

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

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

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

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

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OFFERINGS:

1. Personal Story of Spiritual Lessons



Stop Competing...Start Loving

Competition is ubiquitous throughout society. For many, competition is the backbone of our existence. “We have to work hard to succeed...to win!” How many times have you heard that statement? From the time we are brought into this world, we are bread and raised to compete. Survival of the fittest is engrained in our psyche.

Competition, in and of itself, is not bad. The means and results may, sometimes, be misplaced and removed from any heart intention. What if, perhaps, we have misunderstood the paradigm of competition:

Much of scientific theory, and consequently our model of the way things work, is going up in smoke. With every scientific finding, yet another cherished notion is overturned. A new scientific story is emerging that challenges our assumptions, including our most basic premise: the sense of things as separate entities in competition for survival.

The latest evidence from quantum physics offers the extraordinary possibility that all of life exists in a dynamic relationship of cooperation. Quantum physics now recognize that the universe is not a collection of separate things jostling around in empty space. All matter exists in a vast quantum web of connection, and a living thing at its most elemental is an energy system involved in a constant transfer of information with its environment. Rather than a cluster of individual, self-contained atoms and molecules, objects and living beings are now more properly understood as dynamic and protean processes, in which part of one thing and parts of another continuously trade places.

Lynne McTaggart. “No such thing as a thing.” ODE. Volume 8, Issue 3. July/August 2011. P. 36.

Sport is perhaps one of the most blatant displays of competition. As a competitive athlete in the past, I was trained to win, sometimes—perhaps frequently—at all costs. It was an international sporting competition I attended not that long ago that gifted me with the experience that competition can also provide a forum for love and compassion.

This international sporting competition I attended was of Olympic proportions. It was staged in a former Olympic venue with 1000’s of athletes from many countries around the world competing in dozens of sporting events—all watched by 10,000s spectators over many days. The event was complete with judges, timing equipment, and medal ceremonies. There were spectacular and spectacle-like opening and closing ceremonies. There were even world-class, elite athletes (former and current Olympians) competing at this event. However, there was something different about this event that made it different than your typical showcase for sport.

The organizers of this event went to great lengths to have this international sporting event be more about building community than determining the most proficient athlete competing in their respective sport. This was evidenced by such things as having men and women participating in the same events, having different categories of races (or heats) based on one’s proficiency in a given sport. Indeed, everyone from elite, Olympics athletes were participating in the same events as people who never even tried swimming, or volleyball, or basketball, or gymnastics, let alone competed against someone else. The organizers of this event shared as part of their Mission that:

Sport can bring people together in a way unlike any other activity. Sport has the power to transcend culture, nationality, religion, and most other barriers—in essence, sport has the power to transcend differences.

It was one particular sporting event I attended, and one particular race, that personified the spirit of these games and the demonstration that if we just stop competing against each other, our hearts and souls open up to love.

I was participating as an athlete in these games in the golfing competition. But because I was also an avid swimmer, I made a point of taking in, as a spectator, as much of the swimming competition as possible. On one particular morning that I watched the swimming heats, there was a full calendar/schedule of races planned. Early in the morning I had the delight and honor of watching a member of the United States Olympic swim team break the world record in the 200 meter backstroke. It was exhilarating and wondrous to watch the grace and ease that this swimmer cut through the water with precision and power.

Later in the morning there was the fateful race that put the entire theme of the games into perspective and reminded us all of how much more powerful love is than competition. This particular race featured some of the less experienced swimmers competing in the 200 meter backstroke. For those not familiar with how long 200 meters is, a swimmer must swim four lengths of an Olympic-sized swimming pool (each length being 50 meters) to complete the race.

With the swimmers at the starting blocks, the starter's pistol was fired and the swimmers dove into the water. The capacity crowd (likely close to 5,000 spectators) in this venue started cheering for their friends and loved ones competing in the race. Very quickly, however, before most of the swimmers even finished one length of the pool, we knew this race was going to be different.

In lane 1 (closest to the side of the pool) was a swimmer who clearly was not proficient at the backstroke. Actually, there were moments when I wondered if this was the first time this person ever attempted to swim the backstroke.

As the other 7 swimmers in the pool finished their first 100 meters of the race (2 lengths of the pool) the swimmer in lane 1 had not even finished $\frac{1}{2}$ a length. By the time the swimmer in lane 1 had finally made it to the end of the pool (finishing only 50 meters of the 200 meter race), all the other swimmers finished their entire 200 meter race (in approximately 2.5 – 3 minutes).

The swimmer in lane 1 continued swimming his race. While many spectators in the stands did seem to wonder what was happening (including me), we all stayed put and watched things unfold. The organizers of the event piped music over the PA system to keep people entertained as this swimmer (soon to be hero) continued his journey.

By the time the swimmer in lane 1 had completed 2 lengths of the pool (with still 2 lengths to go), 10 minutes had passed and he looked exhausted. I can remember wondering if he was even going to try to finish the race. After all, it had taken him about 10 minutes to complete the first 2 lengths of the pool and he had another 2 lengths to go.

To my surprise, and to the surprise of many in the stands, the swimmer in lane 1 pushed off from the wall to continue his odyssey and complete his race. The music continued playing over the PA system. People continued watching in amusement at what was unfolding in front of them. Some, like me, did become nervous at moments when the swimmer in lane 1 did not even seem to be moving through the water. His arms were flailing, but he didn't seem to be going anywhere. I can remember thinking at one point, "is there a life guard around?"... "cause this guy is gonna need one!"

With each passing minute, and each passing stroke that seemed to advance the swimmer so little through the water, the atmosphere in the building started to change. This energy shift was the result of one remarkable event. As the swimmer in lane 1 neared the completion of his 3rd length of the pool, one of his fellow competitors from the same race, who had finished the race many minutes earlier, came over from the bleachers where all the other swimming competitors were sitting, chatting and watching the scene unfold, and began to cheer the swimmer on. A minute later another swimmer competing in the same race joined him and then there were 2 swimmers cheering on the man in lane 1. By the time the swimmer in lane 1 finally touched the wall to complete his third length of the pool, there were about 10 swimmers standing on the pool deck cheering him on.

As the swimmer in lane 1 started his 'home' lap, his last length of the race, in a steady stream of support, all the swimmers competing in all the morning's heats came in procession to the side of the pool (hundreds of them) to show their support and cheer him on. With about half a length to go (25 meters), and with all the swimmers on the pool deck chanting in unison "stroke, stroke, stroke", the spectators in the building started to clap in unison to show their support for the courage being displayed in front of them.

It was a divine moment: to hear all the swimmers supporting their fellow competitor; to hear the unified applause of the spectators. When that fateful swimmer finally, some 20+ minutes after he started his race, touched the wall and finished his race, a roar went up from the crowd that was deafening. He clung to the wall, too weak to even acknowledge, perhaps even be aware of, what was happening around him.

His fellow competitors lifted him out of the water and embraced him. I watched as every single swimmer (and there were hundreds of them) waited their turn to hug him. I watched as those in the stands wiped tears of joy from their eyes (through my own tears). I watched as the euphoric energy in the building rose to a crescendo of love and compassion. And it did not stop there.

Within an hour of that amazing scene, there were the medal ceremonies. In order of the heats that took place that morning, the medals were handed out for the 1st (gold), 2nd (silver) and 3rd (bronze) place finishers in their respective races. When it was time to hand out the medals for the race where the swimmer in lane 1 took a little longer to complete his race than the other swimmers (stated with a compassionate smile), the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers accepted their medals. Then, there was a pause...

The announcers came over the PA system and shared that the community of athletes had approached the judges/organizers of the event and wanted to honor the courage shown by the swimmer who finished last in the race mentioned above. He was asked to come forward and was honored with a gold medal for his courage and for personifying what the entire event was about. There was not a dry eye in the entire building.

Competition is not a bad thing. It can bring out some amazing things in us. It can help us to realize the vast potential that resides in each of us. Competition can raise us to new heights of achievement and performance. I might suggest that love has the equally-powerful potential to tap the vast potential that resides in each of us. Love, too, can bring out the best in each of us.

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

2. Contemplative Thoughts*

It takes courage to remain forgiving, loving and merciful.

Anger spoils the beauty of the soul, silence regains it.

Silence gives rest to the mind and this means giving rest to the body. Sometimes rest is the only medicine needed.

Introspection will ultimately allow you to see your true self in the mirror of your heart.

Why feel guilty? Learning how to forgive yourself is a better use of your time.

I can only give my best to others when I am in touch with the best in myself.

Your good wishes can even enable someone who is far away from you to experience happiness.

Peace of mind comes not from wanting to change others, but by simply accepting them as they are. Today let me practice acceptance.

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Often adventures can destabilize us, shaking everything inside. However, imagine everyday being an adventure in which I remain stable and calm and thoroughly enjoy everything that happens, even the challenging parts. Today let me enjoy the adventure of life from a position of inner stability.

More and more people write shorter and shorter messages by email and internet. Although the message is short, I need not shorten the amount of dignity and respect I put in the message. I can fill very few words with a dignity of feeling and a respect for the ones receiving it. Today let me put the energy of dignity and respect in all my messages.

This is the time to be aware of the difference between what is original and true in me and what is acquired and false. I feel inspired when I experience the part of me that is pure and original. To lose track of the truth that is deeply embedded inside of me is to lose clarity and spiritual perspective. Today let me keep the truth inside of me alive.

Manage your mood so you do not cause sorrow for others. When my mood turns sour my behaviours change, sometimes getting strict or tight with rules and regulations or withholding generosity or becoming short tempered. When I keep an attitude of lightness and humour, a bad mood quickly goes away. Today let me notice a bad mood and offer it lightness and humour to help it pass.

The greatest fortune is to have an easy, loving nature. When I flow with life, accept others and accommodate difficulties, my nature becomes easy and loving. If there is intensity inside it is because I find it difficult to flow, accept and accommodate. The more I practice these three qualities the easier and lighter my nature will become. Today let me be easy.

Take power through silence when making decisions. When I consider that my presence in life can be instrumental in bringing benefit to others I will take the time to find wise guidance for my decisions in silence. In silence I can see more accurately what is needed. Beyond the noise of my own thinking, there is clarity. Today let me use silence for power and clarity.

When you come back to yourself you give space for everyone around you to come back to themselves and life becomes refined, flowing and natural again. When I drift away from my inner core, others around me lose sight of me also. This creates disturbance in the energy field between us. When I come back to myself, there is stabilization and the vibrations become harmonious again. Today let me catch any drift from my inner being and come back.

If my energy is stable, I have clarity, my thoughts are clear and my actions display harmony. If, on the other hand, my energy is fluctuating, then I will be muddled and frenetic and my actions will increase the amount of distress in the world. Today let me keep my energy clean and stable.

Have interest in making everything you do top quality. As I progress spiritually the senses demand a different quality of experience. As my power to discern increases I enjoy more subtle beauty and can detect weakness more quickly. To maintain this subtle power to discern, I can put my best effort into everything I do, expressing my interest in quality and refinement. Today let me focus on creating beauty and quality.

Invest in your inner life. When I change my lifestyle to allow time to invest in nurturing my inner life, I become more centered and calmer. This investment is the greatest investment I can make in life in spite of the attraction and distraction to invest externally in others all the time. Today let me invest in my inner life and see that when it flourishes, it supports others as well.

The most precious energy on the planet is the energy of hope. At this time as political solutions fail it is easy to become disheartened about the possibility of meaningful solutions to world problems. However, when I renew the energy of hope in myself it renews hope in others. Today let me sustain and share the renewable energy of hope.

Patience allows me to trust the flow of life, myself and others. I am able to be patient when I understand that gentleness will accomplish more than force. This understanding enables me to hold myself back from pushing or using force with people or situations. Today let me experience patience.

Changing because it is forced upon me means being a victim of change, not the master. When I choose to change before it is forced upon me I experience the power of my own will to decide. Most obstacles and challenges will pass eventually if

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I wait long enough. But to change myself by adjusting, adapting my response and reframing an obstacle to see its spiritual benefit, helps me develop my character in unique ways. Today let me be a master not a victim of change.

Filter out the ego constantly. I have lost trust in my ability to recognize what will nurture my self-respect and what will feed ego. Self-respect brings stability. Ego, on the other hand, rocks and shakes me. With the stability of self-respect I feel I am progressing spiritually. I reclaim my trust in myself when I recognize ego. Today let me feed self-respect and not ego.

World transformation is a result of pure intention. The power of collective intention is such that whatever is inside human beings ultimately manifests outside. Just as a world filled with anger and hatred is a reflection of what is in the human heart, so too, the desire for sustainable change, in its deepest sense, is not just about action, but equally 'a question of intention'. Today let me see the pure intention of humanity.

Results will be achieved when we are more committed and less ambitious. Sometimes setting sights on ambitious goals serves to inspire me to make effort to achieve them. However ultimately it is the depth and consistency of my commitment that achieves the goal. The secret to achievement of any kind is the continuous day to day effort, made in small amounts over time. Today let me commit to small continuous efforts.

What the world needs now is not only individual moments of greatness or even individual lives of greatness, but whole communities of greatness. Rather than admiring or worshiping great ones, it is time for becoming like that ourselves. Each of us has everything we need inside; determination, peace and the generosity of spirit we see in great ones. Today let me bring out my own greatness for the benefit of the world.

How you do what you do, leaves a greater impact than what you do. People notice the quality of action more than they notice the outcome. I may do many tasks and perform many actions in a day but the ones that I fill with enthusiasm and dignity will leave a deeper impression on myself and others. Today let me create impact through high quality actions.

The highest spiritual investment I can make is in creating and maintaining high quality relationships. Often we invest quality energy in 2 or 3 special relationships in life and pay less attention to others. However, ideally I would create quality relationships with everyone I meet. Even a short interaction with another human being can be of high quality, in this way ensuring that I remain in high quality energy throughout the day. Today let me be aware of my interactions.

It is time to renew the world. We see many polluted environments – in nature, in our organizations, in relationships and in myself because the energy of negativity, waste and impurity has entered all human endeavors. It is an art to see a polluted environment and renew it. The energy of conviction and decidedness serves as a renewing force in a polluted atmosphere. Today let me bring renewal to the environments around me.

Attitude is more subtle than conscious thinking. Limited attitudes are formed by the subtle influences I pick up throughout the day through what I have heard, read, seen, in opinions and conversations, etc. I am not even aware of the impressions formed in me as attitudes, until they are expressed. If I am surprised by my own attitude and ask myself "Where did that come from?" I can know that I have picked up a peculiar influence somewhere. Today let me observe my attitudes.

Freedom is a state of mind; unfettered by expectations, doubts or limitations. If I do not feel that, then I can take the time to find out where the blockage is. There is always a blockage inside my thinking or perception. Only when I find it, can I look at it and let it go. Otherwise I may blame myself, my circumstance or someone else. Today let me set myself free by identifying blockages and letting them go.

Align inner and outer worlds. The outer world is a reflection of what is going on inside of human beings. Today the problems and difficulties in the world are a reflection of the ways in which individuals are confused or internally conflicted. When I seek to make my inner world coherent, clean and clear then my outer world reflects this as my actions become a consistent expression of this cleanliness and clarity. Today let me align my inner and outer worlds.

In order to let go of ego you must have self-realization. The mind cannot turn away from ego without having somewhere to turn to. Any attempt to get rid of ego will strengthen it as it fights to remain. However, by turning my attention to the true self—the silent one who watches the ego, the intelligent being who wishes to be rid of ego—I can starve ego of my attention. Only by starving ego, will it eventually die. Today let me strengthen self-realization by feeding an awareness of my true, beautiful self.

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If I begin any task with the worry that it might not be successful I have planted a seed of doubt and it will weaken the task. To be successful, every endeavor requires conviction that it will succeed. It is this energy that carries projects to success. Today let me banish any thought of doubt.

When I refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, I begin to develop the spiritual art of being unshakeable. Although adverse situations may look like they can bury me, they have within them the potential to make me unshakeable. When I face them and transcend all of my reactions to them with the conviction that solutions can always be found, then even if the situations shake I will remain stable. Today let me be unshakeable.

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

3. Poem

I Have Passed This Way

I have passed this way
A thousand times
I have walked the winding path
I have reached the sky and the stars
The dreams of all mankind
The past, the present, the future
Where time drifts in and out
The want of love does all surround
The sun, the clouds, the stars
I have danced across the universe
This music filled my soul
On wings of a new tomorrow
Where life is filled with hope
Just close your eyes and dream with me
Of all that is your reality

Anonymous

4. Quote or Question

Everything can change in a blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks. (Anonymous)

5. Parable – Wealth, Success and Love

A woman came out of her house and saw three old men with long white beards sitting in her front yard. She did not recognize them. She said “I don’t think I know you, but you must be hungry. Please come in and have something to eat.”

“Is there anyone else at home?”, they asked.

“Yes”, she replied. “My husband and daughter-in-law.”

“We cannot enter without the welcoming of your husband and daughter-in-law”, they replied.

The woman went back into the house and informed her husband and daughter-in-law of the above.

“Go tell them we welcome them into our home”, replied the husband. The daughter-in-law nodded approvingly.

The woman went out and invited the men in.

“We do not go into a House together”, they replied.

“Why is that?” she asked.

One of the old men explained: “His name is Wealth,” he said pointing to one of his friends, and said pointing to another one, “He is Success, and I am Love.” Then he added, “Now go in and discuss with your husband and daughter-in-law which one of us you want in your home.”

The woman went in and told her husband and daughter-in-law what was said. Her husband was overjoyed. “How nice!!!”, he said. “Since that is the case, let us invite Wealth. Let him come and fill our home with wealth!” His wife disagreed. “My dear, why don’t we invite Success?” Their daughter-in-law had her own suggestion: “Would it not be better to invite Love? Our home will then be filled with love!”

“Let us heed our daughter-in-law’s advice,” said the husband to his wife. “Go out and invite Love to be our guest.” The woman went out and asked the 3 old men, “Which one of you is Love? Please come in and be our guest.” Love got up and started walking toward the house. The other 2 also got up and followed him. Surprised, the woman asked Wealth and Success: “I only invited Love, why are you coming in?”

The old men replied together: “If you had invited Wealth or Success, the other two of us would have stayed out, but since you invited Love, wherever He goes, we go with him. Wherever there is Love, there is also Wealth and Success!!!”

My wish for you...

- Where there is pain, I wish you peace and mercy.
- Where there is self-doubting, I wish you a renewed confidence in your ability to work through it.
- Where there is tiredness, or exhaustion, I wish you understanding, patience, and renewed strength.
- Where there is fear, I wish you love, and courage.

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

CONTRIBUTING SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND TEACHERS:

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

6. Richard Harvey – The Passionate Response to the Call of the Divine

Not all that long ago people were prepared to suffer extreme torture rather than renounce their spiritual beliefs. Spirituality has always been intensely provocative and confrontational. Think also of the people who tortured their fellow men. And if you are bewildered by that, consider this: they both had the same stated motivations: to save the souls of, respectively, the tortured, mutilated, martyred heretic and themselves.

Today we live in superficial times. If someone approached you a la an Eddie Izzard sketch and proposed to hack you to death unless you agreed with something you thought silly, you would be hard put to see the point in disagreeing. After all, you'd reason, it's only words and this guy wants to take my life.

But isn't there a deeper point here? Have we lost the spiritual sense totally? Today it seems that spirituality is synonymous with pleasure, personal fulfillment, being the best you can be, helping people, being kind. It's sentimental, idealistic, unreal and unchallenging. What's happened to the kind of spirituality where the spiritual teacher loved you so much that he was willing to lose your admiration just to teach you a spiritual lesson, where the spiritual friend approached you to tell you something revealing, difficult and potentially hurtful about yourself, because he loved you more than he needed your friendship to survive the confrontation. Where is the modern day couple, married or otherwise, who are willing to live on the edge of revelation, risk and true love by consistently challenging their partner to awaken, remain open-hearted and be courageous, even more than kind sometimes, or at least to understand that kindness like beauty and compassion is not always a romantic vision in soft focus, because sometimes it must have teeth to really teach and be genuinely human, effective and real!

Two stories come to mind. The first is the monk and the samurai; perhaps you know it? The samurai comes to see the little monk. He's sitting quietly on the floor meditating naturally and the samurai, huge and intimidating, towers over him and demands, "Teach me about heaven and hell!" The diminutive monk looks up and replies, "Tell you about heaven and hell! I couldn't teach you anything! You're dirty! You've got a rusty sword! You're unkempt! You're a disgrace to the samurai class!" The samurai becomes furious and draws his sword. He is about to chop off the monk's head when the little monk looks up and quietly says, "That's hell." The samurai is stunned and amazed by the monk's extraordinary compassion. Realizing that this little man risked his life to teach him a spiritual lesson, he is so affected he bursts into tears of gratitude and wonder and he sheaths his sword. Just then the monk looks up and says, "And that's heaven."

The second is a somewhat peculiar story. It has personal significance to me, because my own spiritual teacher hated it. I don't think he really understood it like I did, partly because he wasn't as literary or intellectual as I was. This is something I often point out to my own clients, students and seekers: because I am a would-be-scholar, i.e. not really a scholar at all, I have the tendency sometimes to dazzle the less-learned with volleys of impromptu literary religious or spiritual references, provoking the complaint that since I know so much and they can never know as much as me, they will never make it spiritually. This of course is rubbish. The lists of Zen, Sufi, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu etc. spiritual masters and adepts include many illiterate Self-realizers. This is because wisdom is not knowledge. Knowledge is acquired, whereas wisdom is innate.

The story is about a beautiful Buddhist nun who provokes the prurient attention of the monks in the monastery and threatens the stability of spiritual practice for the male monks and herself in the process. She selflessly disfigures her face, making herself ugly, so that the members of the community are not distracted and she can apply herself to her Buddhist practices.

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My teacher thought this a horrible story and taken literally it is life-negating, likely misogynistic, and very nasty. But surely it is symbolic of a spiritual truth. That truth is that we must turn away from the outward appearances, the dazzling play of consciousness, to become fully aware, engulfed and overtaken by consciousness and incorporated into the divine. This is not to say that the world of appearances and pleasure and so on are evil (we don't have to fall for that dichotomy), but simply that in the process of awakening and liberation we must turn from the outward life of appearance to enable us to see clearly with inner sight both the inner and the outer, which turn out to be one anyway, although we don't know that (in the wisdom sense) until we have gone beyond the stage of the spiritual process.

Spiritual practice takes us to our edge. There's always an edge, a dichotomy in spiritual practice, because you arrive in time at a meeting of worlds, at the border of time and eternity in a moment. Inner and outer, earthly and heavenly, actual and ideal, human and divine - spirituality looks different from *here* in the world of time, space and relativity, than it does from *there* in the world of purity, love, wisdom, *satchitananda* and reality.

We may not have to suffer extreme torture for our spiritual beliefs anymore, but for those of us who experience the divine call, the invitation to unity, and respond passionately it is like being painfully parted from our loved one. We ache, agonize, yearn and long for and pray for unity with the Divinity.

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.

7. Doug Henderson, Ph.D – We Use Them Until We No Longer Need Them – Part 10 of 11

This is part 10 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.

It is not something outside of us that harms us. It is the poisoning by our own thoughts that creates dis-ease. But we have been conditioned to believe in some hogwash - called germ theory - that even Pasteur – who invented it – recanted. But we have bought into it and we hold it in mind and will defend it. We always defend what we create because we love what we create. We view both our self and our mis-creations as both separate/individual and special. This is the ego's belief in the fragility of the body and the specialness of separation. Even those acts of personal injury that we call an accident were brought on by the attraction of two like thought forms in that instant. But there is no responsibility in this word accident and very subtly we buy into the status of victim. And so, the strategy of fear perpetuates itself.

But it is the recognition of our connectedness with the Divine (our holiness/wholeness) that we acknowledge when we douse because dowsing in any form is the "knocking," and when the "knocking," is genuine and with integrity, it is answered. The integrity of the emotional state is what causes portals to open.

Critical to undoing the process of fear – false emotions appearing real - is forgiveness – it's like bringing the pendulum back to the rest position before it chooses a new response and moves on to answer a new question. This is the letting go that is needed - but a whole new method of forgiveness must be learned because what we have been taught does not work. You can use your pendulum to determine your LOC and your lower attractor issues and recall as many circumstances as possible to release. The cd entitled *Forgiveness* will help tremendously with this.

When you hold the pendulum in the lion posture – you are holding end points of the lung and large intestine meridians – and it is the information in this light of unconditional love that I suspect is responding to the intention of your question.

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If you can quiet the mind – amazing things happen! When the mind is quiet – it comes into coherence with the electromagnetic field of the heart and thymus. The thymus is called the resonance chamber of the heart and at one time they were joined. The thymus when brought into resonance with the heart and mind is the greatest amplification chamber that creation has ever devised, as the frequency of every thought and the vibration of the soul itself resonates and amplifies through every part of your universe! – We go from projecting our junk upon the world to radiating love – what Hawkins calls LOC500 – and when we surrender to a higher source we are going instantly, in that moment to LOC575!

Now, if you can develop this and spend more time there, your LOC cannot help but soar and your pendulum will provide the answers you are really seeking. You may not understand some of the responses but if you turn them over to this Higher Source – you may just find answers coming to you. My experience is that intention is amazingly powerful, particularly when you allow for it!

Tune in to next month's newsletter for the final installment 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.

8. Kathryn Kimmins – Laughter Yoga and Clapping

Would you take up an activity, or encourage your children to engage in it, if you knew that it could reduce the risk of [dyslexia](#) and [dyscalculia](#), improve cognitive abilities and special task performance, social integration, handwriting and spelling and make you feel more focused and less tense?

Apparently all of the above is as easy as clapping your hands.

New research has found a clear link between hand-clapping and neurological development that aids cognitive thinking, writing and literacy.

A researcher at [Israel's Ben-Gurion University of the Negev \(BGU\)](#) conducted the first study of hand-clapping songs, revealing a direct link between those activities and the development of important skills in children and young adults, including university students.

According to lead researcher, Dr. Idit Sulkin, the benefits of hand-clapping games and songs can be seen throughout the school years and even into university students and young adults. Sulkin also found that children who sing hand-clapping songs in the schoolyard during breaks have neater handwriting and fewer spelling mistakes than their peers who did not engage in clapping songs.

The findings indicate that children who do not play hand-clapping games and songs are at increased risk for learning disabilities and developmental problems.

During the study, ["Impact of Hand-Clapping Songs on Cognitive and Motor Tasks" Sulkin](#) found that introducing hand-clapping songs to children in school can improve their cognitive abilities. Sulkin found that children spontaneously engage in games and songs that involve hand-clapping from kindergarten to around the third grade, at which point the children seem to "grow out" of the past time in favour of sports. Sulkin believes this is representative of a natural developmental process that children go through between the ages of seven and ten.

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The researchers also found that hand-clapping activities had a positive effect on adults as well, with participants reporting feeling more relaxed and better able to concentrate as well as elevated moods.

As part of the study, Sulkin went to several elementary school classrooms and engaged the children in either a music appreciation program sanctioned by the board of education or hand-clapping songs training – each lasting a period of 10 weeks.

“Within a very short period of time, the children who until then hadn’t taken part in such activities caught up in their cognitive abilities to those who did,” Sulkin says. But this finding only surfaced for the group of children undergoing hand-clapping songs training. The result led Sulkin to conclude that hand-clapping songs should be made an integral part of education for children aged six to ten, for the purpose of motor and cognitive training and to serve as a developmental platform to enhance children’s needs – emotional, sociological, physiological and cognitive. It’s a transition stage that leads them to the next phases of growing up.”

There are 39 acupuncture points and reflection areas for almost all the organs. Clapping hands vibrates the energy and unclogs the six meridians simultaneously. When you clap your hands, place them together as if in prayer mode. That way you activate all 39 acupuncture points and reflection areas.

This simple routine only takes eight to ten minutes for a 1000 claps. You will feel warmth, even sweat on both hands and feet. This is a process to normalize the organ functions and you will see the results after about two months. Remember, always do the clapping while walking around so you move the energy around the entire body.

Clapping is the warming up exercise to loosen up and remove inhibitions and shyness. Clap hands parallel to each other for full finger-to-finger and palm-to-palm contact, thus stimulating Acupressure points in our hands to increase energy levels.

Rhythm is added to the clapping, to further increase energy levels and group synchronicity, often a 1-2, 1-2-3 rhythm. Movement is then added. There are many variations, but most move hands up and down and swing from side to side, with corresponding movements of the hands and feet.

A simple chant is added to the clapping, normally HO, HO, HA-HA-HA. These are heavy exhalations that come from the belly, to stimulate diaphragmatic breathing.

Adding dance movements boosts feelings of happiness and joy. Enthusiastic clapping, chanting and movement, help build positive energy, helps get the diaphragm moving, and creates a positive group dynamics in preparation for Laughter.

Yes, clapping hands is a simple and very effective way to raise and move body’s Yang energy. It not only makes you feel more energetic, but also eases or cures many chronic diseases such as asthma, heart, lung and kidney problems and circulation, if you can persistently do this every day one hour after a meal (better not in the evening otherwise you might get too excited to go to sleep).

Now then, let’s get clapping.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8irkgubBQg>

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/>.

9. Regiena Heringa – Notes from the Light August 2012

In your world there is the delicate balance between soul and ego wherein lies the basis of your duality. However, this duality is now shifting to unity. You ask, “How can duality become one? Can I live in Light without first experiencing shadow?”

These are valid questions and we answer with a few of our own!

Is it truly necessary in this transitioning time upon your earth, to experience the darkness in order to choose Light? If you were to place an apple and an orange upon your table and you choose the apple, need this choice be based on the previous tasting experience of the orange? We ask you: *do you wish to continue to live in the state of comparison?*

Kindly contemplate the following: within every human being there is a “program of mind” which presents the idea of duality, reminding individuals that they are composed of both material and spiritual matter. This a fact in your dimension. Upon your earth both compositions, physical and spiritual, have often separately played important roles, but now these compositions are uniting. Let us explain.

The importance of physical life is its movement from separation to union. If you review your planetary history, you repeatedly witness this movement of physical matter being uplifted through spiritual language: praise to the Creator through prayer and song, and expressing this Spirit through the development of the arts, mathematics, science, medicine, architecture and so forth. Here you witness the joyful expressions of creation with Creation. *Herein lies the purpose of each human upon your earth: through the use of free will you are invited to render the human condition divine.* It is true that at the apex of your planetary achievements, a voluntary separation from the Creator resulted in the fall of your civilizations. However, now your world is awakening to a greater understanding of the fusion of matter and spirit which may kindle a change in your planetary pattern of construction and destruction. If you indeed become an awakened world nation, you then have the possibility to introduce a fine path towards union with the Creator and with other stellar families who have always existed within the grace and the love of the divine Whole. Earth creation, in consort with the Creator, then can begin to stabilize, flourish, and nourish not only the progress of its planet, but also, through mutual sharing, contribute to the progress of other planetary and intergalactic communities.

Consider the following: within the smallest particle of physical matter, vibrates the sacred essence of life, insuring that all existence is imbued with God-Goodness and Christ Love. *Here is the bridge between matter and spirit, the language of unity.* Why do we state this? Because this sacred Light essence is found in physical matter and yet is accessible and increased only through spiritual understanding—the expansion of a mind and a heart which lie *beyond* your perceived laws of physics.

This vibration of the pure Christ Light needs no understanding of duality in order to be felt, absorbed and experienced. If you, as a sacred and intelligent creation, access this Christ Light through silence, love, gratitude and appropriate action, you will understand that this Universal Light has always been in existence and needs no darkness to explain itself to itself nor to others. All that is unified in the Creator needs no explanation. Rather, it is this divine Whole which exudes love, intelligence and creativity for the enjoyment and advancement of all.

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.

10. Boris Glikman - The Inner Morality – Part 3 of 3

This is the final installment of a 3-part series on Inner Morality by Boris. Parts 1 and 2 of the article appeared in the June and July Spiritual Guidance e-Newsletters. If you are interested in all 3 parts as one article, you can contact Boris directly via his contact information at the end of this article.

The natural and obvious follow-up to the topic of inner morality is the question as to why indeed does society not consider emotional and mental self-abuse to be as serious an issue as the mistreatment of others.

Is it because the society assumes that it is your responsibility and your responsibility alone to look after and deal with your inner world?

Is it because a person's inner world and his intrapersonal relationship are seen to be exclusively private areas which only concern that person and that person alone and consequently are beyond the jurisdiction of any universal law?

Is it because inner self-abuse is directed against oneself on the mental level and so doesn't really affect other people and therefore arouses no concern or reaction in them and consequently society has no incentive to apply any laws to inner violence?

Is it because the society believes that while any person is a potential threat to other members of society and therefore laws have to be established to protect the public against possible violence or mistreatment that people may inflict upon one another, in the situation of a person's relationship with himself, a person can be expected and trusted to not inflict wanton pain upon himself?

So is society's neglect of inner self-abuse due to its diverging underlying beliefs about interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships?

Another factor to take into consideration is the fact that inner self-abuse does not seem to have the same potency, the same "punch" to it as does physical abuse of oneself or others. Mental self-abuse is much more indefinite, amorphous, nebulous, vague and intangible. The mental states of a person are invisible to everyone else, cannot be measured or recorded and consequently there seems to be no objective way to gauge or judge inner self-abuse and that rules out applying universal and absolute laws to them.

One also has to ask whether indeed we ourselves take the inner self-violence that we commit seriously? Or do we ourselves dismiss this inner self-abuse as trivial and non-consequential as it happens in the inner world rather than in the real outer world?

This last question leads us to another possible reason as to why a double standard exists in regards to inner and outer abuse. Consider the way that we view the importance of inner and outer worlds and the events that take place therein.

Inner well-being, inner climate, inner state of events and their evolution all rate much less in significance and consequence than outer well-being, outer situations, outer state of events and their evolution. The inner accomplishments that we have achieved, the inner assets that we have gained, the inner hurdles that we have overcome, the inner losses that we have sustained - none of that matters very much to society. Consequently the fact that inner self-abuse is dismissed as trivial is just a small subclass of the general attitude that society holds towards the inner world.

As far as the society is concerned one might as well be a robot with no inner life at all or a vicious maniac who unceasingly and unsparingly inflicts constant abuse upon his inner self - as long as you are a law-abiding, contributing member of society you are accepted within the community and treated as an equal member with full rights. As long as your inner world and the things that go on there do not affect adversely other members of community, all is well and society is happy with you.

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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.

11. **Ann C. Johnson, Assoc MAPS: Psychologist – Taking Responsibility for Yourself**

Learn to take responsibility for yourself. Make sure you don't get sucked into the 'it's not my fault, it's your fault' game. Don't blame others for your discomfort and guilt; don't blame others for your anger and aggression; don't blame others for your anxiety, panic attacks and stress; don't blame others for your lack of health and wealth; don't blame others for your lack of education; don't blame others for how your life's turned out. As an adult, you can rectify the deficiencies of the past: you can get financial advice to organise your income and savings; you can go back to school and get some more education; you can find ways to conquer your discomfort and guilt; you can learn to understand and manage your anger and aggression; you can learn to understand and manage your anxiety, panic attacks and stress; you can improve the state of your health; you can create a brand new life for yourself.

As an adult, you need to learn to take responsibility for your actions, reactions and interactions; you need to learn to take responsibility for the decisions you have made and paths you have taken; you need to take responsibility for your shifting moods and resultant things you say. As an adult, you need to learn to step back a bit and observe how others behave; you need to learn to ignore others self-centred behaviour; to ignore others passive-aggressive behaviour; to ignore others foolish, impulsive or self-destructive behaviour; unless it directly or adversely affects you. As an adult, you need to learn to stop taking responsibility for other (healthy) adults; you need to learn to focus on the things that you *are* responsible for and to allow the people around you to learn to do the same.

Excerpted from ***Creating A Happy and Healthy Life For Yourself: A Practical Guide To Personal and Spiritual Development*** (Book 3) (Revised Edition). Copyright © 2010/2012 by Ann C. Johnson

ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Ann C. Johnson Assoc MAPS is a psychologist, healer and author. Ann works in private practice in Carrum Downs, Victoria, Australia. Ann provides counselling services to adolescents, adults, couples and families with an emphasis on personal and spiritual growth. In the past 7 years Ann has published 3 books on personal and spiritual development. Ann can be reached by phone on +613 9782-4262; by mobile on +61 413 908 564; or by email at annjohnson3@bigpond.com. To get a FREE copy of Ann's 3 books (in Aust.) please send your details to: PO Box 1062 Seaford VIC 3198 plus \$20 to cover P. & H. costs. If you are overseas please send AUD \$30 to cover Airmail & H. costs.

OTHER GIFTS AND E-NEWSWORTHY ITEMS:

12. Good News Of The Day

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

"I'm a lifelong learner and am always obsessively studying something, whether that's breadmaking or language or wine or chess or writing or fitness. Here are two key lessons -- both really the same lesson -- I've learned about learning, in all my years of study and in trying to teach people: Almost everything I've learned, I didn't learn in school; and almost everything my students (and kids) have learned, they learned on their own. Those two lessons (or one lesson) have a number of reasons and implications for learning. Let's take a look at some of them, in hopes you might find them useful." Zen Habits' Leo Babauta shares more. [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** Implement some of Babauta's suggestions for learning in your own life.

Brenna Martin's dad evidently doesn't like last-minute shopping. Bryan Martin purchased a gift for his daughter's high school graduation -- which happened earlier this month -- thirteen years ago. He managed to keep it hidden this whole time, and his "moving, touching, nostalgic, and thoughtful" present (her words) brought Brenna to tears when dad finally gave it to her last week. [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** Give a simple and thoughtful gift to a loved one.

Amber Chand is an entrepreneur in the United States with a unique business model: "She scans the headlines for conflicts around the world and responds. "I swoop in and then identify a group of talented, skilled artisan women who live there [in conflict zones] and who are clearly going to have to rebuild their lives in the shadow of either war or genocide or civil strife," she explains. The Amber Chand Collection partners with women in places ranging from Afghanistan to Colombia to Gaza. But her devotion toward these women flows from her own life story." [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** The next time you hear of someone going through a difficult situation, reach out in some way, big or small, to help.

"Did you get done what you wanted to get done today?' Eleanor, my wife, asked me. 'Not really,' I said. She laughed. 'Didn't you write the book on getting done what you want to get done?' Some people are naturally pre-disposed to being highly productive. They start their days with a clear and reasonable intention of what they plan to do, and then they work diligently throughout the day, sticking to their plans, focused on accomplishing their most important priorities, until the day ends and they've achieved precisely what they had expected...I am, unfortunately, not one of those people." In this candid article a reputed author and management consultant offers up his reflections on how the habits we reinforce can help or hinder our productivity [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** This week try experimenting with "productivity rituals" of the sort described in the article.

"People go to work to sustain themselves and produce value in the world. Yet work environments can also be stressful, filled with challenging responsibilities and personalities, and feel misaligned with our most deeply cherished values. Instead of sustaining us, the workplace can sometimes feel simply draining, and at worst, unwholesome for both ourselves and the world...is there a path for heart and spirit to come alive through inner transformation at work?" This article delves into five principles that might help pave such a path. [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** This week, make an effort to align your external work in the world with your core inner values.

As humans have begun to explore the mysteries of outer space, both by sending unmanned probes and physically traveling beyond the Earth's atmosphere, a vast number of amazing pictures have been collected. Often photographs of outer space are recorded for the purposes of science, but are also often breathtakingly beautiful images revealing the wonders of the universe. This post brings together 20 of the most astounding pictures of space ever created. [{ read more }](#). **Be The Change:** Take time to look up at the night sky today.

"[The illiterate of the 21st century,' Alvin Toffler famously said, 'will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.' Martin Seligman's celebrated book, *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind*

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and Your Life, was originally published 20 years ago and remains an indispensable tool for learning the cognitive skills that decades of research have shown to be essential to well-being -- and unlearning those that hold us back from authentic happiness." This article by Maria Popova shares more. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** "Wisdom in Blinking" is a short and beautiful passage by Mark Nepo on how our mindset influences the quality of our life experiences. [{more}](#).

"It is said that we become the stories that we tell among ourselves. This might have been true before we became salespersons. For a few decades now, I think we have become numb to the stories that we tell among ourselves. So stories have become shorter and crisper to the length of a tweet. We are so committed to telling a story to the point that finally what remains is a dimensionless point. There is no point in concentrating on a single point. The meaning of a point arises from meandering between the point and its natural circumference. It is within that arena, somewhere, my story becomes yours." This thought-provoking article explores the need in today's world for a Slow Story Movement. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Tell an old friend, family member, colleague or even a stranger a slow story today.

Chade-Meng Tan (widely known as Meng) was among the earliest engineers to be hired at Google. When Google allowed engineers to spend 20% of their time pursuing their passion, Meng decided to spend his time on a cause dear to his heart: Launching a conspiracy to bring about world peace. Meng believes that world peace can be achieved -- but only if people cultivate the conditions for inner peace within themselves. Working with Zen masters, meditation teachers, psychologists and even a CEO, Meng created a seven-week personal growth program called --- Search Inside Yourself (SIY). In this Knowledge@Wharton interview the man who was dubbed Google's Jolly Good Fellow shares more. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** "The life of peace is like an international flight permitting only one handbag. You'll have to leave behind some of your cherished shoes and appliances." [{more}](#).

"It's amazing that our interpretation of experiences can generate intense visceral responses. The fact that we get goosebumps when we are inspired or afraid is one of many everyday indicators of just how deeply and intricately connected our minds and bodies are. In fact, the mind and body are an intertwined whole -- and there is great wisdom in the totality of our mind-body experience. There are sparks of this recognition even in the world of technology. An increasing number of tools leverage something called "feedback loops." Some of these are bio-feedback devices that work by helping us become more aware of the body, giving us real-time feedback about physiological functions so that we can learn to consciously change them. They've been effective in improving many conditions, including stress, depression and even pain. But there are even more powerful feedback loops at work within ourselves...." [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** As you go through your day, pay special attention to the relationship between mind and body.

"Residents of Saltburn, in North Yorkshire, are scratching their heads today after a mysterious 'yarnbomber' wrapped the town's pier with a 50-yard scarf stretching out along the railings. The impressive garment features woollen athletes competing in various Olympic events, from synchronised swimmers to rowers and cyclists, and has delighted young and old alike as the town discusses the good yarn. But the mysterious creator -- who has struck before -- remains anonymous, leaving everyone speculating on their identity..." [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** This week do something to share an expression of art (a painting, song, poem or anything else!) with someone.

The bronze statue of Helen Keller that sits in the U.S. Capitol shows the blind girl standing at a water pump. It depicts the moment in 1887 when her teacher, Anne Sullivan, spelled "W-A-T-E-R" into one of her 7-year-old pupil's hands while water streamed into the other. This was Keller's awakening, when she made the connection between the word Sullivan spelled and the tangible substance splashing from the pump. Less well known is the fact that when this blind-deaf visionary learned that poor people were more likely to be blind than others, she set off down a pacifist, socialist path that broke the boundaries of her time -- and continues to challenge ours today. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** In her acceptance speech the Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison shared this profound parable about a wise old woman who is blind. [{more}](#).

"The notion that open and honest collaboration allows thinking to grow as a collective phenomenon can be traced back to Socrates and other thinkers in ancient Greece. Socrates and his friends so revered the concept of group dialogue that they bound themselves by principles of discussion that they established to maintain a sense of collegiality. These principles were known as 'Koinonia' which means spirit of fellowship." This Psychology Today article delves into each of the ten principles. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Try experimenting with some of the principles of Koinonia in your own life and work today.

"After living through an experimental cancer treatment my sister Barb was left unable to work. When she was offered the opportunity to do a mission trip in India if she could come up with \$3,000 - she was left thinking there was no way she

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could go. No way to raise the funds. She asked me to brainstorm with her as to how she could raise money. "The only thing I can do is hug," she told me - and thus her adventure began." In this powerful piece, a DailyGood reader shares a very personal story about two special cards and the ripples of love one woman would spread across the world -- and beyond the grave. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Hug someone in honor of Barb today. If you'd like to send Gretchen a note of gratitude for sharing her sister's legacy of love, you can do that here. [{more}](#).

Doug Eaton wanted to celebrate his birthday on June 11 in a big way, so he turned to his friends for ideas. "I asked a bunch of my friends on Facebook what should I do on my 65th and I got a whole long list of stuff," he shared, "And one of my friends said, 'Why don't you do 65 random acts of kindness?'" So that's exactly what he did, spending 65 minutes standing on the corner of NW 39th Street and May Avenue in Oklahoma City. From a distance, Eaton looked a bit like any other panhandler holding a sign at a street corner. But instead of a plea for money, his sign read: "I have a home...and a car...and a job. Do you need a few bucks for some coffee?" [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** On your next birthday (or the birthday of someone close to you) honor the occasion by doing a random act of kindness.

What are the core qualities and skills that transformational leaders share? Over the past 20 years, global health leader and changemaker Dr. Monica Sharma has encountered dozens of individuals from around the world who are leading their communities with courage and compassion. A few of the essential traits that they share are: knowing the power of their wisdom for action, embracing all with respect for diversity, and designing for tangible results. More than anything, this article reveals how anybody can become a transformative leader by defining these key characteristics in themselves. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Apply a trait or two from this piece in leading yourself with courage and compassion.

"In the life of each and every one of us, there is a defining moment, one after which we know that our lives will never be the same. For me, 9/11 was that moment." Mony Dojeiji's defining moment eventually led her to an ancient pilgrimage route in Spain, where a chance encounter with an artist would change both of their lives forever. Together they would end up walking a pilgrimage for peace in Jerusalem -- and in the process would uncover precious insights about themselves, each other and the goodness of humanity. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** This article and interview shares more about Mony and Alberto's unique journey. [{more}](#).

In 1989, Stephen R. Covey penned *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, a book that went on to sell millions of copies worldwide and defined a new genre bridging self-improvement, business management, and personal productivity. Last week, Covey passed away at the age of 79. Maria Popova of Brain Pickings takes a look back at his legacy with some of the keenest insights from his beloved bestseller: [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** In this short video clip, Covey opens with an gripping true story, and goes on to summarize his "8th Habit". [{more}](#).

"While I have learned a lot about being a dad, and finding joy in parenthood, I also know that stress-free parenting is a myth. Parents will always have stress: we not only have to deal with tantrums and scraped knees and refusing to eat anything you cook, but we worry about potential accidents, whether we are ruining our kids, whether our children will find happiness as adults and be able to provide for themselves and find love. That said, I've learned that we can find peace." Leo Babauta shares some simple steps that help him towards that peace. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Try implementing some of Babauta's steps in your own interactions with the children in your life.

There is a vitally important shift underway in how we think about progress. Growing numbers of economists, political leaders and expert commentators are calling for better measures of how well society is doing; measures that track not just our economic standard of living, but our overall quality of life. We too can benefit from a shift in priorities and a recognition that real happiness is less about what we earn or own and more about our relationships and state of mind; it's as much about what we can contribute as what we can get for ourselves. Learn how the UK is measuring national well-being in order to create a happier society. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** A happier society starts with each of us. Check out the DIY Happiness Game developed by Well London and try the one-tip-a-week! [{more}](#).

In 2010, Manjula Martin and her partner set out to see the world the old-fashioned way: by bicycle. With little money, no itinerary, gadgets or training, they traversed five countries and 3,500 miles and discovered a world filled with generosity. In this article, Manjula Martin describes the transition from bike to home with four rules for re-entry that are strikingly authentic, grounded, and universal. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Experiment with applying some of the rules that Manjula Martin learned on her bike journey.

"I was sitting at my desk today, looking out the window. I saw an old homeless man crossing the street, carrying a suitcase. I remembered the many times I had looked on from afar, feeling sorry for the homeless but doing nothing..."

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Sometimes we think about compassion but we push it into the deep corners of our heart because we're too busy with life, too shy, or too afraid of strangers. But all it takes is a little awakening... I did what I never thought I could as I'm an introvert and afraid of strangers. I burst out the front door and ran after the old man." That split-second decision led to a moving encounter that would blur the line between giver and receiver. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** The next time you have an opportunity to "awaken" to your own compassion, take it.

More than a billion people around the world are overweight, leading to all kinds of health challenges. "Obesity increases health risks like heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, to name a few, and the health care costs to treat obesity-related illness are skyrocketing, with Center for Disease Control estimates in 2008 reaching \$147 billion dollars (just in the US). But now there is a new prescription for combating obesity, one that goes beyond ubiquitous diet and exercise regimens: mindfulness, the moment-to-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and surroundings." This article from UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center shares more. [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Savor the food you eat today -- with mindfulness and gratitude.

Over the weekend, brothers Cayden and Connor Long joined hundreds of other children as they competed in the first annual New England Kids Triathlon in Cambridge. The boys did not win the event -- they didn't even come close. But that didn't stop them from winning hearts across the Internet. The Long brothers are not your typical triathletes. Six-year-old Cayden has cerebral palsy and can neither walk nor talk. But thanks to the dedication of his older brother, Connor, the young boy has participated in several triathlons. A touching video and article outlining their journey: [{read more}](#). **Be The Change:** Try to alleviate the loneliness someone in your life faces in working with their challenges.

13. Those Who Float

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Young as you are, I know you already know something about faith. You have faith in your mother's arms. That's a good start. But later on, you'll find it gets more complicated.

Not long ago, I was talking with a woman who got me thinking about what faith really is. She was in her mid-forties, and in therapy she said she felt as if she had been "treading water" her whole life.

"What if you stop?" I asked.

Between you and me, Sam, that is not my most brilliant intervention. But it's a good question. What does happen when you stop treading water? Either you sink or you float.

This woman felt as if she had spent most of her life treading water because she was fighting something inside herself. Some people do that all the time. They fight against fear of death, fear of being "found out", fear of losing their minds, fear of realizing they are not the people they should be, fear of becoming who they are. But as this woman was thrashing against the water, deep down she knew she would lose the fight.

So when I suggested that she stop treading water, I realized the difference between those who sink and those who float. The very moment you give up struggling with the water, if you're going to float, you have to put your faith in the water -- just lie back and let it hold you up.

--Daniel Gottlieb, in *Letters to Sam*

14. A Walk in the Rain

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

As the story goes, I was walking through the rain on a cold Autumn evening in Oxford. The sky was getting dark; I was wrapped up warm in my new coat. And suddenly and without warning, the search for something more apparently fell away, and with it all separation and loneliness.

And with the death of separation, I was everything that arose: I was the darkening sky, I was the middle aged man walking his golden retriever, I was the little old lady hobbling along in her waterproofs. I was the ducks, the swans, the geese, the funny looking bird with the red streak on its forehead. I was the trees in all their autumnal glory, I was the sludge sticking to my feet, I was my body, all of it, arms and legs and torso and face and hands and feet and neck and hair and genitals, the whole damn lot. I was the raindrops falling on my head (although it was not my head, I did not own it, but it was undeniably there, and so to call it "my head" is as good as anything). I was the splish-splash of water on the ground, I was the water collecting into puddles, I was the water swelling the pond until it looked fit to burst its banks, I was the trees soaked by water, I was my coat soaked by water, I was the water soaking everything, I was everything being soaked, I was the water soaking itself.

And everything that for so long had seemed so ordinary had suddenly become so extraordinary, and I wondered if, in fact, it hadn't been this way all along: that perhaps for my whole life it had been this way, so utterly alive, so clear, so vibrant. Perhaps in my lifelong quest to reach the spectacular and the dramatic, I had missed the ordinary, and with it, and through it, and in it, the utterly extraordinary.

And the utterly extraordinary on this day was awash with rain, and I was not separate from any of it, that is to say, I was not there at all. As the old Zen master had said upon hearing the sound of the bell ringing, "there was no I, and no bell, just the ringing", so it was on this day: there was no "I" experiencing this clarity, there was only the clarity, only the utterly obvious presenting itself in each and every moment.

Of course, I had no way of knowing any of this at the time. At the time, thought was not there to claim any of this as an "experience". There was just what was happening, but no way of knowing it. The words came later.

And there was an all-pervading feeling that everything was okay with the world, there was an equanimity and a sense of peace which seemed to underlie everything there was; it was as though everything was simply a manifestation of this peace, as if nothing existed apart from peace, in its infinite guises. And I was the peace, and the duck over there was it too, and the wrinkly old lady still waddling along was the peace, and the peace was all around, everything just vibrated with it, this grace, this presence that was utterly unconditional and free, this overwhelming love that seemed to be the very essence of the world, the very reason for it, the Alpha and the Omega of it all.

--Paul Foster, in '[Beyond Awakening](#)'

15. Letter on the Kitchen Table

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Dear Ego,

I'm breaking up with you. No more circular discussions, no more eleventh hour recriminations. We're through.

This is not an emotional decision. Actually, it doesn't feel like a decision at all. We've been drifting apart for some time now, and more than anything I'm just acknowledging the distance between us. Whatever kept us together just isn't there

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anymore.

It won't do you any good to turn on the charm. Don't bother trying to fill my head with thoughts about how great we are together or how lost I'll be without you. You no longer have that kind of power over me. I see right through you now. I look, and there's nothing there.

It took me a long time to figure you out. Like so many unhappy couples I know, we drifted into our own little world and for the longest time I mistook it for reality. If you asked me to pinpoint the day this shift occurred, I couldn't, because it happened so long ago. But I vaguely remember what life was like before I met you. Actually, it's more a feeling than a memory, a feeling of freedom. Not an "I-have-a-whole-weekend-in-front-of-me-with-no-plans" kind of freedom, but something different altogether. It's more a sense of spaciousness, the kind children must feel before their heads become filled with worldly nonsense, before their sense of wonder contracts, before they begin to imitate the behavior of the troubled souls around them.

I can feel that sense of spaciousness right now when I close my eyes and forget that I have a body. It's like I'm not even a person anymore, I'm just this space that goes on forever.

I don't expect any of this makes sense to you. It never has before. You always have to define things, slot them into categories. But this isn't something that is easily explained. It's beyond words— I know, I know, you hate it when I talk like this, when I challenge your rigid view of things. You slip into this really pouty silence.

In the old days I misinterpreted that silence. I felt wrong, even a little crazy, for expressing myself. Now that silence tells me something totally different. It tells me that I threaten you. And it tells me something else, something really important. It tells me that I'm capable of living on my own. When your voice dies away, my voice appears. It's just there. It's probably been there the whole the time, but you were always drowning it out. It's a clear voice. And strong. I'm going to be just fine without you.

My friends think I'm crazy. They wonder what I'm going to do without you. They've seen what happens when we're together, the crazy highs and lows, the bizarre behavior, but they still question my decision. This really throws me until I remind myself what it was like to live in an unhealthy relationship. The worst part is you don't think it's unhealthy. You're convinced that it's perfectly okay to be miserable all the time. Month after month, year after year, you think – it'll get better. We'll work this out. But it doesn't get better. It can't. Sick relationships like ours don't get better, they just get sicker.

It's a small world and no doubt we'll be running into each other a bunch. I guess it's more like "see you around" than it is "goodbye". As long as we maintain a proper distance, we'll be fine. I need to be far enough away from you to hear my own voice. I actually wouldn't mind your company once in a while, like when I'm fixing the sink or packing for a trip. We've always gotten along pretty well in those situations. But this time around, you'll need an invitation. You can't just come barging in. You don't live here anymore.

Please pack up your stuff and leave your key on the table. When I come home later, all I want to hear is the sound of you being gone. I'm going to lose myself in the spacious silence, forget where I begin and end. You said something to me once. You said I'd be nothing without you. Remember? Well, I want to end this on a positive note by telling you that you were right. Without you, I am nothing. Nothing at all. If it weren't for all the hell I went through because of you, I'd have never arrived at that momentous conclusion. So thank you, even if you have no clue about what I just said.

Love always,

John Ptacek

16. Be Not A Beggar

Reprinted from InnerNet Weekly via www.iJourney.org.

Ask nothing; want nothing in return. Give what you have to give; it will come back to you — but do not think of that now, it will come back multiplied a thousandfold — but the attention must not be on that. Yet have the power to give: give, and there it ends.

Learn that the whole of life is giving, that nature will force you to give. So, give willingly. Sooner or later you will have to give up. You come into life to accumulate. With clenched hands, you want to take. But nature puts a hand on your throat and makes your hands open. Whether you will it or not, you have to give. The moment you say, "I will not", the blow comes; you are hurt.

None is there that will not be compelled, in the long run, to give up everything. And the more one struggles against this law, the more miserable one feels. It is because we dare not give, because we are not resigned enough to accede to this grand demand of nature, that we are miserable. The forest is gone, but we get heat in return. The sun is taking up water from the ocean, to return it in showers. You are a machine for taking and giving: you take, in order to give.

Ask, therefore, nothing in return; but the more you give, the more will come to you. The quicker you can empty the air out of this room, the quicker it will be filled up by the external air; and if you close all the doors and every aperture, that which is within will remain, but that which is outside will never come in, and that which is within will stagnate, degenerate, and become poisoned. A river is continually emptying itself into the ocean and is continually filling up again. Bar not the exit into the ocean. The moment you do that, death seizes you.

Be, therefore, not a beggar; be unattached.

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

17. A Reason to Celebrate

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Numbly, I left my husband, Marty, at the hospital where I had been visiting two of my children and headed for the grocery store. Since it was eleven p.m., I drove to the only store I knew was open twenty-four hours a day. I turned my car motor off and rested my head against the seat.

What a day, I thought to myself. With two of my young children in the hospital, and a third waiting at Grandma's, I was truly spread thin. Today I had actually passed the infant CPR exam required before I could take eight-week-old Joel home from the hospital. *Would I remember how to perform CPR in a moment of crisis?* A cold chill ran down my spine as I debated my answer.

Exhausted, I reached for my grocery list that resembled more of a scientific equation than the food for the week. For the past several days, I'd been learning the facts about juvenile diabetes and trying to accept Jenna, my six-year-old daughter's, diagnosis. In addition to the CPR exam I'd spent the day reviewing how to test Jenna's blood and give her insulin shots. Now I was buying the needed food to balance the insulin that would sustain Jenna's life.

"Let's go, Janet," I mumbled to myself while sliding out of the car. "Tomorrow is the big day! Both kids are coming home from the hospital. ... It didn't take long before my mumbling turned into a prayer.

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"God, I am soooo scared! What if I make a mistake and give Jenna too much insulin, or what if I measure her food wrong, or what if she does the unmentionable—and sneaks a treat? And what about Joel's apnea monitor? What if it goes off? What if he turns blue and I panic? What if? Oh, the consequences are certain to be great!"

With a shiver, my own thoughts startled me. Quickly, I tried to redirect my mind away from the what ifs. Like a child doing an errand she wasn't up for, I grabbed my purse, locked the car, and found my way inside the store. The layout of the store was different than what I was used to. Uncertain where to find what I needed, I decided to walk up and down each aisle.

Soon I was holding a box of cereal, reading the label, trying to figure out the carbohydrate count and sugar content. *"Would three-fourths a cup of cereal fill Jenna up?"* Not finding any "sugar free" cereal, I grabbed a box of Kellogg's Corn Flakes and continued shopping. Pausing, I turned back. *Do I still buy Fruit Loops for Jason?* I hadn't even thought how Jenna's diagnosis might affect Jason, my typical four-year-old. *Is it okay if he has a box of Fruit Loops while Jenna eats Kellogg's Corn Flakes?"*

Eventually I walked down the canned fruit and juice aisle. *Yes, I need apple juice, but, how much? Just how often will Jenna's sugar "go low" so she will need this lifesaving can of juice? Will a six-year-old actually know when her blood sugar is dropping? What if...?* I began to ask myself again.

I held the can of apple juice and began to read the label. *Jenna will need fifteen carbohydrates of juice when her sugar drops. But this can has thirty-two.* Immediately I could see my hand begin to tremble. I tried to steady the can and reread the label when I felt tears leave my eyes and make their way down the sides of my face. Not knowing what to do, I grabbed a couple six-packs of apple juice and placed them in my cart. Frustrated by feelings of total inadequacy, I crumpled up my grocery list, covered my face in my hands and cried.

"Honey, are you all right?" I heard a gentle voice ask. I had been so engrossed in my own thoughts that I hadn't even noticed the woman who was shopping along side of me. Suddenly I felt her hand as she reached towards me and rested it upon my shoulder. "Are you all right? Honey, are you a little short of cash? Why don't you just let me...?"

I slowly dropped my hands from my face and looked into the eyes of the silvery haired woman who waited for my answer. "Oh, no, thank you ma'am." I said while wiping my tears, trying to gather my composure. "I have enough money."

"Well, Honey, what is it then?" she persisted.

"It's just that I'm kind of overwhelmed. I'm here shopping for groceries so that I can bring my children home from the hospital tomorrow."

"Home from the hospital! What a celebration that shall be. Why, you should have a party!"

Within minutes this stranger had befriended me. She took my crumpled up grocery list, smoothed it out, and became my personal shopper. She stayed by my side until each item on my list was checked off. She even walked me to my car helping me as I placed the groceries in my trunk. Then with a hug and a smile, she sent me on my way.

It was shortly after midnight, while lugging the groceries into my house, that I realized the lesson this woman had taught me. "My kids are coming home from the hospital!" I shouted with joy. "Joel is off life support and functioning on a monitor. Jenna and I can learn how to manage her diabetes and give her shots properly. What a reason to celebrate." I giggled to myself. "I have a reason to celebrate!" I shouted to my empty house.

"Why you should have a party," the woman had exclaimed.

And a party there will be!

18. A Young Girl with A Big Heart and an Old Man with A Lot of Flowers

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

When I was very young (about ten or eleven years old), I heard that our neighbor, a retired physician, had lost his wife after a long illness. He was such a dear soul, and he had the most spectacular gardens in his backyard. The whole neighborhood could see his glorious flowers from the street. The backyard was a profusion of daisies and roses, snapdragons and lilies, hyacinths and columbines. I used to think there wasn't a flower in the world that he didn't grow. Our family didn't know the doctor. The extent of our interaction resided in a wave hello as we would walk past his house on the way to the city park. He only lived two houses across the street from us, but it might as well have been a full block away, for how little we knew him.

It made me sad that his wife had died and I was sure he was lonely, because the few times I saw him on the block, he looked sad. So I decided to take it upon myself to be the one to make him smile. After school, I would go over to his house and chat with him while he worked in his backyard. The way he told me all about his flowers, you could tell gardening was his joy. One day it was raining hard and he wasn't outside, so with the boldness of youth, I knocked on his front door. When he answered it, I just strolled right in, like I owned the place. His stairway had a circular landing and then a single step down to the main floor into the living room. It was a perfect stage.

So, I would sing and dance every single song I knew (bear in mind that my ballet teacher had told me I had the grace of an elephant), and he would applaud furiously and yell, "bravo! bravo!" when I was done. *Looking back as an adult, he may have been cheering the fact that this torture was nearly ending! ;)* Then, an hour later, I would go home for dinner.

This continued for what must have been weeks, because school was finally out, and it was almost Easter when his wife had died. After every performance, I took a deep bow (sometimes several) while he applauded like crazy. And when the weather was sunny and we could go back to his garden, I would often sing while we worked. Sometimes I could hear him humming and it would make me smile, because you can't hum and be sad.

One day, my mother heard a knock at the door. When she opened it, the retired doctor was standing there with an HUGE armload of cut flowers-- all from his garden. He said he wanted to thank her for letting me keep him company after the death of his wife. She was speechless at the variety and amount of flowers he had brought in gratitude. There were so many flowers that she filled every vase we had, and all three floors of the house had fresh flowers in every room.

To this day, gardening has become my joy and passion as well. I credit him with instilling that in me at an impressionable age. He was a dear and gentle man, and I imagine that when he retired, he had scores of patients who begged him not to go.

19. A Spontaneous Opportunity to Truly Teach My Children About Generosity

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

My kids and I were heading into the superstore over the weekend. On the way, we spotted a man wrapped in a blanket and holding a sign that said, "Lost my job. Family to Feed".

At this store, a sight like this is not a normal occurrence. It was obvious the man was embarrassed, but desperate. My 10-year-old noticed him commented on how bad it must be to have to stand outside in the cold wind.

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While we were in the store, I asked each of the kids (I have seven :) to pick something they thought our 'friend' outside would appreciate. They picked a couple apples, a package of shrimp cocktail, a sandwich, some cheese and a bottle of juice.

Then my 17-year-old asked, "Can we get him a gift card?"

I thought about it. We were low on cash ourselves, but... well, sometimes giving from our 'need' instead of our 'abundance' is just what we need to do!

We talked about the fact that we might have to do away with some of the things we were going to buy if we bought a gift card. All the kids piped in.

"That's ok!"

"I'll eat oatmeal all this week!"

And on-and-on, each child declaring something they could do away with for the week.

In their eagerness, they said, "Hurry mom! Let's get out there to give him his stuff before he gets too cold and leaves."

We quickly checked out, with the items he could eat at the moment, and a gift card for the store. At the suggestion of my 16-year-old, we also grabbed a hot cup of coffee, then drove to the end of the parking lot, where our 'friend' was holding his sign.

We handed him the coffee and the bag of food. He lit up and thanked us with watery eyes. When I handed him the gift card and said he could use it for whatever his family might need, he burst into tears, obviously overwhelmed and grateful.

Though I wished we could have done more, I can't help but think about how this experience has been such a wonderful opportunity for our family. The impact of how it feels to help someone has rippled through them all-- they cannot stop talking about it, and for four days now have been 'scouting' for others we can help!

Things would have played out so differently if I had simply said, "No, we really don't have money to give more," or something to that effect. Stepping out definitely not only helped a brother in need, it also gave my kids the sweet taste of helping others.

20. Just Decide, Friend

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

I was waiting to pick up a friend at the airport when I had one of those life changing experiences, the kind that you sometimes hear other people talk about, the kind that sneaks up on you unexpectedly. This one occurred a mere two feet away from me.

As I was straining to locate my friend amongst the line of passengers exiting the airport, I noticed a man coming towards me carrying two light bags. He stopped right next to me to greet his family.

First he motioned to his youngest son (maybe 6 years old) as he laid down his bags. He crouched down and they gave each other a long, loving hug. As they separated enough to look in each other's face, I heard the father say, "Its too good to see you, son I missed you so much!" His son smiled somewhat shyly, averted his eyes and replied softly, "Me too dad!" Then the man stood up and gazed in the eyes of his oldest son (maybe 9 or 10 years old) and while cupping his son's face in his hands said, " You are already quite the young man. I love you very much." They too shared a very loving and tender hug.

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While this was happening a baby girl was squirming excitedly in her mother's arms, never once taking her little eyes off the wonderful sight of her returning father. The man said "Hi, baby girl!" as he gently took the child from her mother. He kissed her face all over and then held her close to her chest while rocking her from side to side. The little girl instantly relaxed and simply laid her head on his shoulder, motionless in pure contentment.

After several moments, he handed his daughter to his eldest son and declared, "I have saved the best until last!" and proceeded to give his wife, the most loving kiss I ever remember seeing.

He gazed into her eyes for several seconds and then silently mouthed "I love you so much." They started looking into each others eyes, beaming big smiles at one another, while holding both hands. For an instant they reminded me of newlyweds, but I knew by the age of their kids that they couldn't possibly be.

I puzzled about it for a moment then realized how totally engrossed I was in this wonderful display of unconditional love not more than an arm's length away from me. I suddenly felt uncomfortable, as if I was invading something sacred, but was amazed to hear my own voice nervously ask, "Wow! How long have you two been married?" "We've been together 14 years in total and married for 12 of those." he replied, without breaking his gaze from his lovely wife's face. "Well then how long have you been away?" I asked. The man finally turned and looked at me, still beaming his smile, "Two whole days".

Two days?! I was stunned by the intensity of greeting, I had assumed he had been gone for at least several weeks - If not months. I know my expression betrayed me, I said almost offhandedly, hoping to end my intrusion with some semblance of grace, "I hope my marriage is still that passionate after 12 years!"

The man suddenly stopped smiling and looked straight into my eyes and with forcefulness that burned right into my soul, he said something that just left me a different person. He said, "Don't hope, friend, just decide!" Then he flashed me his wonderful smile again, shook my hand and said "God Bless!" With that he and his family turned and strode away together.

I was still watching that exceptional man and his special family walking away when my friend came up to me and asked, "What are you looking at?" Without hesitating, and with a curious sense of certainty, I replied, "My future!" "I wish I could be such a wonderful wife of such wonderful man."

21. Virtue Is The Only Shelter We Have In This World

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

The first thing I noticed about him was his intensity. When other people got up to take a break, he sat with such a sincere, unassumingly deep focus that I was immediately impressed.

The next time I noticed him was few days later. He happened to be in front of me as we walked down to the dining hall, and I caught a glimpse of his sweatshirt. The cuff of his sleeve was tattered and dirty, with a small hole in it. I instantly knew that he had no money, and that his intense search for truth had rendered a simplicity and faith that made the lack of funds not as worrisome as it would be for the rest of us. Still, I thought that if there was ever anyone to help, it would be someone of this type of intensity, where his answers might reap dividends to help many others as he deepened his quest. I resolved that I was going to help him, but I didn't know how yet.

You're not supposed to notice other people at these meditation retreats so you can focus more on noticing yourself, but old habits die hard :-)) and I tend to be a bad student of good advice.

After many days of absolute silence, I got my chance to speak to him. One of the first things he did was offer me a gift of a book :-)) I later learned that he knew the city he needed to go to next, but had no ride there. It was in my general direction, so I offered him a ride.

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In the car, I got to listen to his story. He was a restless kid in high school, unhappy with pettiness he experienced and the apparent shallowness of the life around him. Working at a coffee shop, he managed to save enough money to go to S. America, where he found a native healer and lived with him in the jungle for some time. Discovering that the healer didn't have the answers to the questions that troubled him, he returned to the US. He entered into a period of disillusionment that led him to leave home as a young 19 year old. He headed west on a Greyhound, buying a ticket for as far as his \$80 savings could take him. Arriving penniless and without knowing a soul where he was let off, his story really began to get interesting.

Within minutes of his arrival, he met a good hearted man who passed on \$20 without being asked for it--enough for a meal and another bus ticket. His journey continued westward, each time seemingly encountering kind strangers who assisted selflessly with a few dollars here and there. Sometimes a sandwich, or a place to stay, a ride, a bit of advice, or even a kind word sustained him and gave him the strength for the next steps. There were some tough times too-- nights without a place to sleep except under the stars, days without meals but full of a deeper hunger that went beyond the stomach. There were times of disillusionment, like when he was kicked out of a church where he felt called to pray, all because his clothes were a bit dirty. He was relatively clean shaven and never had the appearance of a bum, but rumbled and dirty clothing from several days without shelter is hard to hide.

Moments like these lead to a deeper disillusionment that at times had sparked a few experiments with drugs. This was the first time my instinct to help him had been questioned, so I probed further. After getting kicked out of the church, he sat on a bench outside and smoked some marijuana that a stranger had given him. Somewhere in the 'high' of that low, he realized that drugs were not the answer. Right then, he dug a hole on church property and buried his small marijuana pipe along with the remaining weed he had.

Still, my doubts had sprung up, damaging that original instinct of goodness from a few days earlier. I probed harder on how he processed the encounters with so many strangers who would often give him money, and he said that he would never ask for anything-- that these people wanted to give him money and so he accepted. That sounded ok, but I kept wondering if he would use money for drugs in another tough situation. Or that maybe someone else would help him with money, and I should keep mine for myself. I decided that I needed to test him before helping him. I just didn't know how yet.

His story continued, and he somehow ended up in west Texas, totally coincidentally at the home of a friend's father after leaving Delaware weeks (maybe months) earlier. It was one of the few opportunities he had to stay in touch with his mother back home. She was on the tail-end of a divorce with his father, and had lost her factory job, but was making ends meet by working a carwash and waitressing. On the call home, he learned that his grandmother's health was shaky, and was flooded with the love and affection he felt for his family's kindness. Relating the story to his host, along with his intense feeling of wanting to help, the friend's father paid for his journey back to Delaware, just as he himself realized that he never needed to leave in the first place.

His conclusion after floating on the kindness of strangers on a 2000 mile journey was that you can't run away from your problems, because you'll always end up right back where you started :-)

Back at home, he took odd jobs to help support his mother. He stayed for perhaps a year and spent spare moments caring for his grandmother until her death. The questions and hunger remained, and had led him to Buddhist teachings during that year. His mother seemed to share many of his questions, and they too deepened their connection even more in the time that he was back. After his grandmother's death, and with his mother's blessings, he decided to explore some of what he had read in books a bit further. He left home again to attend his first 10-day silent meditation retreat in Massachusetts. That struck a cord and we went to another as soon as he could. After several more retreats in different parts of the country, he ended up volunteering at a monastery for weeks or maybe months on end. He hadn't felt necessarily called to be a monk and felt some internal difference at that monastery, so he left.

And so there he was, after eight 10-day silent meditation retreats and some time at a monastery, in my car heading north. I let him use my cell phone to call his mother. He was sensitive about using my minutes even though they were free on the weekend, but in the small update and few words they shared, I could feel such tremendous love and mutual affection. She was still scraping by with her two low-paying jobs, but asked him if he needed money. He had \$3 in his wallet, but he declined, feeling that she would need the cash more than him. He just wanted to let her know that he was doing ok, and that he loved her.

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There was a certain monk living in the city where we were headed that he had read about. I happened to know this monk, and offered to introduce him, which he happily accepted. First we had to eat though, and that would give me my first chance to test him. I took him to a rather noisy sandwich place with a few friends, knowing full well that he only had \$3 in his pocket. He asked if they took ATM cards, and they did, so he ordered the cheapest sandwich on the menu at \$5.75. I found out that his mother had told him that there he had \$9 in his bank account, and I had just lead him into spending 2/3rd of it on a meal. Still, I didn't mind this particular test even though it left me short of truly understanding what he felt.

We discovered that neither of us had a proclivity for a noisy cafe after 10 days of silence, and decided to eat our sandwiches elsewhere. Finishing our meals, I took him to the monastery to meet the monk I had promised to introduce him to. The monk was busy, but graciously gave us some of his precious time, deeply touching my guest.

Somehow, I didn't realize that the place he needed to go was another 2-hour drive from where we were. I told him that I couldn't take him that far, but that I could take him to the local train station where he could ride back to the airport and then catch a bus to the town he was headed. The train ride would be about \$3 and the bus ticket would be at least \$10. As we're driving to the train station, he asks if he can use my cell phone again. He calls his mother, and asks if she can put \$20 into his bank account a few moments before we park. That's when I realized how I would test him. We find our parking spot, and I open my trunk to get his bag out. It was an unseasonably warm April afternoon, and I reach past his bag to my own to pull out a very nice sweater.

"Many years ago on my birthday, my sister gave me this sweater. The label has her initials embroidered into it," I say, showing him the label.

"During my own journeys, my family has been an incredible support to me. I couldn't have done much without them, particularly my sister who has taken care of so many small things that might have been impossible from overseas." He nods and smiles.

"To me, this sweater is a symbol of that love and support that has carried me so far. As you continue on your journey, I felt it might be a wonderful reminder to you in tough times. But it's a warm day, so I want to offer you a choice. You can either have this sweater, which is a symbol of love and protection, or you can have 20 dollars," I say as I pull out a bill.

"Which would you like?" I ask, knowing full well that he doesn't have the money for his next steps, and that his mother may or may not be able to put money into his account in time for tonight's bus to his destination.

"I'd be honored to carry the sweater," came his reply.

"Are you sure? It's quite warm right now," I pressed.

"Are you kidding? The sweater would mean so much. And I'm always a little cold at night. I definitely choose the sweater."

How many of us would make the same decision in his situation?

I had just been engaged a few weeks earlier, and some uncle had given me a \$100 bill. I put away the \$20 bill and pull the \$100 out of my wallet.

"I wanted to test your faith and your trust in the path you've chosen. But you've reminded me that virtue is the only shelter we have in the world. So I want to give you the sweater, and some money too."

He smiled and welled up just a little bit. We unloaded his bag, and I got back in my car. He walked up to my window and said Thank You.

We exchanged some parting words and then I drove off.

I often wondered what happened to him. Until a few weeks ago. I got an email, and after more travels, and more meditation retreats, he found a monastery that fit with him, and has become a monk-in-training. He even sent a photo of himself with shaven head and robes. That made me feel like the answers he finds on his own path will lighten the suffering for so many others.

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

I'm not rich in the traditional sense, but every time I feel poor, I think about the best \$100 I ever spent. And I smile knowing that my sister's gift of a sweater on my birthday years ago ended up in the best possible place.

22. Meeting Michael

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

I was sitting at my desk today, looking out the window. I saw an old homeless man crossing the street, carrying a suitcase.

I remembered the many times I had looked on from afar, feeling sorry for the homeless but doing nothing. I do give money to homeless people when I walk by, but never really interact with them, beside a smile.

I came across this website and all your stories inspired me so much to get more involved. Sometimes we think about compassion but we push it into the deep corners of our heart because we're too busy with life, too shy, or too afraid of strangers. But all it takes is a little awakening from like-minded people like you!

I did what I never thought I could as I'm an introvert and afraid of strangers. I burst out the front door and ran after the old man. When I reached him I asked him if I could buy him lunch. He looked surprised, but accepted readily, warning me he had big appetite!

I was shaking with nervousness and excitement all at the same time. We went to a Vietnamese restaurant. I told the waiter to give the guy whatever he wanted and I would pay for it.

I sat down for a moment asking the old man how he was doing. He told me he was sleeping behind the court house near my work because it is warmer there. I promised him I would give him a few jackets to keep him warm. Then he asked me something I did not expect. He asked if he could give me something!

I told him that I didn't buy him lunch to get something in return. But he insisted it was nothing much and he wanted me to have it. He laid some inexpensive jewellery on the table and, unable to refuse, I asked him to pick something out for me because that would be a lot more meaningful. He chose an owl necklace, something someone else had given him.

Since I had run out the office without telling my boss I couldn't stay long. I apologized for not able to spend time with him and promised I would sit down with him for lunch next time and chat more.

Before I left he asked for my name which is "Mai" pronounced as "my" in English. Then to my delight, he told me his name was "Myyyyyy-chael" (Michael.)

I did not feel like I gave him anything much - but felt he gave me more than I could have asked for. Of all the men who ever said I was beautiful Michael's compliment made me feel the most blessed. He was the new friend who helped me conquer my shyness and inspired me to be more proactively kind to others.

23. The Origin of the Word "Kind"

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Have you ever wondered why we make such a big deal about living kindly? For a lot of us it's just innate, feels like the right thing to do. But, that little voice in my head warned me one night, "Don't take kindness for granted—find out why!" So I did, and made an exciting discovery in the process.

What prompted me to make this quest for kindness was realizing in a special moment of wonder where I was standing—upon parched earth that has become the condition called drought where I live in Colorado. I looked up and felt dwarfed by the titanic spruces and pines and aspens that surround my house. They didn't seem the least bit phased by the fact that a spark or bolt of lightning could sentence their lives to a furious death.

I thought about how unkind and cruel nature can be. Then I wondered; is it nature that's so unkind or just I who doesn't really understand? It occurred to me that nature isn't punishing us or seeking retribution for how we have mistreated the environment, but is simply out of balance from all we have taken and not given back. It's karmic.

While these thoughts of nature swirled in my head, I decided to revisit the one book that holds so many truths for me—the dictionary. Seems odd, doesn't it? The dictionary?? You see, I learned a long time ago that every word, like people, has a story. Every word started somewhere in time for reasons that are often buried in the dust of history unrecalled.

So there it was, like discovering an ancestor I never realized before that I was related to. The word "kind" is one of the oldest in the English language, going back some time before the year 900. It originally meant "nature." Kind = nature! It was like peeling back my skull and exposing my brain to the sun. Never before had I so clearly seen that kindness is natural, of nature.

When we show kindness, especially in the face of cruelty, we are wielding the greatest power in the universe—our groundedness in nature. Being kind to unkind others does two things: it keeps us grounded in our essence and it serves as a reminder to the unkind to return to theirs. It is unnatural to show cruelty and meanness. It causes drought within human hearts and our world.

The psychologist Blair Justice once wrote, "Letting ourselves feel that sense of wonder that surrounds us every single minute is what elevates our hearts beyond a mechanical pump and turns them into instruments of love and kindness." He obviously "gets" it. Return to kindness and replenish your heart. That is our nature. (As Paul Harvey so famously quoted, "Now you know the rest of the story." Rest in peace, Paul.)

24. Taking Off My Shoes

Reprinted from www.HelpOthers.org.

Today was a rainy day and I was walking down the street feeling blessed. I felt like doing something kind for someone else, almost as if I was trying to spread the abundance of love I was receiving.

I suddenly saw this teenage girl dressed in tattered clothes, getting soaked and without any footwear. She was making her way through the dirty garbage and sewers, trying to pick something that would be of use.

I immediately told her to wait for me there as I ran home to get her something. Spontaneously, I took off my shoes, which I really love, wrapped them up in a plastic cover and gave it to the teenage girl on the street.

The girl looked shocked as if she is so not used to this kind of kindness. She almost couldn't believe it.

A distinguished musician who lives down the street corner stopped his car to peer and smile when he saw what happened. The two watchmen who witnessed the little act chattered and gave me friendly looks.

(Today, I wore my dad's shoes, feeling grateful even if they were a bit large for my feet.)

It takes so little to help people sometimes, if we just let go of our possessions.

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25. Restoring the Diversity of Indigenous Agriculture

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

In an age where multinational agribusiness has casually stripped India of seed diversity, while creating dependence on its GMO seed products, Natabar Sarangi is on a mission to revitalize organic agriculture and reintroduce native rice varieties through seed banking. His fight is not only to repair the damage done to India's agricultural sector since the so-called "green revolution", it is to restore an ethic of sustainability and economic justice to farming. It is a struggle for the overall wellbeing of the nation. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3327>.

26. Danny and Annie

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

This StoryCorps video tells the greatest love story ever. Funny, touching, and incisive, Danny and Annie are unusually thoughtful and candid in expressing their affection -- from their very first date to the time of Danny's death. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3235>.

27. The Second Glance

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Have you ever cringed at the sight of a human being who is physically disfigured? David Roche, who was born with a facial disfigurement, spent years trying to hide from himself. At middle age, he discovered his inner beauty, his spirit and his strength, and he has dedicated his life to helping all people find the inner beauty within themselves and in others. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2419>.

28. Conspiracy of Love: Cory Brook's Commencement Speech

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Newark, New Jersey Mayor Cory Booker returns to Stanford University to deliver the 2012 commencement address. In these excerpts, he reminds graduates that their success is the product of a vast "conspiracy of love" and challenges all of us to engage in the conspiratorial caring that makes our society safe, strong, and ennobling. Join the conspiracy! And make change in your life! Start by giving this 30+ minute video your full attention. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3346>.

29. We Love You

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

You will never think one person can't make a difference after seeing this. A simple message of love in the midst of potential war goes viral, and makes a difference. This is a moving, inspiring call to action, one in which anyone can emulate with very little courage but with a lot of love. This is truly people to people communication. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3122>.

30. Giving Wings to Little Prisoners

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

2012 CNN Hero Pushpa Basnet found her calling when she was still a student in social work in Nepal. While visiting a women's prison as an assignment for one of her classes, she felt a tug on her shawl and a little girl smiled at her from behind bars - a child living with her mother in prison. That image haunted Pushpa until she graduated, and she started a daycare in the morning for children aged 2-4. A few years later, she started a residential home for the older children - those older than 6 - so that they could go to school and live "normal" lives while visiting their mothers on holidays. "My mission is to make sure that no child grows up behind prison walls," she says. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3265>.

31. Birth 2012 – Let's Co-Create A Global Birth Day

It's 3 minutes that powerfully inspires people to get involved in the movement to create an historic Birth Day celebration on December 22, 2012, that will connect 100 million in the service of birthing a new era for humanity! Many people have been brought to tears by the video. Follow this link to the video... <http://www.indiegogo.com/birth2012>.

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.

32. Spiritual Resources

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

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

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

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

33. 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.

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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.

34. 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.

35. 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>).

36. A Course in Miracles Study Groups

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>).

37. 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@servinyourjourney.com.

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

38. Serving Your Loved-Ones

Do you have a loved-one who is seriously ill, dying or who has recently died? If so, Spiritual Guidance extends a heart-felt offer to serve your loved ones. Many believe they are helpless in assisting their loved-ones during times of terminal illness and/or when they are dying. Many believe there is nothing that can be done to bring their loved-ones peace or to ease their suffering. Furthermore, many believe that after their loved-ones have died, there is nothing that can be done to continue guiding them to a peaceful passing and rebirth. This is not the case.

Spiritual Guidance is offering to extend the ancient Buddhist practice of 'Phowa' for your loved-ones to guide them to a peaceful passing and rebirth. If you are asking yourself, "If I or my loved-one is not Buddhist and/or does not believe in Buddhism or any form of God, is there any conflict?" The simple answer is 'no'. The Phowa practice invokes the 'truth' of compassion and love that crosses faith / spiritual traditions and beliefs.

If Spiritual Guidance can be of service to you in this way, please:

1. Email us a picture of your loved one (in a standard graphical format; for example: .jpeg, .gif, .pdf, etc.) to rmeagher@servinyourjourney.com.
2. Provide your loved-one's name (first name is all that is necessary) and their date of death (if they have died).

We will add your loved-one's picture to our 'Phowa' practice wall and pray for them daily.

If you have any questions, you are invited to follow up with us. Our contact information is at the very bottom of this e-newsletter.

Shanti,
Namaste,
Agape,

Rev. Robert Meagher
Spiritual Guidance

39. Supporting Spiritual Guidance

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

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

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

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

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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.

40. 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

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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

41. Annual Ontario Multi-Faith Council Educational Conference



Theme: "Facing the Questions in Spiritual and Religious Care"

Date: October 1 & 2, 2012 (overnight accommodation available starting September 30)

Place: Jackson 's Point Conference Centre, Jackson 's Point, ON

* Look for our invitation by e-mail and on line with more details in June * www.omc.ca/

42. The Wisdom of Enneagram: Moving Beyond Personality

The Wisdom of the Enneagram: Moving Beyond Personality with Russ Hudson.

Fri Oct 19 (7-9 pm) Sat Oct 20 and Sun Oct 21 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

At Cutten Fields, 190 College Ave E, Guelph; sponsored by April Burrows & April Snider.

Cost: *before June 30* \$300; after June 30 \$350 – includes lunch.

The Enneagram tells us about the relationship between our personality and our Essence. Individuals and business professionals welcome. Register online at: www.spiritualdirectionandcoaching.com

43. Developing Resilience For Times of Transition And Change

Developing Resilience for Times of Transition and Change with Anne Simmonds.

Sat Oct 27 to Sun Oct 28, 2012 – 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in downtown Toronto.

Addressing the experience of transition and loss (letting go of what is familiar and moving into the unknown) by exploring psychological and spiritual dimensions associated with significant life changes.

Cost: *before June 30* is \$225; after June 30 is \$260. Non-refundable registration deposit of \$75.

Register online at www.annesimmonds.ca or call Anne at 647-524-8377.

44. Good Grief! Befriending Loss in Ourselves And Others

Good Grief! Befriending Loss in Ourselves and Others with Anne Simmonds.

Sat Nov 17 to Sun Nov 18, 2012 – 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in downtown Toronto.

Personal or professional caregivers or those suffering a significant loss will benefit from this exploration of the challenges and opportunities of grief.

Cost: **before June 30** is \$225; after June 30 is \$260. Non-refundable registration deposit of \$75. Register online at www.annesimmonds.ca or call Anne at 647-524-8377.

45. Richard Harvey Course Program Summer / Fall 2012

“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.”



Richard Harvey*

Therapy & Spirituality

· Online Psycho-Spiritual Training for Therapists, Counselors, Guides, Spiritual Teachers, Healing Practitioners, and serious students ·

Course Program Summer/Fall 2012

The Assemblage Meditation

· *Spiritual practice for the 21st century* ·
6 Jun, 20 Jun, 4 Jul 2012

Spirituality in Middle Years & Old Age

· *Later life as spiritual fulfillment* ·
18 Jul, 1 Aug, 15 Aug 2012

The Seven Stages of Forgiveness

· *Beyond blame, guilt and punishment* ·
12 Sep, 26 Sep, 10 Oct 2012

Methods: Lecture-seminars, discussions and questions, one-to-one tuition, written assignments, experiential tasks and psycho-spiritual practices.

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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 tuition sessions with Richard.

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

Price: 250 euros per course.

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, past 'Pay for Workshops, Courses and Retreats' and 'Pay for Counseling and Psychotherapy' to 'Other Payment' and fill in: 125 (for amount) and the course title (for brief description), and then proceed making your payment online.

* Richard Harvey/Therapy & Spirituality offers an innovative, radical psycho-spiritual approach to the human predicament in the 21st century. Richard's three-stage model of human awakening addresses the issues of individuals and collective humanity.

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/>

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

and

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

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Richard Harvey

Mob: Spain (0034) 680 741 108

Tel: Spain (0034) 958 953 033

www.therapyandspirituality.com/

46. A Heart's Journey

...by Hilary Musgrave and Monica Brown

Thurs Nov 1 (7-9 p.m.)

Fri Nov 2 (9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.)

Sat Nov 3 (9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

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A weekend of Scripture-based imagery, story, ritual and music that speaks of our own heart's journey. Using music from Monica's adult collections, particularly *Holy Ground* and *A Heart's Journey*, together with Sacred Clowning, Monica and Hilary will draw participants into a reflective and intimate experience of the sacred.

Cost: \$135 includes meals
Accommodation and Thurs supper add \$100

Pre-register with deposit ASAP; full payment due Oct 5th.

Contact Providence Spirituality Centre in Kingston: 613-542-8826 or info@psck.org

47. Befriending Our Bodies

...with Anne Simmonds in downtown Toronto.

Sat Oct 13 to Sun Oct 14, 2012 – 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(second session) Mon Nov 5 to Tues Nov 6, 2012 – 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Supports optimum physical, emotional and spiritual health – designed for women who want to feel at home in their own skin and learn to access and trust this powerful source of inner guidance and wisdom. Limited to 12 participants.

Cost: **before June 30** is \$225; after June 30 is \$260. Non-refundable registration deposit of \$75.

Register online at www.annesimmonds.ca or call Anne at 647-524-8377.

48. Music that Makes Community XIX

Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Highly recommended by Carol Edgar, spiritual guide in Ottawa:

Mon. August 20, 2012 (8:30 a.m.) to Wed. August 22, 2012 (2 p.m.)
St Peter's Church, 49 Queen St N, Kitchener

Cost: \$275 before July 9; \$350 after July 9 with lunch included Mon and Tues.

Special group rates: info@allsaintscompany.org

Music that Makes Community is a practice of singing that has been central to music making for centuries; without the use of books or screens, this practice transcends labels like contemporary or traditional. Designed specifically for music directors, organists, clergy and lay leaders of the church who want to learn how to lead music effectively with "paperless" music. Practical and theoretical.

Register: www.allsaintscompany.org/event/music-makes-community-xix-ontario-canada

49. The Integral Life of Paradox – You Are More Than Your Personality

A two-day workshop at 27 Dunham Crescent, Aurora, Ontario with Joan Mitchell:

Fri Sept 7th (9:00 am to 10:00 pm)

Sat Sept 8 (9:00 am to 6:00 pm)

Cost: \$160 includes lunch both days – register before Aug 10

Reflecting on a different and deeper perspective than personality, we will explore the rewarding life that lies beyond personality, the concepts of personality and Essence, the nine (enneagram) soul motivations of consciousness in relation to personality type, finding Self by 'unlearning,' and inclusivity vs exclusivity.

Contact: Joan Mitchell at 905-841-6615 or jamit27@rogers.com or www.universalenneagram.ca.

50. The Priorities of Transcendence

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

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/courses.html#prioritiestranscendence>



The Center for Human Awakening

presents

The Priorities of Transcendence

· *What is absolutely necessary for human awakening?* ·

An Online Psycho-Spiritual Training Course

with **Richard Harvey**

For: Therapists, Counselors, Guides, Spiritual Teachers, Healing Practitioners, and Spiritual Seekers

“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 methodology 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

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

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 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.'

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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 or extend 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 ways 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: How We Awaken

The Mass Interest in Spirituality
Dilettantism
Three Levels of Spiritual Engagement
Beginning with Faith
Opening and Cracking
Discovering the Guide or Teacher
A New Model of Acceptance

Lecture-Seminar Two: How We Open Our Hearts

Many Roads to the Divine
Commitment, Energy and Resolve
Capacity and Destiny
Awareness-Acceptance-Change
Surrender and Grace
Wholeness
The Flowering of the Personality

Lecture-Seminar Two: How We Invite Transcendence

Death and Eternity
Being and Purpose
The Heart Center
The World of Two
Qualities of Compassion
The Ego in Service
The Priorities of Transcendence

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

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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 Skype 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

16.00 Students' questions which lead to discussion and sharing, focusing on the lecture material

16.30 Students' questions, concerning their own inner work or healing practice

16.55 Students will be asked for their last thoughts on the session, followed by a minute of silent attunement together

17.00 The session ends

After the lecture-seminar: Richard will send out written assignments, experiential tasks and psycho-spiritual practices to the group as a whole; possibly in individual cases specific encouragements and suggestions

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

Dates:

Lecture-Seminar One: 1 Aug

Lecture-Seminar Two: 8 Aug

Lecture-Seminar Three: 15 Aug

Times: 15.30-17.00 Central European Time Zone (CET)

One-to-one Skype sessions with Richard – dates to be arranged with individual students.

Price: 250 euros. Two places are made available at a reduced cost to sincere students who are unable to afford the full price.

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 select "course", the course title and 125 (for amount, unless you have agreed a lesser amount) and proceed making your payment online. 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 select "course", the course title and 125 (for amount, unless you have agreed a lesser amount) and proceed making your payment online.

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, select "Course or Workshop", for brief description "Priorities" will suffice, enter the amount of your payment and then proceed making your payment online.

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 select "course", the course title and 125 (for amount, unless you have agreed a lesser amount) and proceed making your payment online.

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PLEASE NOTE: 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 (MBS) or 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>

FURTHER RESOURCES:

WEBSITE

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

SOCIAL MEDIA

<http://es.linkedin.com/pub/richard-harvey/25/261/42>

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

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

Twitter: @RichardHarvey7

BIO

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

Also join Richard on the **Therapy & Spirituality** Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Therapy-and-Spirituality/138888839521420> for more photos, writings, workshops, courses, book details, articles, training, individual and couples sessions, supervision, retreats, upcoming radio shows, appearances, public talks, group events, poems, bio, booking details, music, questions & answers, travel details, free downloads, video talks, spiritual teaching and latest news...

... and via Richard Harvey/ Therapy & Spirituality Newsletter

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

Spiritual Guidance

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

Spiritual Guidance

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