give this message to others. Today let me be aware of my subtle messages.

Changing habits results in behaving differently with family and friends. Although the change in you may be positive, it can still create a subtle resistance from those you are close to, as they adjust. It creates a subtle disturbance requiring them to shift as well. Today let me be patient with any resistance around me.

When hearts are close no words are needed. People yell at each other when angry even when they are sitting physically close to each other. This is because their hearts are far apart. When hearts are close soft words are spoken. When minds are close no words are needed, there is understanding. Today let me keep my heart and mind close to others.

In life we connect with many others who are part of our human family. Sometimes we meet new people who we feel are familiar and trusted as if we have known them before. As we connect to each other, we recognize the spiritual essence that has not changed over time. Today let me be myself so my old friends will recognize me.

Do I see bodies or souls? When I see people as bodies I am influenced by how they look, by the color of their skin, the size and shape and beauty of the body. However, when I see people as souls I am touched by the quality of their energy. The subtle vibrations of kindness, enthusiasm, determination or strength become more visible when I see each person as a soul, a being of consciousness. Today let me experiment with seeing others as souls.

When I become so wrapped up in my habits that I am not able to discern how my thoughts, feelings and actions are being driven by them, I lose my sense of self mastery. When I sit in silence and begin to "see" some of my deepest habits of thought and attitude, I am able to choose whether they will influence me or not. This is true self-mastery; to conquer negative habits by removing their power. Today let me transform old habits by seeing through them.

Storms don't leave a mark on the ocean. When I hold a consciousness as vast as the ocean, although problems may arise they leave no mark on me. When I immerse myself in the ocean of peace and love everyday through meditation, I grow my inner capacity to weather storms. They come but they no longer drown me. Today let me sit in silence and experience an inner ocean of peace.

What is the true news of the world? The newspapers, radio and television tell us about destruction, war and disasters. But what of the news of kindness, unity, harmony? Like a sapling that is vulnerable if exposed too early to storms, newness in the world is quietly happening under the cover of bad news. If I pay careful attention I can feel newness growing. Today let me look for signs of newness and beauty in the world.

It is when we silence the chattering of our mind that we can truly hear what is in our heart and find the still, clear purity that lies within the soul. Spiritual love carries us into the silence of our original state of being. This silence contains the power to create harmony in all relationships and the sweetness to sustain them. Today let me draw from my reservoir of inner silence.

When I pay too much attention to the lives of others, I waste my time trying to write someone else's script and forget to write my own. It is not my job to write another's script and any attempt to do so is futile, frustrating and doomed to failure. I can choose to let be and cherish the freedom from the subtle tensions and anxieties about others, by letting them write their own script. Today let me create my own life and let others live their own.

The spiritual journey is a process of cleaning the impurities of insecurity, jealousy, fear, sadness and anger from the soul. As the process of cleaning goes on we begin to uncover the layers underneath. Rather than being disheartened, I understand that I am progressing spiritually when I discover I have cleaned out another layer. Today let me be patient with myself and the spiritual process.

Often when people meet, the true identity of the soul is hidden inside a reputation. Reputations can be big and can demand attention and care. When two reputations meet they collide while trying to get around each other as if trapped in a narrow hallway. When I see another person as their true spiritual identity, a being of conscious energy, then it is easy to interact, dance and pass in the hallway. Today let me bring my true identity to every interaction.

Our perception is our creation, so in a real sense we are creating the world at every moment. And what shapes our perception? Mostly it is our beliefs. If you believe the world is a 'dark and dangerous place' you will more likely perceive scenes and situations as a threat. Your thoughts and feelings will contain some form of fear and your actions in life are likely to become detrimental to your happiness. Whereas if you believe the world is an 'adventure playground' you will see most situations and circumstances as an opportunity to be creative and playful, your thoughts and feelings will be joyful and a steady state of happiness will more likely be your daily experience.

Many of us have come under the illusion that what we do gives us worth. The more I accomplish the more valuable I must be. However, accomplishments are a weak crutch for true self respect. When I understand I am valuable independent of my accomplishments I will be free to bring my best self to all that I do without relying on my accomplishments for my sense of self respect. Today let me value my value.

Expectations create pressure. When I hold an expectation of someone it creates a subtle pressure they experience as force. Feeling forced to do something usually makes people resist or rebel in some way. To create cooperation in my relationships I must let go of expectations. Today let me free myself and others from the pressure of expectations.

Greatness is beyond analysis. In the same way you cannot teach someone how to fall in love, you cannot teach someone how to have a life that is filled with greatness. It is not teachable, but it may be learnable. When I am free to be who I really am, a natural expression of love comes easily and my actions are filled with serene greatness. Today let me re-learn how to act from my true nature.

We learn to identify with 'ideas' like family, club, profession, nation, religion and race etc. From each identification we can 'seem' to derive a 'feeling' of belonging. We don't notice however, that in each case we are attempting to externalise our sense of self. We are trying to find our self outside of our self. From a spiritual point of view this is a form of insanity! It is also what gives rise to the ego or the 'false self' or misidentification. This then leads to feelings of fragmentation, isolation and unhappiness simply because each of these 'externalised identities' are limited, do change and can be threatened.

What's on your mind will be clear in your face and actions. Although I might think my thoughts are private, in fact they are very visible on my face and in my actions. Although people can't see my thoughts they see my words and actions and they will know exactly what is on my mind. Today let me pay attention to make my thoughts high quality so I will be happy for them to be seen.

Any creation is a direct expression of its creator. My life is an expression of me, the creator of it. When I understand that everything I create reflects me I will put the best of me into each thing I create. Today let me express my best.

Change your world from within. It is possible to map the journey between what is going on inside a person to its external creation. My world is a direct reflection of the thoughts and beliefs I project onto it. Real mastery is to look within the self and find the thought pattern that is creating or sustaining a difficult situation. Feelings of powerlessness, fear or hopelessness allow difficulties to continue. Feelings of power and determination bring solutions. Today let me change my outer world from within.

Ego is any false image I hold of myself. To consider myself to be a body is the oldest, deepest down I am faced with thinking I am no longer competent, capable or able. However, when I remember that the body is the vehicle for the soul, I can conquer this subtle ego and remain cheerful, capable and competent independent of the state of the body. Today let me conquer the false image of myself as a body.

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

3. POEM

The Journey

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice...
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
"Mend my life!"
each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.

It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen branches and stones.

But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do—
determined to save the only life you could save.

Mary Oliver

4. QUOTE or QUESTION

"What seems to be the fear of death is really its attraction." (A Course in Miracles, T-19,IV,C,1,5)

5. LIFE IS LIKE COFFEE

Sometimes we all need to be reminded of what's truly important in life. This charming little video does just that. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.flickspire.com/m/MBT/LifeIsLikeCoffee?lsid=8319931d9f49825be07b5c2dbac90fd4>.

6. A TASTE FOR LIFE

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

East India Company

210 Somerset Street West, Ottawa

On Wednesday evening, April 25, I will be hosting A Taste for Life at East India Company (210 Somerset Street West, Ottawa). A Taste For Life is a unique, annual fundraising event that has been helping Ottawa men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS for 14 years. Funds raised from A Taste for Life are divided between The Snowy Owl AIDS Foundation and Bruce House. All money raised is directed to care for those living with HIV/AIDS.

Please join me for this worthwhile evening by:

1. Calling the East India Company (613-567-4634) and making your reservation. Please also let me know you plan to attend so that I can send you a friendly reminder closer to the date.
2. Going out for dinner with your friends and family on April 25th and having a great evening!



3. Making a donation to a great cause! East India Company will donate 25% of the cost of your meal to Bruce House and the Snowy Owl AIDS Foundation.

When making your reservation, please mention that it is for A Taste For Life. For more about A Taste for Life, visit <http://www.atasteforlife.org/>.

Make your reservation early to avoid missing out!

In gratitude for your support,

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 – ANIMUS POSSESSION

Women experience a special problem about working with self-worth and it is what Jung sometimes called “animus possession”. Because we are deeply – most of us blindly – immersed in a patriarchal society, we have an egoic mask which is governed by patriarchal symbols and which supports the values of the patriarchy. This mask totally subdues a woman’s true nature. So she has to find a way to remove the mask, because it is completely false and it denies her womanhood and the deep values of the feminine.

As the patriarchy has flourished and established itself as our predominant culture, so its principles and values have become embedded in our psyches. This aspect of the inner world of both men and women has been named the patripsych. The patripsych upholds *unconsciously* the values of the patriarchy. While this poses a deep challenge for men, it is a distinctly different problem for women.

A woman’s conditioning is so imbued with male values that her ego structure relates exclusively to a male system and does not resonate with her natural female self. What makes this so difficult to work with is its near invisibility – not really seeing it, not knowing it, not thinking there is anything wrong with it, because there is extremely rarely any alternative to *having* to adapt to it. You can feel the pressure from the evolution of several thousand years of patriarchy. So the difference for a woman is that as soon as you start to peel away the layers, very soon what appears is an infantile layer of stunted growth that is *everything-that-pleases-daddy*. This is her deep conformity to the male value system. When that has been shed there is this little seed or undeveloped impulse that is the tiny, unformed ego of her own femaleness that longs to be developed as womanly qualities. Through those qualities a woman can re-engage with the world in an entirely new way. With the patriarchal mask discarded she is free to be herself in a way that is not constricted by patriarchal norms.

Men have to strip away their identification with the negative values of patriarchy too, because a man’s real potential lies deeper. So, for men, developing genuine self-worth is more of a humbling practice. When women do their inner work they get bigger, more visible, more noisy and less civilised – more obviously free – whereas men become deeper and more humble. It is a different direction, but for men as well as for women, the issue is how much the patriarchy is within you, unquestioned and inviolable.

If you are a woman who entered into the man’s world with a career you have even more to handle from the point of view of your inner life. You are in a man’s world anyway and you cannot get out of it – no one should kid himself or herself that

they are *not* in it. However, if you have gone into it in a masculine role you are likely to be even more deeply submerged. The higher you have risen in the hierarchy of the man's world the more subsumed in it you are.

Do you know the story of the Greek goddess Athena? She was born out of a male version of a Caesarean section. While the god of heaven and earth, her father Zeus, screamed in agony, Hephaestus, the god of the forge, cut open his head with an axe. Out of the wound Athena was born, wearing full armour and brandishing weapons. She considered herself to have only one parent – her father Zeus. When you get a successful woman who is “straight out of her daddy's head,” you can see she is functioning like a man – not like a woman – in a man's world. It is absurd to say that this says anything positive about the equality of women or feminist values, because it is more antithetical to women and the women's movement than if a man held the job.

Exploring the tension between male and female values leads you to another schism – the division between inner and outer. The repression of the in-turning, feminine principle by the outgoing, masculine principle is reflected in the history of war, conquest and *gynocide*. When you get those dreams with a male figure who is oppressive and who is after you, there is the patriarchy and the oppressive masculine ego inside you saying, “No, little girl!” That is the fear, the patriarchy personified and deeply internalised.

[Excerpted and adapted from *The Flight of Consciousness*, Richard Harvey, Ashgrove Publishing 2002, <http://www.amazon.com/-/e/B004WC4YQI>]

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 – AMAZING TIMES

We do, indeed, live in amazing times. Life on this planet is changing at an unprecedented speed. Time appears to be accelerating due to shifting magnetic fields in and around the earth. As our planet and our sun are lining up with our Great Central Sun, we are being bombarded with the most intense, loving light that is causing tremendous shifts in the consciousness on this planet. The intensity of this loving, healing light is creating many changes for us on all levels of our being starting with the physical. Many people are aware that their bodies are going through something they can't quite define or identify. So called ascension symptoms vary from person to person, and are affecting everyone I've talked to in the last year. These symptoms include poor sleep or wanting to sleep all the time, inability to tolerate foods you once ate easily, difficulty finding what you can eat and tolerate, unexpected weight loss or weight gain, mood swings, unexpected anger and depression for unknown reasons, loss of interest in people or things that you once adored, and more. These are just a few of the more common ones. Nothing seems to be the way it was. Weird is the new normal and life is shifting and changing day by day. We are adjusting and changing our perceptions, expectations, and moving into a new way of thinking and being: Unity Consciousness. We are beginning to realize we are not separate beings struggling alone to make it in this lifetime, but part of a unified whole consciousness that is the God field. We are not alone and could not be if we tried. As the God Consciousness we are, we are supported in every moment. Learning to trust that love and support is our biggest challenge at this time.

The veils are thinning between the dimensions resulting in our seeing, hearing and sensing more of the divine beings working with us to help us to remember who we are. We have so much help; all we need do is be still, take the time to tune in and ask that their guidance be known to us. Spiritual advancement has never been easier than it is now. As we are moving into the new vibration of the Spirit Human the Divine Beings of Highest Light are offering us unprecedented amounts of support to cleanse ourselves mentally, emotionally and physically to make room for the great light of enlightenment and ascension that is beaming upon us. We are being asked to cleanse our bodies of a lifetime of toxins, unknowingly accumulated and stored, keeping the body dense and unable to receive higher vibrations. Eating lighter and detoxifying help our bodies be able to receive the glorious energies now available to us. Physically we are wise to continue some form of activity while at the same time increasing our stillness, our meditation time. If we are busy running around, thinking and being constantly distracted we are unable to make space for the new energies coming to us. Mentally it is time to release all that you are carrying from the past that keeps you stuck in old, limited, blaming-type thinking. It is time to get rid of your story and be present in the NOW as the new evolving you. Releasing who you thought you were and stepping into your role as Divine Human is a most wondrous and rewarding process. With each letting go you will feel lighter and more present to your real True Self, the Spirit Being, God Expression you are.

We do, indeed, live in amazing times. Take advantage of this Great Shift of Consciousness and do everything you can to wake up NOW to the big YOU, the Truth of You, God Expressing.

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Sherry Harris is a psychotherapist, spiritual counsellor and teacher. She may be reached at 613-236-8852 or by email at 2belight1@gmail.com. She is available for evening and weekend appointments as well as during the day. Her insurance receipts are reimbursed by most benefit packages. Please check out her website at www.sherryharriscountselling.com.

9. DOUG HENDERSON, Ph.D – WE USE THEM UNTIL WE NO LONGER NEED THEM – PART 6 OF 11

This is part 6 of a 11-part series by Doug. If you are interested in all 11 parts as one long article, you can contact Doug directly via his contact information at the end of this article.

But let's go back to something that I said earlier –“Everyone is doing the best that they can - with the information they have accepted.” With the information they have accepted – gets to the crux of the problem because we have bought into so much junk – possibly 97% or more of what we think we know is false

So, we need something that helps us to differentiate Truth from Non-Truth. For Hawkins, it was Muscle Testing or one movement in applied kinesiology. If the body is a communication device then muscle testing is simply another form of Dowsing. Hawkins felt that when we muscle test, we are connecting with a Higher Realm of Consciousness, provided that we are of integrity and have achieved level 200 on his Map or Scale of Human Consciousness. Seems to me every dowser feels the same way.

Hawkins believes that the discovery of the importance of muscle testing is of such significance that those who apply it have a 1,000 times greater chance of achieving enlightenment than those who didn't have the opportunity to use it.

Personally, I prefer the pendulum because I don't Trust Self Muscle Testing. And there – right there is why we rely on something else – something outside of us or so we think. We do not trust our own intuitive response! – that right there is a belief in littleness that I need to change because we teach what we need to learn most and by teaching it we learn it.

Each of us knows that we can make this device (Hold up the Pendulum) perform any way we want. When we train it, by our intention – we can make it respond in circles, straight lines etc. – this is the egoic mind manipulation at work. And that's where we need to be cautious.

We have the ability to create or mis-create and the ego would always have us mis-create because it wants to limit our belief in what we are; - to the body. But the body is not what we are. The body is only a learning device through which to experience life. We discard the body when we transition just like a snake shedding it's skin.

The body is constantly changing. Approximately 1,000,000 cells are being replaced every single minute. Some proteins in the body are being replaced every 40 seconds, every molecule of your stomach lining is being replaced every 5 days, every cell of your brain every 2 months, every cell of your liver about every 6 months and every cell of your skeletal system is being replaced about once a year. It is thought that every atom of your body is being replaced every 7 years or sooner.

So, we have the ability to re-configure our self into a better pattern or to simply continue the same pattern and degenerate. We can create a new pattern – by changing our Thoughts and E-motions. E-motions – Energy in Motion. By changing our thoughts and E-motions we can de-toxify, slow down the aging process and heal the mind! Seven years ago when I had 4 different cancers, I spent 1,000's of hours creating protocols that would re-configure the body in a better pattern. The ultimate conclusion that I came to was that I created those cancers in the past by holding my lower attractor thoughts inside and poisoning myself with my own thoughts at a cellular level. So, out thoughts and the awareness of our thoughts are very critical if we intend to change the circumstance we created. We created it and we can undo it.

Now, I am going to say something very important to you! Are you ready?

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 – THERE IS A REASON TO SMILE

Abundance surrounds you, and more awaits you if you call to it and summon it forth: “I command the Light to come in.”

The Light responds to this invitation, this invocation, for it cannot but do otherwise. It is natural for the Light to penetrate your being, because you are a child of the Light. Only the mind can temporarily prevent the Light from entering in. Therefore, do not be a slave to your mind. Do not make it your master, for it is a false God; it will deceive you; it will tell you that you are small and in need of protection; it will encourage you to gather security around you at all times; it will speak against risk taking and trust and faith in the Light.

The mind is the voice:

of fear
of the past
of guilt
of remorse
of regret
of anxiety
of smallness
of prejudice
of the dark.

It sounds convincing at times; it appears to be real; it keeps you stuck.

This is what is meant by the Ego – the falseness of the mind. You will know it is active when you feel like you “can’t do it”, when you are insecure.

There are many ways to express your consciousness, many ways to live your life, many lives to be lived. Do not fear that there is only one way and that you will take the wrong turn. There is no such thing as a wrong turn, no mistake to be made. All roads taken ultimately lead to an evolution of the Soul, to a greater learning and awareness, and this is why your Soul has chosen to be incarnated, so that it may evolve and learn and grow and experience.

Only detours are possible. You are on the right path for you; do not doubt but rejoice always in your good fortune. You cannot make a mistake.

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 – CORTISOL AND STRESS – LAUGH TO STAY HEALTHY

A natural stimulant such as Laughter Yoga can reduce our cortisol levels, thereby alleviating junk food cravings and blood sugar fluctuations.

Cortisol is an important hormone in the body, secreted by the adrenal glands and involved in the following functions and more:

- Proper glucose metabolism
- Regulation of blood pressure
- Insulin release for blood sugar maintenance
- Immune function
- Inflammatory response

Normally, it's present in the body at higher levels in the morning and at its lowest at night. Although stress isn't the only reason that cortisol is secreted into the bloodstream, it has been termed "the stress hormone" because it's also secreted in higher levels during the body's 'fight or flight' response to stress, and is responsible for several stress-related changes in the body. Small increases of cortisol have some positive effects:

- A quick burst of energy for survival reasons
- Heightened memory functions
- A burst of increased immunity
- Lower sensitivity to pain
- Helps maintain homeostasis in the body

While cortisol is an important and helpful part of the body's response to stress, it's important that the body's relaxation response to be activated so the body's functions can return to normal following a stressful event. Unfortunately, in our current high-stress culture, the body's stress response is activated so often that the body doesn't always have a chance to return to normal, resulting in a state of chronic stress.

Higher and more prolonged levels of cortisol in the bloodstream (like those associated with chronic stress) have been shown to have negative effects, such as:

- Impaired cognitive performance
- Suppressed thyroid function
- Blood sugar imbalances such as hyperglycemia
- Decreased bone density
- Decrease in muscle tissue
- Higher blood pressure
- Lowered immunity and inflammatory responses in the body, slowed wound healing, and other health consequences
- Increased abdominal fat, which is associated with a greater amount of health problems than fat deposited in other areas of the body. Some of the health problems associated with increased stomach fat are heart attacks, strokes, the development of metabolic syndrome, higher levels of "bad" cholesterol (LDL) and lower levels of "good" cholesterol (HDL), which can lead to other health problems!

To keep cortisol levels healthy and under control, the body's relaxation response should be activated after the fight or flight response occurs. You can learn to relax your body with various stress management techniques, and you can make lifestyle changes in order to keep your body from reacting to stress in the first place. The following have been found by many to be very helpful in relaxing the body and mind, aiding the body in maintaining healthy cortisol levels:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| * Laughter Yoga | * Listening to Music |
| * Deep Breathing Exercises | * Guided Imagery |
| * Self-Hypnosis | * Meditation |
| * Exercise | * Journaling |
| * Yoga | * Sex |

Cortisol secretion varies among individuals. People are biologically 'wired' to react differently to stress. One person may secrete higher levels of cortisol than another in the same situation. Studies have also shown that people who secrete higher levels of cortisol in response to stress also tend to eat more food, and food that is higher in carbohydrates than people who secrete less cortisol. If you're more sensitive to stress, it's especially important for you to learn stress management techniques and maintain a low-stress lifestyle. And remember to breathe.

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/>.

If you were to look deep inside your physical bodies, beyond the confines of flesh, blood and cells, you would observe a unified rhythmic pattern which has its origins in the higher vibrational worlds of the Creator.

There are many, many worlds, dimensions and universes. You are observing some of these with your outer sophisticated machinery and others you are observing through inner, less sophisticated machinery!

It has often been stated, dear peoples of this revolving globe, that in your physicality there is a wondrous link between microscopic and macroscopic existence. Let us extend these links to include the visible and invisible, flatness and depth, curved space and folding space, time and non-time, thought and love, crystal and vibration, multi dimensionality and void, and unity to the Whole.

What does this all indicate? That your existence has multiple viewing points and that, through your own free will, you can align your belief system to one or to many of these points.

Let us give you the following example.

Imagine you are standing in front of a full-length mirror. As you view your body, you have at your disposal various ways of observing it. If you choose the reference point of "Love" you perceive your body as a sacred temple, to be cherished and to be used for divine service. If you decide to choose the view point of "Physical Scientist" you might admire the complexity and intelligent workings of the body. If you choose the reference point of "Visionary" you might glean a linking between the "root" vibration of your body, your personal mind and the universal consciousness of all life.

Because your planet is now transitioning, you have at your fine fingertips choices on how you wish to live by the reference points that lay before you and within you. As you well know, your earth and its willing inhabitants, are accepting the invitation to return to a vast network of greater vibrational systems. Therefore, highly spiritually developed beings, many living among you today, are reminding the human family of certain reference points which, if integrated and lived, will create a smooth transition from the present-day conflictual earth environment to an elevated and peaceful expression of earth unity. It is this earth unity which propels your world and its people to be welcomed into a web of worlds and dimensions of elegance and divine intelligence.

Hence, we would like to review with you, gentle peoples of learning, some of the major reference points that all spiritually developed nations in various worlds and dimensions use as the fundamental basis of their living patterns.

The greatest of these reference points is fraternal Love. From here, all other attributes of the Creator's world flow forth. A society which is based on fraternal Love, will ensure that its citizens lead lives of respect, cooperation, honesty, integrity, and appreciation, while supporting and encouraging others in their communities to create with the respectful use of their talents and abilities. These citizens dedicate their ways of being and doing by creating communities and nations based on inclusion and sharing, while nurturing openness of mind for healthy learning and societal and scientific progress. They continually celebrate and express their gratitude toward all life which is given to them as a sacred trust by the Creator.

Throughout your history, there have been and there continues to be, individuals, visible and invisible, living upon and within your earth who base their lives on these revered principles. Their continued presence assures the earth that it is forever anchored in a holy foundation.

It is with great delight that we observe how the Light is shining more and more brightly through the fog of your world. Happily we observe individuals, groups and communities being secured in the great spiritual principle of fraternal Love. We applaud you and we thank you for choosing to consider and to put into action the viewpoint of sacred living. This is the Way of the Light which you, gentle people, are following.

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 – WHICH REALITY IS REAL?

The defining mark of a human being that sets him apart from all other denizens of the Universe is that he simultaneously experiences both the outer and inner environments.

This concurrent awareness of the two separate and distinct worlds brings up questions that are crucially significant to every person's existence.

Mankind is forever burdened with the dilemmas of how to divide one's attention between the two domains, of how to determine which realm gives a more authentic and reliable picture of reality and of how to establish where one world ends and the other begins.

How to ascertain how big a part each domain should play in one's life, how to amalgamate the two realities with one another, which world is more real, how to coordinate and reconcile the sometimes contradictory messages coming from the two spheres of experience, indeed even how to work out whether a certain message is coming from the inner or the outer world - these are the questions that confront a person throughout his entire life and this is the price that man has to pay for having a highly developed degree of consciousness.

As we simultaneously live in two worlds, all the issues and problems come in pairs. For example we are faced with the need to understand how the outer realm of people and the inner realm of feelings and thoughts operate, we endeavour to be in touch with both worlds and we potentially can be alienated from either or both of them.

And on top of all that there is the issue of determining how the two worlds interact with one another, how the inner domain affects and is affected by the outer one and how to untangle the convoluted web of connections that bind the two realities to each other.

Note that this is not merely a philosophical problem, of little significance and relevance to real life. Society places great value on knowing how to balance your interactions with the two worlds. For example, awareness of solely the inner world, with no acknowledgment of or response to the outer world, would be taken as a sign of serious mental illness or of extreme eccentricity. Awareness of only the outer world with no attention paid to and no input from the inner world would be taken as a mark of either a severe mental deficiency or of being brainwashed or even of being a zombie.

And so we straddle precariously the two mountains of experience, trying desperately to keep a foothold on both peaks, forever endeavouring to discover a steadier, more secure position.

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 – CREATIVITY: MORE PLEASE!

Masters of Tai' Chi Gung generally have a huge smile on their faces. They see the humor in humanity. Given the degree of suffering in the world, this can appear a bit odd. One might even question their compassion... if they're so stubborn, and just happy all the time.

When Lao Tzu was practicing his Yoga and developing the principles of Tai' Chi Gung, the concept of the Tao came into being in China. In the ever present moment, contrasts can arise; in Japanese Zen philosophy, this juxtaposition of opposites is sometimes presented to students in riddles called koans.

So here's a riddle: "Why does a Master of infinite compassion continue to smile, while human beings around him or her suffer from disease, death, starvation, war, pestilence, abuse, deprivation."

A Taoist might say... well, in spite of what appears to the unenlightened person; there is always balance. So as increasing strife appears in the world, there is in fact a rising intensity of goodness present. One might even say, the strife is simply being cleansed. What was set into motion in the past, is manifesting. All the dirt is going to have to come out in the wash. No stone can be left unturned. Karma is a b*#ch.

Some people say that the first stage of enlightenment is to realize that the creator of all life dwells inside you, and inside of every human being currently in a physical body and also those without a body at the moment. You never have, nor can you ever truly separate yourself from the Divine force that is creating through you as you. You can "create" a world that appears separate and pretend you're not creating it. That's actually pretty funny, if you think about it. It was once described by an Indian Yoga master like this. People live their lives as if they are fish in the sea dying of thirst. Bummer, if it's true though. That means everything happening on the earth was set into motion by "unconscious" human beings. That means everything going on in your own life, you had a hand in creating. And, everything set into motion needs to complete its cycle of creation.

Some people read that, let it sink in for a second, begin to recognize its truth, and proceed to run as fast as they can from the idea... "uh, oh... if that's true, I will have to take full responsibility for everything in my entire world. Don't really want to do that, don't really want that much power... let me pretend it's not true. And.... since they are creating right along with the creator, swimming in the midst of their constant creative power, they create a life that edits that out.

Problem is, they're still creating. So running from their own creative power usually just means that they end up thinking someone else's thoughts, and doing someone else's actions, and pretending it's their "authentic" life. It's called being "unconscious". It sets up an interesting circumstance: if you're not the one doing it, you can easily find someone else to blame, sometimes called "victim" consciousness. Lord knows there's plenty of that going around. Ask a politician or priest for that matter. Anyway...

The good news is, you are never separate from the creator. So if you want a change, you just need to set it into motion. It does help to understand the mechanics. The Tai' Chi Gung system is sometimes called "the owner's manual" of the human body. By the way, you can "read the first chapter", by doing the free warm up exercises at www.rasaji.com. Do the thing, get the power.

So the liberation from suffering lies within the sufferer. The healthy body lives inside the sick body. The whole person lives inside the incomplete one.

How can the perfection manifest? Well, that depends on the human being. When it's instantaneous, we recognize it as miraculous. When an individual rises to the level of Mastership (in the Tai' Chi Gung system), they can manifest it in others. (An adept can manifest it in their own life.)

One of the reasons that the Tai' Chi Gung system is such a powerful system of transformation is that there is a profound power to heal present in the forces of nature. The body itself is made up of the elements of nature. Unlike some very limited understandings of karma, it is valuable to recognize that not everything set into motion by an individual must manifest physically in their life. With an understanding of chi and how to work with the elements of nature, it is possible to redeem the past and accelerate the transformation of an individual so that they can experience "the miraculous" on a daily basis, and perfect health comes to them much faster.

On the road to mastership, another concept arises that confounds those who are attached to suffering. If you ever hope to bring healing to another human being, you will need to be able to see "health" in them. Health is very cool. It will likely bring a big smile to your face. :)

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.

Amy Jung and her son Ethan stopped into The Humane Society near their home in Wisconsin to play with the cats, but one feline -- a 21-pound cat named Pudding -- stood out to the pair. They made an impulsive decision to adopt him and his friend Wimsy. That same night, Jung, who has had diabetes since childhood, started having a diabetic seizure in her

sleep. That's when Pudding sprang into action. The fast-acting feline sat on Jung's chest in an attempt to wake her up and when that didn't work, he nudged and nipped her face until she briefly returned to consciousness. In that moment, Jung was able to call out to Ethan, but he couldn't hear her calls. Luckily, Pudding darted into Ethan's room and pounced on the bed until he woke up and was able to call for help. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A75EE:12445D4F40F5539F5735209D17117797B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Tune in consciously today to people's needs, and do simple things like smiling at someone who might value it.

Activity balanced with rest: it's the way all of nature works, a beautiful reminder that everything is in ebb and flow. Our own bodies follow natural patterns, recuperating every night and preparing for the next day's action. With music as well, the structure imposed by notes inherently depends on the unstructured space supporting it. As a culture, though, we give more importance to creating notes and relatively little to the space between them. Sure, our rational minds want to ensure progress -- but our intuitive minds need space for the emergent, unknown and unplanned to arise. Within the existing paradigm, the external comes first, the internal takes a backseat, and in deference to measurability, we become more tuned in to doing than to being. The problem isn't in the doing per se: the secret to more balance lies in how we frame our efforts. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A792B:12445D4F40F5539F9B0C201B4411E993B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: "Only after a break can you have a breakthrough." Whitney Johnson shares a similar view on her Harvard Business Review Blog. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A792C:12445D4F40F5539F9B0C201B4411E993B4B847859706E37D&>.

Let your better self rest assured: Dearly held values truly are sacred, and not merely cost-benefit analyses masquerading as noble intent. Neuroscientist Greg Berns of Emory University and colleagues posed a series of value-based statements to 27 women and 16 men while using an fMRI machine to map their mental activity. Test participants were asked if they'd sign a document stating the opposite of their belief in exchange for a chance at winning up to \$100 in cash. If so, they could keep both the money and the document; only their consciences would know. The findings: when people didn't sell out their principles, it wasn't because the price wasn't right. It just seemed wrong. "If it's a sacred value to you, then you can't even conceive of it in a cost-benefit framework," said Berns. This Wired Magazine article shares further. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A7A50:12445D4F40F5539F1EBB3CCAB1B9DE89B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: "Truth is a quality of the mind that doesn't depend on figuring things out or being clever." A short reflection on putting integrity in action. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A7A51:12445D4F40F5539F1EBB3CCAB1B9DE89B4B847859706E37D&>.

"I had a hard time with most of my subjects, especially math. One day, after looking at my grades, my father had a heart-to-heart chat with me. He said, 'The way to crack your subjects is to fall in love with them. When you start loving what you are learning, it will no longer look like work. Everything will fall in place after that. Just fall in love.' I was in sixth grade around then, and decided to take him seriously and literally said, 'I love you' to my math textbook. Then, something strange happened. I actually fell in love. I started enjoying the mystery behind each geometric question, soaking in it, and experiencing joy when I was able to solve it. Over the years, it got to a point where I would finish all the exercises in the textbook in a day." On the art of competing with love...read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A8009:12445D4F40F5539F03539ACE2724C51FB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Learn. Love. Work. Learn to love work; love to learn work; work to learn love.

"When Pablo Picasso, the Spanish artist, was a schoolboy, he was terrible at math because whenever the teacher had him write a number on the chalkboard, he saw something different. The number four looked like a nose to him and he kept doodling until he filled in the rest of the face. The number 1 looked like a tree, 9 looked like a person walking against the wind, and 8 resembled an angel. Everyone else in the classroom saw numbers on the chalkboard; Picasso perceived a variety of different images. The connection between perspective and creative thinking has to do with habituation and over-familiarization. Where creative thinking is concerned, that is the irony of the skill: the more adept you are at something, the less likely you are to look at it in a different way." In this article, author Michael Michalko explores the power of metaphors. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A80CF:12445D4F40F5539F3A7DEE988F3DB2F8B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: On the topic of 'Beginner's Mind,' this passage starts by proposing an interesting TV experiment: "I want you to watch TV with acute awareness, mindfulness, and precision ..." Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A80D0:12445D4F40F5539F3A7DEE988F3DB2F8B4B847859706E37D&>.

Few know more about the art of travel than acclaimed writers Paul Theroux and Pico Iyer, who have a combined six decades of experience chronicling their adventures around the world. These two world wanderers shared a list of the things they do to make travel meaningful and how they go about being a traveler rather than a tourist. Their first piece of advice? "Pick a destination that raises more questions than answers." Along with their list, this NPR piece also includes beautiful excerpts from the two authors' writing. Read more at

<http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A812C:12445D4F40F5539FAB3D6C03F9AB0892B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: As you move about today and this week, consider how your travels offer up opportunities to transform.

"Do you enjoy having time to yourself, but always feel a little guilty about it? Then Susan Cain's "Quiet: The Power of Introverts" is for you. It's part book, part manifesto. We live in an era that values its extroverts -- the outgoing, the lovers of crowds -- but not the quiet types who change the world. In this engaging interview Cain discusses what it really means to be an introvert, the value of solitude in the creative process, and why we need to shift our cultural bias for gregariousness." This Scientific American article shares more. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A840C:12445D4F40F5539F9FAB8831E76D66F6B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: "Silence is helpful, but you don't need it in order to find stillness." Brief snippets from Eckhart Tolle: Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A840D:12445D4F40F5539F9FAB8831E76D66F6B4B847859706E37D&>.

"Unfortunately, I was educated in a school system that believed the world in which it existed would remain essentially the same, with minor changes in fashion. We had no idea what the world had in store for us. And here's the thing: we still don't. We never do. We have never been good at predicting the future, and so raising and educating our kids as if we have any idea what the future will hold is not the smartest notion. How then to prepare our kids for a world that is unpredictable, unknown? By teaching them to adapt, to deal with change, to be prepared for anything by not preparing them for anything specific. This requires an entirely different approach to child-rearing and education. It means leaving our old ideas at the door, and reinventing everything." Author Leo Babauta shares further. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A8936:12445D4F40F5539FB760FB87E8BAC715B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Learn twice: teach a child in your life some life skills.

"He was all soaking wet. The house had been power washed earlier but no one knew there was a baby kitty over in the bushes or that he had gotten wet. I cleaned him off with paper towels in case he had offensive tasting soap on him and put him back down and went back inside so the mama could get her baby. After much sitting there watching him cry, she walked away and didn't come back. I ran over to Wal-Mart, got a kitten bottle and kitten replacement milk and took the baby home. I got up throughout the night to feed him and help him with his toilet needs and he slept in my drawer. That night, I thought, I will sneak him into the office in a shoe box on Friday morning." Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A8ADE:12445D4F40F5539F364A9D0F2CA1A4E8B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Reach out with an act of kindness that might help make "one life breathe easier" today.

"This is Ankur," our host Sachi had said, with the catching enthusiasm she's known and loved for, "He's an amazing photographer and has recently gone totally 'gift economy'." Meaning that he offers his photography unconditionally as a gift, inviting recipients to 'pay it forward.' I look over at the young man seated in front of me. An unguarded face lit now by a smile both shy and warm. "What's your experience been like so far?" I ask him. "Beautiful," he says, "I love gifting people my work and having them let their heart decide how much to give." "But what made you decide to work in this way?" I ask him. "Three eight-year-old monks stood on a cliff edge and saved my life," responds Ankur, his voice bland and friendly, as if the occurrence he speaks of was the most natural thing in the world. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A8DAE:12445D4F40F5539FA06A0924927AD866B4B847859706E37D&>.

One of Jeff Skoll's passions is storytelling. It stems from his youth, when he hoped to be a writer and inspire people to help solve the world's biggest problems. Skoll took a detour on that path when he met Pierre Omidyar and became eBay's first employee and president. Ultimately that detour enabled him to tackle his early passions on a scale that he could only have dreamed of before. He is famed not just for the fortune he made, but also the fortune he continues to give away in innovative ways. In this interview with the Stanford Social Innovation Review he discusses his wide-ranging philanthropic efforts. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9043:12445D4F40F5539F704F61E941566C20B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Consider the stories that have helped inspire and shape you. Find a way to share them with the world.

Kent Melville's father was skeptical when his son first said that he wanted to use the profits from his successful summer lemonade stand to start his own soda company. Aaron Melville, who teaches business classes at a local college, did not believe his 9-year-old autistic son was ready to run his own business. He told Kent to wait until he was older. His son's response brought tears to his eyes and change to his heart: "Dad, I have everything I need right now, but there are lots of other kids with autism that can't do the things they want or need. I want to be able to help them get some of the things they want with the money we earn. Can't we start now? I don't want to wait." Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9177:12445D4F40F5539F51DF6C2436DB759BB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Take a small step today towards a dream you've long harbored.

One day in 1987, 5-year-old Saroo Brierley spent the afternoon begging for change with his brother at a local train station. When it was time to go home, the boys boarded what they thought was the correct train. They were wrong. Exhausted, the young brothers fell asleep, only to wake up 10 hours later on the other side of India, hundreds of miles away from their family. 25 years later, using little more than a vague recollection of his childhood and some help from Google Earth's

mapping technology, Saroo began his miraculous journey home. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9541:12445D4F40F5539FB44DC668887FDFCAB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Is there a wholesome connection from your own childhood that you still remember? Try reconnecting to it.

"The topic for this week's meeting was: 'What are you doing to keep your business going in these crazy-making economic times?' Several people said they have upped the number of cold calls they're making; others talked about creative ways they're using social networking to market themselves. Some are revamping their web sites and blogs; a few are exploring new business ideas, as they worry that their current businesses might not survive. When it was my turn to speak, I said, 'I've stopped making sales calls. I make service calls instead.' The group looked at me, their faces registering everything from confusion to curiosity to disbelief to disdain. So I explained what I had learned." Author BJ Gallagher explains how she made the transition in her own life and work. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9686:12445D4F40F5539F3CC0443CC8D922D5B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: At work, school, or at home, try unconditionally offering something, just to be of service.

"When I started meditation in the 1970s, people like my parents would say that 'Meditation is staring at your navel. It's self absorbed.' I'd been through medical school and I'd say that when you're in medical school, you go in a room, you close the door and you don't come out for four years. But no one says that's selfish. Everyone knows that it is preparation to do something valuable for society. So I if I meditate -- that's like preparation for the rest of my day -- it's a self education and one that you want to renew everyday...I sit to anchor and organize my life around my heart and mind, and to radiate out to others what I find." A fascinating DailyGood interview with psychiatrist and meditation teacher Paul R. Fleischman. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A990D:12445D4F40F5539F5007A41AF900AFC3B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Spend some time observing and learning from your own mind and body today.

"Good deeds are contagious. We naturally imitate the people around us, we adopt their ideas about appropriate behavior, and we feel what they feel. Acts of charity are no exception. In our 2010 generosity experiment, we showed that every extra dollar of giving in a game designed to measure altruism caused people who saw that giving to donate an extra twenty cents. Furthermore, the network acts like a matching grant: that same experiment showed that contagious generosity spreads up to three steps through the network (from person to person to person to person), and when we added up all the extra donations that resulted at every step, we found that an extra dollar in giving yielded three extra dollars by everyone else in the network." Internationally recognized political scientist James Fowler shares the science of spreading good. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9998:12445D4F40F5539F5288D1C2987472F5B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Spread good today. Find something inspiring, make it more visible, and let the good ripple through your network.

"I met Shelagh Gordon at her funeral. My sharpest impression of her that day, as mourners in black pressed around me, was of her breathtaking kindness. Shelagh was freshly-in-love thoughtful. If she noticed your boots had holes, she'd press her new ones into your arms. When you casually admired her coffeemaker, you'd wake up to one of your own. A bag of chocolates hanging from your doorknob would greet you each Valentine's Day, along with some clippings from the newspaper she thought you'd find interesting. Shelagh made people around her feel not just loved but coveted. That was the golden thread that stitched together the ordinary seams of her life." The Star newspaper dedicated unprecedented coverage to this relatively unknown 55-year-old woman's funeral ... this remarkable story explains why. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9B38:12445D4F40F5539F4BC1CA7F168D4949B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Honor an ordinary, magical life in your own world.

"Our modern view of disease is that disease is centered in the body. The older view of disease is that it is soul loss, a loss of connection, of meaning, of purpose, of essence. If this is so, the real task of the medical system is to heal soul loss, to aid in the retrieval of the soul. What is needed is not to develop more of a spiritual practice or to go to church more. Our task is to recognize that we are always on sacred ground, that there is no split between the sacred and secular. That there is no task that is not sacred in nature and no relationship that is not sacred in nature. Life is a spiritual practice. Health care, which serves life, is a spiritual practice." Renowned medical leader Dr. Naomi Rachel Remen shares more about recovering the heart of medicine. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9C5D:12445D4F40F5539F2E804E4F389F0E2DB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: An inspiring story of UCSF's Dr. BJ Miller, someone whose own journey of healing led him to serving others in healing. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9C5E:12445D4F40F5539F2E804E4F389F0E2DB4B847859706E37D&>.

Water is art activist Betsy Damon's passion. She was studying sacred springs in China when she began meeting individuals interested in water from a variety of angles: medicine, hydraulic engineering, spirituality. This unique collaboration led to an invitation to review a major water project in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan. Because of her critique, the project was actually scrapped. But then Damon was asked to design a new project -- which actually got built. Stretching along the Yangtze River and serving Chengdu's roughly 10 million citizens, it's the first municipal living water garden in the world -- "Polluted river water moves through a natural, and artistic treatment system of ponds, filters and

flowforms, making the process of cleaning water visible." Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9F0A:12445D4F40F5539FE7EBFE27751C45CEB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Check out the Living Water Garden gallery at Betsy Damon's website: <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9F0B:12445D4F40F5539FE7EBFE27751C45CEB4B847859706E37D&>.

"While busy with work and deadlines and feeling somewhat under pressure, I was sent an advertisement for some inspirational books, one of which included the poem below. When I first glanced at the title, I assumed it was a poem about the race and rush of life, but as I read on it stopped me dead in my tracks and brought tears to my eyes. I had just snapped at a family member and didn't take notice when she tried to get my attention. I stopped what I was doing and went over to give a hug to the person I talked to so sharply, and sat down to talk with her. Not only did it clear the air between us and made her feel a whole lot better, but my own mood also brightened." A real-world story and a poem about life. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16A9F64:12445D4F40F5539FE23360086B98F057B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Live this day with a heightened awareness of how precious it really is.

Across the globe, women are taking on the challenge of poverty in creative, smart and sustainable ways. This article highlights five dynamic women whose work collectively spans Haiti, India, Afghanistan, Kenya and beyond. Their uplifting and diverse contributions seem poised to reach new heights in the coming year. Learn more about them and how to keep up with their journeys here. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16AA334:12445D4F40F5539FE0F2A6CEFF784E67B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: "I used to think the opposite of love was hate. But life experience tells me that's not true. ... the opposite of love is power." A short passage by Patty De Llosa...read more at... <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16AA335:12445D4F40F5539FE0F2A6CEFF784E67B4B847859706E37D&>.

"While growing up, I'd never really considered how important it is to be imaginative. It's a childhood profession, you could say. It comes naturally. Then we hit an age when we're presented with a scantron of bubble-in options, a template for a CV that we need to create, and Excel. At that point, our learning has to fit into certain parameters: within that little bubble, within the one page limit, and within a tiny digital graph. So, what happens to our imagination? It seems to fade." In this reflection, journalist Esha Chhabra shares a reflection on the gentle power of imagination. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16AA75D:12445D4F40F5539FF80449F8634813CEB4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Practice imagination today -- perhaps even six impossible things before breakfast.

Most athletes have the benefit of seeing what's ahead of them -- an opponent, the bars, a vault. But for 13-year-old Lola Walters, she usually has no idea what's coming until she's literally five feet away from it. Walters, a Washington resident, is legally blind, and suffers from a disease called nystagmus which causes her eyes to shift constantly, leaving her with double vision and no depth perception. She may fall more often than her peers but gets back on the bars with a grace and grit that has won her the admiration of her friends and teachers alike. This article and the accompanying video afford a glimpse of her fearless spirit. Read more at <http://premiere.whatcounts.com/t?ctl=16AA778:12445D4F40F5539F6BAFBC469719AA54B4B847859706E37D&>. Be The Change: Accept one of your own limitations, but fearlessly, and with the resolve to rise every time it causes a stumble.

16. THE SECRET OF WORK

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Whatever we do, we want a return. We are all traders. We are traders in life, we are traders in virtue, we are traders in religion. And alas! we are also traders in love.

If you come to trade, if it is a question of give-and-take, if it is a question of buy-and-sell, abide by the laws of buying and selling. There is a bad time and there is a good time; there is a rise and a fall in prices: always expect the blow to come. It is like looking at the mirror. Your face is reflected: you make a grimace — there is one in the mirror; if you laugh, the mirror laughs. This is buying and selling, giving and taking.

We get caught. How? Not by what we give, but by what we expect. We get misery in return for our love; not from the fact that we love, but from the fact that we want love in return. There is no misery where there is no want. Desire, want, is the father of all misery. Desires are bound by the laws of success and failure. Desires must bring misery.

The great secret of true success, of true happiness, then, is this: the man who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish man, is the most successful. It seems to be a paradox. Do we not know that every man who is unselfish in life gets cheated, gets hurt? Apparently, yes. "Christ was unselfish, and yet he was crucified." True, but we know that his

unselfishness is the reason, the cause of a great victory — the crowning of millions upon millions of lives with the blessings of true success.

Swami Vivekananda in "[Work and Its Secret](#)"

17. MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE PRESENT MOMENT

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Some months ago, for three successive nights, I was awakened by three insights that came to me – persistently and repeatedly – one per night. The first night's message was: "Only the present moment is real." The second night's message was: "You can trust the present moment." The third night's message was: "Make friends with the present moment."

How do I surrender the primacy of my conditioned mind and egoic will, and allow – moment-by-moment – space for stillness and the arising of my natural state of awareness? Doing so, for me, involves a certain amount of rational insight to initially coax the thinking mind from its constant daydreaming in the foreground into letting go and taking a secondary position in the background. This shift is facilitated by the first night's message.

With the mind's move into the background, my body comes alive, my hearing clears and ambient sounds are bright. I'm alert but feeling a deep peace...I'm fully here, having taken a "backward step" into the present moment. Staying here, however, is a real trick – an all-or-nothing opportunity. One thought – indeed any mind intrusion – and I'm instantly back in my ego identity.

Allowing my ego to step aside requires trust – not only that a larger intelligence is holding me, but that it's capable of actively engaging in my practical affairs. This slow building of trust is assisted by the second night's message.

Some days, when I am especially calm, I can ease into the present moment for longer periods...successfully relaxing into this friendly – indeed loving – universe. Slowly, I'm making friends with the present moment, with being, in accordance with the third night's message. Making friends with the universe is very, very enticing. Like a moth to a flame.

My goal is to abide in presence, allowing being to inform my doing. It entails a fundamental shift of my identity, of who I take myself to be. Am I the ego? Or, am I the consciousness that is observing – with equanimity – from behind the drama? To the ego, simply being sounds dangerously disengaged. But now I know – gradually, gradually – that being fully present is radically transformative and just the opposite of passivity, allowing one to be responsive rather than reactive, and in service to the need at hand.

Ultimately, I can think of no higher aspiration than to become an instrument through which larger creative and healing forces of a friendly, loving universe can come into the world. This can only happen in the present moment, with complete trust. Gradually, gradually.

--Alan Zulch

18. NOTHING LEFT TO FIGHT AGAINST

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

During the Vietnam War, I was a political activist. I fought for peace. There was some contradiction. There wasn't any peace in me. I hated the people who disagreed with me. That was a kind of war within myself. In 1968, I was just beginning to look at the way in which I was vigorously clinging to my opinions about things and denigrating others who had different opinions, when there was a strike at San Francisco State University.

The police came with their masks and clubs, started poking people. And without thinking, I ducked under the hands of people to get between the police and students. I met this riot squad policeman face-to-face with his mask on and everything. He was close enough to touch. I met this policeman's eyes straight on, and I had this overwhelming experience of identification, of shared identity. This was the most transformative moment of my life -- having this experience of shared identity with the riot squad policeman. It was a gift. Nothing had prepared me for it. I didn't have any conceptual basis for understanding it. The total experience was real and incontrovertible.

My life as a political activist ended with that encounter, because there was no longer anything to fight against. The way I described it to my friends was the policeman was trying to protect what he thought was right and good from all of the other people who were trying to destroy it -- and I was doing the same thing. Since I had no basis for understanding the experience of shared identity with someone whom I had considered complete "other" (i.e., the riot squad policeman), and because the experience had been so real and so powerful, I began to search for someone who would understand it. How could a riot squad policeman and I be identical? In my search I met Suzuki Roshi. The way he looked at me, I knew he understood. That's how I got here [as an ordained monastic.]

--Zenkei Blanche Hartman, former abbess of the San Francisco Zen Center

19. LIVING LESSONS OF BIOMIMICRY

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Biomimics are men and women who are exploring nature's masterpieces -- photosynthesis, self-assembly, natural selection, and more--and then copying these designs and manufacturing processes to solve our own problems. I call their quest biomimicry -- the conscious emulation of life's genius.

In a society accustomed to dominating or "improving" nature, this respectful imitation is a radically new approach, a revolution really. Unlike the Industrial Revolution, the Biomimicry Revolution introduces an era based not on what we can extract from nature, but on what we can learn from her.

When we stare this deeply into nature's eyes, it takes our breath away, and in a good way, it bursts our bubble. We realize that all our inventions have already appeared in nature in a more elegant form and at a lot less cost to the Planet. Our most clever architectural struts and beams are already featured in lily pads and bamboo stems. Even the wheel, which we always took to be a uniquely human creation, has been found in the tiny rotary motor that propels the flagellum of the world's most ancient bacteria.

I can't help but wonder how we will use these new designs and processes. What will make the Biomimicry Revolution any different from the Industrial Revolution? Who's to say we won't simply steal nature's thunder and use it in the ongoing campaign against life?

This is not an idle worry. The last really famous biomimetic invention was the airplane. We flew like a bird for the first time in 1903, and by 1914, we were dropping bombs from the sky.

Perhaps in the end, it will not be a change in technology that will bring us to the biomimetic future, but a change of heart. Our tools are always deployed in the service of some philosophy or ideology. If we are to use our tools in the service of fitting in on Earth, our basic relationship to nature--even the story we tell ourselves about who we are in the universe--has to change.

At the same time that ecological science is showing us the extent of our folly, it is also revealing the pattern of nature's wisdom reflected in all life. This time we come not to learn about nature so that we might circumvent or control her, but to learn from nature, so that we might fit in, at last and for good, on the Earth from which we sprang.

We have a million questions. How should we grow our food? How should we make our materials? How should we power ourselves, heal ourselves, store what we learn? How should we conduct business in a way that honors the Earth? As we discover what nature already knows, we will remember how it feels to be a part of, not apart from, the genius that surrounds us.

Let the living lessons begin.

--Janine Benyus

20. AN EGO STRATEGY TO AVOID SURRENDER

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

What is conventionally called "love" is an ego strategy to avoid surrender. You are looking to someone to give you that which can only come to you in the state of surrender. The ego uses that person as a substitute to avoid having to surrender. The Spanish language is the most honest in this respect. It uses the same verb, *te quiero*, for "I love you" and

"I want you." To the ego, loving and wanting are the same, whereas true love has no wanting in it, no desire to possess or for your partner to change.

The ego singles someone out and makes them special. It uses that person to cover up the constant underlying feeling of discontent, of "not enough," of anger and hate, which are closely related. These are facets of an underlying deep seated feeling in human beings that is inseparable from the egoic state. When the ego singles something out and says "I love" this or that, it's an unconscious attempt to cover up or remove the deep-seated feelings that always accompany the ego: the discontent, the unhappiness, the sense of insufficiency that is so familiar.

For a little while, the illusion actually works. Then inevitably, at some point, the person you singled out, or made special in your eyes, fails to function as a cover up for your pain, hate, discontent or unhappiness which all have their origin in that sense of insufficiency and incompleteness. Then, out comes the feeling that was covered up, and it gets projected onto the person that had been singled out and made special – who you thought would ultimately "save you." Suddenly love turns to hate.

The ego doesn't realize that the hatred is a projection of the universal pain that you feel inside. The ego believes that this person is causing the pain. It doesn't realize that the pain is the universal feeling of not being connected with the deeper level of your being – not being at one with yourself. The object of love is interchangeable, as interchangeable as the object of egoic wanting. Some people go through many relationships. They fall in love and out of love many times. They love a person for a while until it doesn't work anymore, because no person can permanently cover up that pain. Only surrender can give you what you were looking for in the object of your love.

The ego says surrender is not necessary because I love this person. It's an unconscious process of course. The moment you accept completely what is, something inside you emerges that had been covered up by egoic wanting. It is an innate, indwelling peace, stillness, aliveness. It is the unconditioned, who you are in your essence. It is what you had been looking for in the love object. It is yourself. When that happens, a completely different kind of love is present which is not subject to love / hate. It doesn't single out one thing or person as special.

--Eckhart Tolle

21. A HEART TOUCHED BY A MUSICAL SOUL

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

I was feeling a little blue because my mother had been laid off from her job and she had lots of bills to pay. It left me wondering what was going to happen to us now. But it reassured me some when my mother told me she was relieved to be leaving since her boss wasn't the nicest person to be around.

I got off the college shuttle bus and started walking. That's when I heard piano music and singing rising above the noise of the people and the traffic. I walked a little slower so I could find out to where it was coming from. Through the crowd I saw a young lady sitting at a piano with a carriage next to her.

She was singing songs about love, keeping on trying, and not underestimating the power within yourself. The way she was singing comforted me a bit. I stood there watching her play for about fifteen minutes, thinking that it must take courage to perform on your own in the middle of a crowded New York ferry terminal.

So I stood there listening.

She must have felt my presence because she would occasionally look in my direction. By now I was telling myself that if she could perform in front of hundreds of people she didn't know, then I could at least tell her how good she sounded. I walked over and put some money in her carriage and she said, "Thank you." Instead of continuing my way home, I said to her, "I have been going through a rough time lately, but you've made me hopeful again."

"I'm happy that I could help," she replied. "Why are you so sad?"

"Well, my mum told me she had got fired from her job, and that made me sad. I'm not so sure what to do ..."

"You see, here's the problem," she explained. "The way you were walking, your head was down. Don't look defeated, because opportunity come in different ways and if your head is down you might never see it. You should smile more ... lift your head up."

I smiled faintly, amazed by how she was encouraging me. So, I asked her, "Why are you playing the piano in the middle of a crowded place? I've seen you do this more than once."

She explained to me that she sees a lot of negative people in the world and she tries to alleviate the pain and bring more positivity by sharing motivational music. She told me that when she wasn't making music she studied psychology. So, that was how she knew some of the things she was telling me.

I smiled a little wider because I knew that she was doing a good thing. So, after that we parted, my heart touched and lightened by a musical soul!

22. THE HANDS WE ARE DEALT

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

There is a homeless man who always seems to be perched on his bike somewhere along the main road running through our town. We see him every time we leave the house. He is either bundled up, hunched over his bags and blankets in the winter, or riding up and down the street in the summer when I suspect trying to catch a little breeze in the heat.

Whenever I see him I want to bring him a coffee, or a water, or a blanket, or a fan - but I never do.

His name is Bruce. I only know this because my brother-in-law saw him one freezing day on his way to our house. He asked his name and why he was sleeping in the field. Then he gave Bruce the coat off his back and the hat from his head!

Today I had a notion to venture to the mall with the little ones. As we headed inside we saw the ever-present bell-ringers of the holiday season, collecting money for the Salvation Army.

I echoed Merry Christmas to the freezing volunteer but, with full hands, did not put a dime in his bucket. I told myself I would catch him on the way out but never did.

While driving home from the mall, frazzled from all the get-back-heres, don't-touch-thats and we-are-leaving-NOWs of our trip, I found myself stuck in the slowing traffic of our two lane road home. I was getting aggravated because it was nap-time for the little ones. They needed it and I needed it.

Then someone decided to cut in front of me. I muttered under my breath that cutting me off wasn't going to get him anywhere - and where exactly did he think he was going anyway?

I realized he was pulling his car off the road.

The man I was cursing under my breath for disrupting my five minute drive home got out and walked over to Bruce (whom I had not even seen in my world of crabbiness.) He handed Bruce some money.

I looked back, through blurry eyes, and was really ticked off. At myself!

Sometimes I think the bitterness I feel for the hand I have been dealt clouds my view of the fact that there are others who have been dealt a hand with a card or two less. I was reminded today that I need to slow down the carousel, help when I know I should, and give when I know I can.

If you need me I will be rehearsing the art of removing money from my purse with my foot, so I can drop some in that little red bucket next time I pass a bell-ringer when my hands are full.

That is, after I find Bruce and invite him over for dinner!

23. THE SECURITY GUARD'S IDEA!

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Ten years ago, I was dissatisfied with my job working as a Vice President at a bank. Often, due to my standing as Vice President, I'd watch someone greet me respectfully but then turn around and respond dismissively to a fellow employee. In reaction to this obvious inequity, I made it a point to be even more respectful of individuals who were below me on the corporate ladder.

One of these individuals was a security guard who oversaw the parking lot of the building where my office was located. This man was consistently gracious to everyone and it was easy to think of him as a friend.

During this time, I had 2 dogs, one of which was very old, blind, deaf, and had a bad heart. I couldn't leave him at home alone so I began sneaking him and my other dog into my office every day. The security guard, my "partner in crime", helped me by being on the lookout as I carried one dog and led the other quickly inside the office building.

One day, the guard popped his head in my office and tossed a newspaper on my desk. "You should do this", he called over his shoulder, heading out and closing the door behind him. On the front page was an article about doggy day care, and describing how the concept was spreading across the country.

Having always expressed a deep love for animals, I took his suggestion to heart and immediately began researching the idea. Soon, information, opportunities and assistance began coming my way from every direction. Six months later, I left my deadening corporate job and opened the first doggy day care in my city! A decade later, I'm still running this business and doing what I love to do!

I've lost touch with the man who started me on this path, but there's not a day that goes by that I don't thank him in my heart. We never know who will be our angels!

24. THE VETERAN WHO JUST WANTED TO BE SEEN

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

This happened about four or five years ago. I had been involved in "Non Violent Communication" for a couple of years. I was struggling as I still do with finding a natural and seamless way of connecting with people through compassion and empathy in everyday encounters; trying not to assume I know what someone needs but being willing to ask. Walking through the lobby of an office building in San Francisco I could hear a man screaming and shouting obscenities. He was so loud his voice penetrated the sounds of mid-day traffic and the double glass doors leading to the street.

Heading through those doors I saw a double amputee hunched over on one of those little rolling platforms auto mechanics sometimes use to scoot under cars. He was gesturing erratically at pedestrians as they approached and yelling profanities as they veered as far away from him as they could get while still staying on the sidewalk.

"I fought in Nam!" he yelled. "I lost my legs In Nam! Why can't you help me?"

Trying to avoid him I hugged the building and tried to melt into the crowd, hoping he wouldn't notice me. I don't know if his volume actually rose or it was just my imagination but his words surrounded me. With every step they seemed louder.

"I lost my legs In Nam! Why can't you help me?" he roared (with added expletives!)

Two more steps and I'd be at the corner and out of range. Then something shifted in me and, to my surprise, instead of making my escape I stopped, turned and walked back towards him. Crouching down I put a few bucks in his cup and asked him if he just wanted someone to stop and listen to him.

"Don't you think I at least deserve that?" he shouted. "I went to Nam!" There was a pause as he caught his breath. "I was a kid. I came home with no legs! And they won't even look me in the eye!" He paused again as he struggled to get the words out. "... I did it for them ..."

Looking into his gnarled, dirt-stained, unshaven face I guessed he was just a few years younger than me. I imagined our shared experiences as black youngsters growing up in the fifties and sixties. Had he, like me, shivered with fear when Emmet Till was killed in Mississippi? Was he also anxious when Ruby Bridges was escorted into that schoolhouse in New Orleans. Had he cried when John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert Kennedy were assassinated?

I was also aware of our differences highlighted by his ragged clothes and his paper cup for spare change.

I asked if he just wanted to be seen and heard after all he had come through. His voice dropped and he nodded and whispered, "Yes ... yes."

With a calm steady gaze he looked me in the eyes as tears spilled over his wizened cheeks. He clasped my hands in his.

Spare change would help but simply being seen and heard can be what some of us long for most of all.

25. THE "LIFE IS GOOD" LADY

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

One day, on my way to work, I pulled into the Dunkin Donuts drive-thru. I was tired, hungry, worried about money and bills - as usual! I was behind this woman in a VW with a "Life is Good!" sticker on the back window. As she put her hand out the window to pay I saw her beautifully manicured nails and the expensive looking jewelry on her arm. Her hair looked like she'd just been to the salon.

My envy immediately kicked in and I started grouching. 'Must be nice!' and various other mean-spirited thoughts went through my mind. I was resentful of her material possessions and her "Life is Good" attitude.

When it was my turn to pay the cashier told me that the lady in the VW had paid for my order! I was told that she regularly goes through the drive-thru, gets a cup of coffee, pays with a \$20 bill and puts the balance towards those behind her in line.

I felt grateful and very ashamed of my judgmental attitude. I tried to catch up with her to give her a thank you wave, but she disappeared into traffic.

Since then, I have done similar things on occasion - paying the toll for someone behind me, buying a lonely man a Thanksgiving meal at Cracker Barrel, buying a backpack for a homeless guy. Each time, I remember the lady in the VW and her generosity and realize little things DO make a difference because they cause a ripple effect. Now my mother makes a point of anonymously buying meals for people in restaurants.

Thanks, VW lady. Life is good, indeed!

26. USING MY HOBBY TO HELP THE HOMELESS

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

I am a huge fan of thrift shops and I have several that I check out every weekend. It's how I unwind and have some time to myself. I actually look forward to it every week.

One of my favorite shops had started discounting certain clothing by 90%. Every week they had an entire wall filled with all kinds of items, most of which were in great condition. I was disappointed at first that I couldn't personally benefit because nothing was in mine or my husband's size.

Then it dawned on me. I could stock up on sweaters and jackets for the impending cold weather and donate them to the homeless shelter! In the last couple of weeks I've gotten six huge bags of sweaters, jackets, sweatpants, and long-sleeved shirts for under \$20! I also got a small bag of soap, toothbrushes and shampoo for \$1.

One of the jackets I got today was brand new and still had the tag on it. Most of the other items are brand-name and in really nice shape. I try to get unisex colors and styles in case there are some women who need clothing too.

I went to the shelter today to drop off my haul. It was pouring rain and there were several people huddled inside waiting for lunch. One poor man was lying on the wet floor. I asked him if he wanted something dry to lie on and gave him a sleeping bag. He was thrilled and said he really needed one.

Before dropping off the clothing I tucked a smile card into one of the jacket pockets!

27. OFFERING A WORD OF LOVE

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

It was freezing outside my car. I did not want to get out of it, when we passed by a small shop selling odds and ends. Suddenly I noticed a tiny figure, bent and covered with some bits of cloth, shivering with the cold from the harsh winds that were blowing so hard that night.

It was only 5 degrees in Um Al Quwain that evening, which is freezing cold indeed. Here was an old man of 75, seated in the corner of this store, waiting for anyone who would think of lending him a single coin or a cup of hot tea. I was about to open my biscuit packet, but my mind and soul went out to this old person.

I asked my husband to go over and hand it to this old man. He looked into my husband's face and smiled, I could see that smile from the car window and he said, "Thank you." I felt so happy and in turn I prayed for the old man to live through the cold night.

I was sure to visit again and find out how he was the next day, as I have to pass this way every day. I did so, the next evening, and he remembered the car and came up to my window and smiled at me. My heart went out once more and this time I offered him a bag of food, which I carried with the hope of finding him in the same spot. He reached out for the bag and I gave him my hand, he held it and smiled and said in Tamil, "May God bless you. Thanks for this help." I looked at the old man and told my husband, "Doesn't he remind you of my Daddy?. My gosh, with that cap on his head and the smile in his eyes and the warmth of his hand, I could tell you this, he reminds me of my father."

At a closer look, I saw my Daddy in this old man, waiting for anyone to show him some mercy or love. I do hope all of you who read this, will remember that maybe one day, it could happen to one of us, so please do not pass by a poor person without offering at least a word of love and a kind smile or an act of kindness of any kind.

28. DESIGNED FOR GENEROSITY

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

What would the world look like if we designed for generosity? Instead of assuming that people want to simply maximize self-interest, what if our institutions and organizations catered to our deeper motivations? This compelling TEDx talk explores this question and introduces the concept of Giftivism: the practice of radically generous acts that change the world. The video is charged with stories of such acts, ranging from: the largest peaceful transfer of land in human history, to a pay-it-forward restaurant, to a 10-year-old's unconventional birthday celebration, and the stunning interaction between a victim and his teenage mugger. With clarity and insight, it details the common threads that runs through all these gift manifestations, and invites us to participate through everyday acts of kindness -- in an uplifting global movement. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3048>.

29. CHARLIE CHAPLIN: LET US FREE THE WORLD

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Some call it the greatest speech ever made. This remix puts Charlie Chaplin's climactic address from "The Great Dictator" (1940) into present-day context, showing how the spirit of liberty, brotherhood, and equality that defeated fascism seven decades ago must be urgently reclaimed. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2739>.

30. HOW TO BE ALONE

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

This charming video pays tribute to the happy wholesomeness of being alone. Tanya Davis recites her poem about the ways of solitude, gently cataloging all the places where aloneness can bring freedom and healing. Whether at a lunch counter, park bench, mountain trail, or on the edge of a dance floor - all you have to do is love yourself enough, to love being alone. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2086>.

31. BAREFOOT COLLEGE

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

In Rajasthan, India, an extraordinary school teaches rural women and men -- many of them illiterate -- to become solar engineers, artisans, dentists and doctors in their own villages. It's called the Barefoot College, and its founder, Bunker Roy, explains the values behind its success. Trust the people, he says, and they'll create the solutions themselves. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2699>.

32. FIND NO ENEMY

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Akala's lengthy hip-hop poem is somber and clear-eyed in its disappointment with race-relations, global politics, and contemporary culture. And yet it retains both hopefulness and an action-plan. "The only way you can change anything," he slams, "is to look in the mirror and find no enemy." Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2895>.

33. THE EMPATHIC CIVILIZATION

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

We humans are soft-wired for sociability, affection, to belong, and to empathize. The question is "Can we extend our empathy to the entire human race, fellow creatures and biosphere?" If we can imagine that possibility, we can save our species and our planet! Jeremy Rifkin's talk on the empathic civilization is mapped out in a stunningly visual and cohesive way. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=1959>.

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).

34. 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 Chimnoy, 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.

35. 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.

36. 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.

37. 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>).

38. 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>).

39. INTERFAITH CONVERSATION SERIES



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

“Interfaith Conversation”

Every 2nd Wednesday, 5:30 – 8:30pm

New Edinburgh Square Retirement Residence
420 MacKay Street, Ottawa

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: the Baha'i Faith; Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; and Taoism. We believe that celebrating all faith traditions can facilitate and promote wholeness, integration and interconnectedness.

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

These Interfaith Conversations also offer participants the opportunity to participate in communal meals that are offered in a potluck setting. Contact Rev. Robert Meagher for more details.

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

Your in-kind donation and/or free will offerings are accepted for participating.

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.servingyourjourney.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.

41. 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

42. ART AND SPIRITUAL LIFE RETREAT

Art and Spiritual Life Retreat at Kingfisher Bay (30 min from Peterborough; 1 ½ hours from East Toronto).

Fri April 27- Sun April 29, 2012

Cost: \$195/pp

Be refreshed and enjoy the beauty of Stony Lake. Three amazing artists (Cynthia Stevens, Anita Van Zeumeren and Joyce Mulder) will lead us through their own art, story, and humour. A weekend for artists and non-artists. Time to create, rest and grow plus a bonus concert by Glen Soderholm Saturday evening. Register or inquire at www.kingfisherbay.ca or call 705-772-7273.

43. IGNATIAN RETREAT

Ignatian Retreat – Villa Loyola Retreat and Conference Centre, Sudbury, Ontario

May 4 to May 6, 2012

7:00 p.m. Fri until 1:30 p.m. Sunday

Director: Mrs. Linda Labelle, Diocesan Coordinator of Faith Development & Evangelisation for the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.

During this silent and preached retreat there will be opportunities to deepen our prayer and relationship with the Trinity; come to a deeper realization of our call to be contemplatives-in- action; to review Saint Ignatius' attitude of doing all things for the Greater Glory of God – to find God in all things. We will be exploring and praying with segments of the Spiritual Exercises in order to enhance your prayer and discernment. ALL ARE WELCOME! For more information or to book this retreat, contact Manon Gravelle at 705-522-3502 ext 0.

44. THE GIFT OF LISTENING: BECOMING A LISTENING PRESENCE

The Gift of Listening: becoming a Listening Presence by Miriam Frey

Sat May 12, 2012 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

at Medaille Retreat House, London

An introduction to the art of listening for those who want to enhance their personal and professional lives. To register: contact Medaille Retreat House: 519-641-1379 or e-mail: medaille@csj.london.on.ca.

45. FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD WITH WILLIAM BARRY, SJ

Friendship with God with *William Barry, sj* – at Providence Spirituality Centre, Kingston.

Fri May 25, 7 PM – Sun May 27, 1 PM

Cost: workshop (includes lunch) \$100; accommodation + Fri supper, add \$100 – *due May 4*

In this workshop we will examine God's offer of friendship and its implications for prayer and life. Acceptance of the offer and growth in friendship with God transforms us and the world through us. There will be opportunities for quiet reflection as well as small group sharing. His latest book is *Changed Heart, Changed World: The Transforming Freedom of Friendship with God* (published by Loyola Press in 2011).

Pre-register by calling Providence Spirituality Centre – 613-542-8826 or e-mail info@psck.org.

46. 4th CANADIAN CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH CONFERENCE

4th Canadian Contemplative Outreach Conference – *Deepening Our Intimacy with God.*

at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, 1617 Blyth Rd, Mississauga

July 20-22, 2012

Friday – a day of discernment and visioning; Saturday – a day of enrichment. Join them for the full conference or Saturday only. Details to follow.

47. GROUP SPIRITUAL DIRECTION: TOGETHER SHARING THE JOURNEY

Group Spiritual Direction: Together Sharing the Journey at Regis College – RGP2051HF

9 am to 4 pm – four weeks: Saturday *May 26, June 2, 9, 16*

New Course · Toronto (St. George Campus) Site Explores the theory and practice of group spiritual direction through readings, participation in a process of group spiritual direction and discussions. Through participation in a contemplative process participants will explore how small groups are a good way for people to begin spiritual direction. Lecture, discussion in a group process of spiritual direction, short reflection papers. Attendance and participation mandatory. Pass/Fail. For further information about details of the course or registration procedure, contact Professor Maureen McDonnell at maureen.mcdonnell@utoronto.ca.

48. CULTIVATING THE COMPASSIONATE HEART: A CHRISTIAN/BUDDHIST RETREAT AND DIALOGUE

The Dharma Centre of Canada presents

Cultivating the Compassionate Heart: A Christian/Buddhist retreat and dialogue with Michael Hryniuk Ph.D., Sharon Davison & David Berry

May 4-6, 2012

For more information contact: Michael Hryniuk at mhryniuk@yahoo.com



"Compassion is the heart/mind quality that creates and holds space to be present and bear witness to your own and another's suffering. Everyone has suffered; it is part of the human experience. What causes suffering and is there a way beyond suffering? How can we focus on cultivating the qualities of kindness and friendship and living spiritually? Both Buddha and Christ spoke about moving beyond suffering to peace, joy and loving-kindness.

Join Michael, David and Sharon as they guide a weekend of connecting with these universal questions, resulting in time for reflection, coming home to your own experience, and an interfaith exploration of suffering and the peace and well-being that is beyond suffering."

Michael Hryniuk is a Catholic theologian, author, speaker, and consultant specializing in the field of contemporary Christian spirituality, ministry development and spiritual formation. He is the author of *Theology, Disability and Spiritual Transformation* (Cambria Press, 2010) as well as numerous academic and popular articles on the themes of youth ministry, contemplative spirituality, and Trinitarian theology.

David Berry is one of those rare individuals who can not only connect the dots but does so with the clear-seeing of a long-time practitioner dedicated to Buddha dharma. He has chaired high-level NGO and governmental working groups on sustainability and the environment from California to Iceland.

Sharon Davison is a facilitator, educator (B.Ed.Adult) and coach. She teaches courses including those based on MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction) which was developed at Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical.

49. THE PASSAGE OF TIME AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ZARATHUSHRIAN TRADITION

NAMC Seminar 2012

3590 Bayview Avenue , Toronto

The seminar is open to all.

Saturday April 7 th 9:30am to 5:00pm

The attendance fee of \$7/person covers lunch and coffee.

Space is limited to the first 160 paid registrants.

To register, please contact Meher Panthaky meherpanthaky@yahoo.com, 905-568-4946, 905-568-4946, OR Parvez & Roshan Rabadi prabadi@aol.com , 647 341 6731 OR 647 341 6731



Delivered by four knowledgeable mobeds, the lectures will specifically focus on:

- Zarathushtrian Connection in Pishdadian and Kyanian by Ervad Soli Dastur
- Rise of Zarathushtrian Faith in Achaemenian Times by Ervad Cawas Desai
- Revival of Zarathushtrian Faith in Sasanian Era by Ervad Brigadier Behram M. Panthaki
- Zarathushtrian Religion in the Post-Exilic Era in India by Ervad Gustad M. Panthaki

50. LIBERATING THE SELF: AN ONLINE PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL TRAINING COURSE

with **Richard Harvey**

“Do not settle for less than everything – the transformation of the human heart and the courage to demand and bear the responsibility of leading a spiritual life in the world.”

‘My psycho-spiritual psychotherapy is a therapy/mindfulness/meditation practice; it is “attending to soul” and soul mediates between mind and spirit; it is healing the personality, not as an end in itself, but as a prelude to the heart-filled life of the authentic self, the one you have always longed to live; finally, it is the primary source of personal and transpersonal development. It provides you with the opportunity to practice awareness, to reside in the Mystery, to be awed and baffled, clear and confused, and find a deep acceptance for it all. It encourages and guides you to not assume, to practice humility, to open and expand, to work with your boundaries and compassion, and practice being more than your small, egoistic self allows you to be. It places you in the stream of existence, constantly reminding you of the need for openness, acceptance, and surrender.”s you with the opportunity to practice awareness, to reside in the Mystery, to be awed and baffled, clear and confused, and find a deep acceptance for it all. It encourages and guides you to not assume, to practice humility, to open and expand, to work with your boundaries and compassion, and practice being more than

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For: Therapists, Counselors, Guides, Healers, and Students who have made a serious commitment to their inner journey.

In this Course: The course aims to introduce you to a new paradigm of psycho-spiritual practice that connects the spiritual and transcendent realms to personality and character. If you are a practitioner and you would like to incorporate spirituality into your practice or strengthen your understanding and ability to work from a psycho-spiritual perspective with your clients, or if you wish to deepen in your own inner journey, this online course may serve you.

If you are a practitioner working with others your ability to facilitate or guide is wholly dependent on your having experienced the stages of human development we discuss in these lecture-seminars. Therefore there are three possible way for you to approach the subject matter in this course: as a practitioner, to learn how to be more effective with your clients, as a seeker, to familiarize yourself with the inner realms and inform yourself about the inner journey, or as both a practitioner and a seeker embracing both.

Lecture-Seminar One: The Process of Self-Discovery

- Appreciating the Gate
- Inner Dynamics of the Personality
- Models, Patterns and Defenses
- Relationships, Projections and Transference
- The Fire of Healing
- The Central Character Dynamic
- The Stages of Forgiveness
- The Original Wound
- Wholeness

Lecture-Seminar Two: The Transformation into Authenticity

- The Bridge of Authenticity
- Alone and Waiting
- Art and Expression
- Transformation
- Being and Purpose
- Loose Ends
- The Heart of Compassion
- The Four Stages of Ego

Lecture-Seminar Three: The Life of Transformation

- Fuel for the Journey
- Community, Aging, Death and Love
- Group Practice
- Spiritual Distance
- Spiritual Questions and Divine Lessons
- Changing Biographies
- Contradiction and Paradox
- Does Inner Work End?

Methods: Lectures, discussions and questions, one-to-one sessions, written assignments, experiential tasks and psycho-spiritual practices.

Format: Three small group lecture-seminars over Skype as a conference call, lasting a total of 4 ½ hours. Written assignments, experiential tasks and psycho-spiritual practices given by Richard to complete and implement between meetings. Two half-hour one-to-one sessions with Richard.

The format for the lecture-seminars is:

- 15.30 Welcome, followed by a brief introduction to the lecture material and a minute of silent attunement together
15.35 Richard gives the lecture
14.00 Students' questions which lead to discussion and sharing, focusing on the lecture material
14.30 Students' questions, concerning their own inner work or healing practice
14.45 Richard will give written assignments, experiential tasks and psycho-spiritual practices to the group as a whole; possibly in individual cases specific encouragements and suggestions
14.55 Students will be asked for their last thoughts on the session and, following a minute of silent attunement together, Richard ends the session

Duration: Three online lecture-seminars, two personal consultations, plus email contact over 4 weeks.

Dates:

Lecture-Seminar One: 18 April
Lecture-Seminar Two: 2 May
Lecture-Seminar Three: 16 May

Times: 15.30-17.00 Central European Time Zone (CET)
One-to-one sessions with Richard – dates to be arranged with individual students.

Price: 250 euros

Booking: Send a message via <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/contact-us.php> stating your wish to enroll on this course. On being sent a confirmation email, please pay a non-refundable deposit of 50 % (125 euros) at <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/pay-online.php>. Please scroll down to the bottom of the page and fill in 'Other Payment': 125, Liberating the Self, and then proceed making your payment online.

You are respectfully reminded that this is not a "pop" psychology course, or a flimsy feel-good process, but rather a serious, radical and exceptionally challenging approach to real human development at the deepest levels. Although terms like spirituality, transformation, the inner journey and authenticity are commonly used in the mind-body-spirit (New Age) field, Richard uses them with a very specific meaning and intention. "My work of the last 35 years is culminating in the creation of the foundation for a Divine Psychology to serve in the crucial work of individual and collective human awakening."

For a brief summary outline of Richard's Three Stages of Human Awakening see

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/interview-stages-awakening.html>

and

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

For further reading see

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

It is advisable also to have read Richard's books, particularly The Flight of Consciousness before taking this course. See

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

and

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

WEBSITE

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

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

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

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BIO

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

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In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

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