

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



Never Underestimate the Value of A Kind Gesture

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

... Aesop

Last month I was grateful to celebrate my 48th birthday. That I have lived 48 years is a blessing in itself, but the milestone of my birthday paled in comparison to the deluge of kindness that was shown to me on that day.

Many hours before the day actual day struck March 17th, birthday wishes started to flow in from around the world. On the day itself, dozens, perhaps hundreds, more kept flowing in. All seemingly, small, little gestures of thoughtful, caring and kind well wishes. But as they kept flowing in—too many to respond to each one individually, although I responded to more than 100—the totality of those individual, little gestures started to come into focus.

We so often take for granted a kind, little gesture—not only the affect and effect of receiving, but also the same in giving. We too often stop to thank people for seemingly, small, little gestures of kindness directed toward us without understanding what we are doing. For example, having someone open a door for us; or someone giving up their space in line to allow us to go ahead. We may say thank you for these gestures, but we barely take the time to stop, look the person in the eye, and connect with them on a soul level. We too often rush ahead in our hurried lives momentarily grateful that we have gained a few precious seconds in our unquenchable-thirst for efficiency and our illusionary quest to 'get ahead of the game' and 'beat the clock'.



And the same holds true for offering a kind gesture to someone. We may think we are sending a simple, little birthday wish. We may think all we are doing is being kind and opening a door for someone. But something far more significant and meaningful may be happening in these simple, little gestures—both for the giver and receiver.

For the giver, you have stopped, for just a moment, pulling yourself out of your self-aggrandized sense of self and putting someone else before you. You have realized, if only for a moment, you are *not* the only person that walks this earth and that all that life has to offer is also comprised of these moments to give of ourselves, truly, completely and freely.

For the receiver of these small, little gestures are capable of nothing short of changing and/or saving lives. The piece of inspirational fiction below, by John W. Schlatteris, is a perfect example...

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on. As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him.

He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes. My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks." They really should get lives.

"He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.

I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play a little football with my friends. He said yes. We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books. Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends.

When we were seniors we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak Graduation day. I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him. Boy, sometimes I was jealous! Today was one of those days.

I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!" He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began... "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends...I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life. For better or for worse.

God puts us all in each other's lives to impact one another in some way. Look for God in others.

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What opportunities are there for you to receive and give kindness today? You may just be changing and/or saving the lives of someone—including yourself.

Shanti, Namaste, Agapé,

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

2. Poem

The Vigil

Don't go to sleep one night.
What you most want will come to you then.
Warmed by a sun inside, you'll see wonders.

Tonight, don't put your head down.
Be tough, and strength will come.
That which adoration adores
appears at night. Those asleep
may miss it. One night Moses stayed awake
and asked, and saw a light in a tree.

Then he walked at night for ten years,
until finally he saw the whole tree
illuminated. Muhammad rode his horse
through the night sky. The day is for work.
The night for love. Don't let someone
bewitch you. Some people sleep at night.

But not lovers. They sit in the dark
and talk to God, who told David,
*Those who sleep all night every night
and claim to be connected to us, they lie.*

Lovers can't sleep when they feel the privacy
of the beloved all around them. Someone
who's thirsty may sleep for a little while,
but he or she will dream of water, a full jar
beside a creek, or the spiritual water you get
from another person. All night, listen
to the conversation. Stay up.
This moment is all there is.

Death will take it away soon enough.
You'll be gone, and this earth will be left
without a sweetheart, nothing but weeks
growing inside thorns.

I'm through. Read the rest of this poem
in the dark tonight.

Do I have a head? And feet?

Shams, so loved by Tiabrizians, I close my lips.
I wait for you to come and open them.

Jelaluddin Rumi

3. Quote or Question

"The Beauty of the Mountain is hidden for all those who try to discover it from the top, supposing that, one way or another, one can reach this place directly. The Beauty of the Mountain reveals only to those who climbed it." -- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

4. This Month's Heart and Soul Picks

Each month I am blessed and honored to co-create this spirit-filled e-newsletter for a growing community of heart-centred people around the world. I am grateful to receive a cornucopia of content for this e-newsletter, and I read all of it. Sometimes, there are a few e-newsletter items that, on any given month, speak to me more than others and that I invite you to take a moment to explore for yourself. Below are this month's 'Heart and Soul Picks'.

11. The following 'Good News Of The Day' stories...

Nipun Mehta gave his first public talk at a monastery. He was 25 years old and the subject was "The Spirit of Service" At the time Nipun was just a few years into running ServiceSpace, a non-profit whose global projects now touch millions and are designed to spark generosity and inner transformation. In this debut talk Nipun dives headfirst into the core of what selfless service is about. With compelling clarity he offers up a wealth of stories, insights and reflections, giving us a glimpse of the vast potential we each have to be of service in this world. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/662/the-spirit-of-service-nipun-mehta/>

Compassion moves us to care for the suffering of others and enables us to live cooperatively with each other. Yet, in this world of information overload and constant connection, we risk being overwhelmed by our emotional response to the suffering of others. Fearing exhaustion, we turn off our compassion. However, although many of us assume that we only have so much compassion to spare, the developing research on compassion says that we can cultivate and sustain our compassion to build our capacity to alleviate suffering. Read on to learn more.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/601/how-to-increase-your-compassion-bandwidth-c-daryl-cameron/>

Be The Change: Is there a service opportunity you have been avoiding because you fear it will weigh too heavily on your heart? You are not alone. Challenge yourself to dig deep into your core of love and consider engaging your whole heart in that service activity, being mindful of the positive effect your actions have and why that service is important to you.

Our emotions, beliefs, and ideals are constantly changing, and most cells in our bodies are completely renewed every seven years. How, then, do we know who "we" are? Over the past ten years, the emerging field of experimental philosophy has examined this paradox, along with its many related questions about morality, happiness, love, and how to live. In this fascinating video, Yale University professor and experimental philosopher Joshua Knobe "takes us through some mind-bending, soul-

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deconstructing thought experiments that push our notions of the self to the limit and past it, into a new understanding of our basic existential anchor." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/665/the-nature-of-the-self-maria-popova/> **Be The Change:** How has who you are today changed from who you were five years ago? Practice keeping in mind the transient nature of the self so that you do not get too attached to the way things are. Change is constant.

Philosophers, researchers, spiritual leaders -- they've all debated what makes life worth living. Is it a life filled with happiness or a life filled with purpose and meaning? Is there even a difference between the two? Recently some researchers have explored these questions in depth, trying to tease apart the differences between a meaningful life and a happy one. Their research suggests there's more to life than happiness -- and even calls into question some previous findings from the field of positive psychology. This piece shares more. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/666/the-difference-between-meaning-and-happiness-jill-suttie-jason-marsh/> **Be The Change:** Strive for balance in all areas of your daily life, and discover those pockets of happiness inside the meaning.

12. The Dalai Lama: Why I Laugh
13. To Be On A Spiritual Path
14. Seeing Fully
15. Practice Without Integration Is A Waste
16. Two Words That Can Change Your Life: You Matter
20. Infinite Love

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).

5. Rev. Sherry Harris, MSW, RSW, Certified Spiritual Counsellor, Coach, Teacher – Becoming A Steward of Life

What does being a steward actually mean? Caretaking, having dominion over, respecting, honouring, nurturing, encouraging, supporting? All of the above and way more. ***When I become a steward, not only of my life, but all life, I treat it with reverence as if it is the most precious gift in the world.*** And life is the most precious gift ever. No matter what is going on in our lives, we can wake up each day grateful for our breath, grateful that we are alive to experience another day; grateful to be alive to find new ways to experience the gift of being, of even just plain breathing and existing. Even being depressed and anxious, angry or fearful we can find one small thing to be grateful for. We can put our thoughts aside and say "Thank-you for life, God/ Source/ All That Is. Thank-you for another opportunity to find the beauty, the mystery, the majesty. Even if I cannot see it today, I have another day, another chance to connect to your grace, God. Until then I'll just breathe, center, go within and be still knowing that in the stillness awaits the peace, grace and balance I so long for. Thank-you, God, for giving me this day."

Being a steward of life starts with me and my life and flows out from there. If I learn to love, honour and take good care of myself, I will have the loving energy to extend that love out to others. If I would not hurt myself, surely I would not dream of hurting others. And this expands to way more than people. Extending love as a steward includes being kind, caring, respectful and compassion to all life forms, from our mineral family, to plants, animals, the air, the waters, the environment: all life on this beloved Gaia. We are one life united. What we do to this planet we do to ourselves. There is no separation. We are connected in all dimensions to all expressions of life's energy. As above, so below. What I do to my brother, I do to myself.

The love I extend to myself, flows from me to all life. It surrounds, protects, heals the imbalances that conditioning has brought. Gratitude, appreciation, recognizing the incredible beauty we live with has such a high vibration it raises all that it touches. How easy it is to do this once we realize the value of seeing with eyes of gratitude the immense beauty, awe and wonder that is life. How blessed we are to be able to experience with our senses all that surrounds us. When we transition, the gifts of physicality will not be present. Enjoy it now. Open your eyes. Taste, touch, smell, embrace. For too long we have been locked in our heads forgetting the majesty of life we live in, wrapped up in our limiting thoughts of insufficiency. Our planet is conscious and abundant beyond our wildest imagination. Get out of your head. As the old expression goes: wake up and smell the roses.

Being a steward of life means savouring every divine moment of it, being in awe, being innocent and open to what shows up knowing it is all consciousness, all life, moving through us, to us, from us. Share the joy of discovery. Radiate awe at each new expression of life. We lined up to be here in this incarnation. Let's make a commitment to take off the dark glasses and let the light in. Celebrate. Your life is a gift and you are its steward. Treat yourself with the utmost kindness. You are precious. There is no one exactly like you. You are unique, yet joined in consciousness to all that is. Just as each snowflake is unique, so are you. Celebrate yourself. Treat yourself like the God expression you are and as you do that you will radiate that love and respect out to all life, to all of God's expressions. That, to me, is being a steward of life. If you don't know how to love yourself go to someone who can teach you how. I learned, so can you.



ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Sherry Harris is an ordained interfaith minister, psychotherapist, and certified spiritual coach, counsellor and teacher. She may be reached at 613-236-8852 to book an appointment or by email at 2belight1@gmail.com. Session receipts are covered by most insurance benefit packages.

6. Doug Henderson, Ph.D – Crisis, Hopelessness and Conscientious Objection

A friend of mine who passed away not too long ago used to say, "Everyone is doing the best that they can." I thought about this statement and added; "with the information that they have accepted." My mother who is 89 says, "growing old is not for sissies." To which I say to you, "mastery is not for sissies." Spiritual Mastery requires giving up the lesser self and aligning with the coherency of spirit. It means giving up a false belief in the annihilation of individuality. It means coming from the heart. But it also means seeing things for what they are. It means raising your consciousness. And what is consciousness? Many popular gurus skirt around this issue but it can be summed up in three words. Consciousness is God! So, raising consciousness is the raising of awareness of your Source. This is why you have an interest in spirituality. It's a personal connection to Source. What I am about to share is personal. It is my persona and your persona.

Recently, I have been very concerned about what is happening in Ukraine and the actions of our government. Coincidentally, I have been reading the channeled works of Eva Pierrakos, "The Pathwork of Self Transformation," and "Surrender to God Within." The Guide that spoke through Eva between 1955 and 1979 and gave 258 lectures is some of the most profound material I have ever come across. The Level of consciousness exceeds anything that I have read and studied to date! The material shows us the illusions we have created and what we must do to give up the illusions. It demands, *"that which most people are least willing to give: truthfulness with the self, exposure of what exists now, elimination of masks and pretenses and the experience of one's naked vulnerability. It is a tall order, and yet it is the only real way that leads to genuine peace and wholeness. But once you have committed yourself to it, it is no longer a tall order but rather an organic and natural process;"* that moves you.

As I began the process, reading the material but very concerned about the manipulation of Ukraine, the old patterns were very much in place. Blame was a dominant feature. It's a projection of what we deny most within the lower self. I wasn't used to taking responsibility for my-self. But if I don't take responsibility, who will? Mastery of the self is not the sweetness and syrup I thought it was. Mastery of the self is all about looking at the ugliness within, accepting that this is who I am and deliberately asking for help and guidance from Universal Consciousness to change. Universal consciousness did not create this current crisis, I did. Yet the Power that created the universe possesses the power to heal and awaken me to Truth. And I ask it to do so, now!

Each of us from the time we were innocent babies created false needs, expectations of our self and others and beliefs and opinions to mask the false self, so that we could function in the world. We also created a false image that we attempt to live up to but never will. These are the icons or images I placed before Universal Consciousness (God). Only by examining the ugliness and vicious patterns within my-self will I be able to make better choices that help transcend the muck that I find my-self mired in. In other words, my function is not to seek for love but for the blockages to love. Love is always present. My level of consciousness and my willingness to go deeper determines to what extent I recognize the falsities to love.

The physical body may have grown into adulthood but that does not mean that the emotional body with all its false programming has matured at all. All those childish, false concepts are still there within the adult body. Why? Because I refused to accept responsibility for the unconditional love that I have been entrusted with. Universal Consciousness has entrusted each individuated form of spirit with the ability to create like itself. To create more coherently and more lovingly I need to purify and master the lower self. As William Walker Atkinson pointed out; *the process only begins when we identify with Spirit, "as Spirit only identifies itself with those who recognize their identity with it."*

Each of us is an individuated form of Spirit. Each of us is so much more powerful than we care to recognize, accept and take responsibility for. When we refuse to examine the core ugliness within, to see the vicious circles, the patterns, the trigger mechanisms, the defense mechanisms, the posturing that protects a false identity and the expectations we place upon our self and others, we create a situation ripe for crisis. The crisis begins when we project what we deny most about our self upon other individuated forms of spirit and the world. It's a harmful process that boomerangs on each of us and stems from a refusal to go within and make correction. It is the norm 97% of the time. Each of us have been groomed and conditioned to be in this state because, in this state, each of us is easily manipulated. We are putty in the hands of the propagandist. The energy around this constant negativity brought us to a cataclysm at the time of Atlantis and more recently to the First World War, The Second World War, and the subsequent Cold War and now to the posturing over Ukraine. Its total insanity. I am insane and so are you.

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The lesser self is only one aspect of the personality but it is a constant shape-shifter, constantly re-inventing itself to create chaos and keep us dazed and confused. It's very much like a politician. (lol) The agenda of the lesser self and the politicians of the world fits like a hand in a velvet glove that shapes into an iron fist. One moment they are sweetness and syrup and the next they are the bullies of the world fighting over petro-dollars and petro-markets. Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Iran and now Ukraine; it's the same old same old – fear. Its meddlesome obscenity knows no boundaries.

In mid-February, 2014, I watched as our government did something unprecedented to my knowledge, in Canadian history; it recognized a coup government of a foreign nation (Ukraine) within days of the coup. This was both shocking and very suspicious. That kind of response smacked of an orchestrated event that tended to indicate a pre-meditated fore-knowledge, pretense and malfeasance. In the weeks that have followed lies, fear and propaganda have been the norm of both our government, the media and many western governments. What amazes me is to what extent all Canadian political parties and their members are parroting the same lies and mis-information. The problem in all of this is the propagandist becomes his own first customer. But I would prefer to propagate love than hate or fear.

So, let me ask you; just who are the terrorists? And where did they get their start? They were birthed within the hardened hearts, minds and emotional bodies of each of us. I gave them power and so did you. We projected these maniacal thoughts and feelings onto the world. We gave them position and authority to act for us. We are the hypocrites we refuse to see. As sovereign individuated forms of spirit each of us must go within and change the ugliness within us. No one else can do it for us. It's an inside job! And whenever the opportunity arises we must make better choices. And if this is not enough perhaps we consider stop funding the insanity with our taxes. There is no need for taxes to fund weapons of mass destruction and the greatest weapon of mass destruction of all - is fear and hatred of another human being or country.

Perhaps we are ripe for change. One of the most viewed alternate sources for news information is RT.com. This is a Russian source for news. The program is "Russia Today," and many western media sources are being surpassed by it in popularity. In particular there is a political program, "Cross Talk," hosted by Peter Levelle, an American expatriate and Fulbright scholar who has worked for 25 years for RT. Also, Tim Kirby, an expatriate American from Cleveland, Ohio has a program, "Just My Opinion." Whether RT, You Tube or Al Jazeera, there are many alternate sources for a different and possibly a more accurate version of the news. Isn't it interesting that when we live in our own little farm, we never really consider that what we are being fed daily is found on the floor of our very own stable. But we need to see the effects of our creations and how they never left their creator and do come back to haunt us. My hands are dirty and so are yours. So, conduct your own investigation. Come to your own conclusions. But make a choice to go within and make correction. Our continuance as a species depends upon it! And when you think that you have gone as deep within as you can go; go deeper!

For those interested, a study group of Eva Pierrakos, "The Pathwork of Self Transformation," will start April 4th, 2014. I can be reached at 613-233-3888 for details.



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. On July 1st, 2009, 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. In May, 2004, Doug was diagnosed with 4 different cancers. He refused conventional therapy and developed protocols that

worked for him. Today, his clients benefit from what he learned. Doug can be reached by phone at 613-233-3888, by email at drdoug88@gmail.com, or via his website at www.quantumru.com.

7. Kathryn Kimmins – Laughter, A Natural Community Inclusiveness Builder

Back in 1995, Dr. Madan Kataria, a family physician in Mumbai, India was asked to write an article for a health magazine on *Laughter, the Best Medicine*. While he did his research and submitted his article, that process changed his life. Laughter is good for us in so many different ways: it gets us using our full lung capacity. It triggers the production of “feel-good” hormones in our brain. It gets us out of depressing thinking ruts, clearing us to receive joy and new energy. Why, in this stressful time of rapid social change and crucial global challenges are we laughing so little? Children naturally laugh on the average around 400 times a day. By the time people are grown up, the average is down to around 15. We are missing out on so much by failing to laugh more! Something must be done to remedy this situation!

With the support of his wife, Madhuri, a yoga instructor, the Katarias invited three friends to join them for some daily laughter at a park on the way to work early in the morning. They began by telling jokes. Others saw them, and came over to find out what was happening. When they ran out of good jokes, they developed a series of short laughter exercises that anyone could do. Our bodies do not know whether laughter is real or “fake” as long as we do it! Soon others heard about this laughter group in the park, and wanted to start their own. Dr. Kataria began to train leaders for Laughter Yoga, as it came to be called. Now, in 2014, there are some 8,000 Laughter Yoga groups in 79 different countries which meet on a regular basis just to laugh together, and receive the free energy and good feelings it creates.

Laughter Yoga began as a way of contributing to world peace, harmony, and well-being. It can be enjoyed by people of all ages, races, genders, cultures, intellectual abilities, physical abilities, and socio-economic levels. It's easy, and it's fun. It requires no special equipment and bridges any language gaps. It can be enjoyed within the family, in existing community groups, and in Laughter Yoga clubs. It can enhance business conferences and employee recreation programs. There are very few physical reasons not to participate in Laughter Yoga.

Training for Laughter Yoga leaders is now available right here in Hamilton. Several leaders are available to introduce Laughter Yoga to community groups and businesses. There are ongoing community Laughter Yoga Clubs open to individuals wanting to expand their circle of friends in our interesting and diverse city. Find out how Laughter Yoga can help you and your organization build community inclusiveness in new, healthy and enjoyable ways.



ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: An enthusiastic and infectiously 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/>.

8. Regiena Heringa – Notes from the Light – April 2014

You are living in a dancing universe, as your thoughts, your molecules, and indeed all particles of matter and non-matter continually play and celebrate life. This is the nature of your reality and a wondrous nature it is!

It may be perceived that there is no systematic order in the dancing of mind and matter. Yet, all is well structured and efficient throughout the dimensions and universes, for life is permeated with the holy Spirit of creation and transformation. No thing, no thought lies outside this all-encompassing Spirit of supreme love and intelligence. Even that which you think of as darkness and emptiness is filled with light and life. This may seem paradoxical.

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Because of your present limited abilities to observe and experience those events and situations which vibrate beyond your human understanding and reasoning, your world seems to be filled with paradox. Yet, it is this gracious gift of paradox that stimulates your people to study further and to progress spiritually, scientifically and socially. Humankind is asked to study both paradox and anomaly. Why? you may ask.

Your planet is a member of an immense whole and it plays a significant part in the unification of existence. Your world contributes to other planetary, galactic and intergalactic systems which are also members of this vast unity. Hence, you, as a planetary society, are assisting other worlds to comprehend certain human situations. Kindly rest assured that even in the sometimes seemingly obscure behaviour of your citizens, your planet and its inhabitants continually and lovingly progress upwards in the journey of the Spirit.

Other worlds also donate to this magnificent whole. One manner they assist your people is by contributing to the elevation of human thought. This is done by stimulating creative ideas and insights within the minds of certain individuals who nurture spiritual thoughts and who freely demonstrate the desire to assist in the balanced advancement of all life. Hence, your scientific discoveries are unfolded to those in your communities who are alert to all that is good and helpful to humankind.

It is also to be remembered that to present a greater sense of completion—the coming together of parts of a massive whole—living patterns of other realities and dimensions are inserting themselves into your world. To your earthly experiences, this can be observed as anomaly and paradox. To clarify, let us present this simple example.

Imagine that you are putting together a picture puzzle of one thousand pieces. As you do not have the completed image of the puzzle in front of you, you have no reference point to assist you in completing it. Imagine now that several other individuals come to your aid. As these friends have various backgrounds and experiences, they present you with other perspectives and consequently encourage you to think differently. Consequently, due to varied individual observations, the puzzle is easily completed.

Kindly contemplate the following: you live in a twirling universe which encompasses a myriad of worlds, many of which are inhabited. All these worlds indeed, all thought and all life, reside in a magnificent vibrating force of divine love and intelligence. Therefore, in your daily existence, ask yourselves how you wish to contribute to this whole. What aspects of your holy nature do you present to your families, communities and nations to encourage and remind them that they, too, are essential aspects of this whole?

We leave you with the following paradox: existence by its very nature will continually dance towards a greater love and a brighter light. Yet, in truth, all life already vibrates within this all-encompassing love and light.

We embrace you.



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.

9. Robyn Lebron – Atheist / Agnostic

This is the 15th article in a long series of contributions by Robyn from her book "Searching for Spiritual Unity...Can There Be Common Ground?"

<< Note: Atheists don't think of Atheism as a religion, but since it is often compared to religions, or sometimes labeled as a 'lack of' religion, it is worth trying to understand fully. >>

In early Ancient Greek, the adjective *atheos* meant "godless". The word began display more-intentional, active godlessness in the 5th century BC, acquiring definitions of "severing relations with the gods" or "denying the gods". Western atheism can be dated back to pre-Socratic Greek philosophy, but was not a distinct world-view until the late Enlightenment. The 5th century BC Greek philosopher Diagoras is known as the "first atheist", and strongly criticized religion and mysticism. Even today, some atheists view religion as a human invention used to frighten people into following moral order. The meaning of "atheist" changed over the course of history. The early Christians were labeled atheists by non-Christians because of their disbelief in their pagan gods. In English, the term atheism was derived from the French *athéisme* in about 1587. The term atheist, in the sense of "one who denies or disbelieves the existence of God", was coined in about 1571. In the 20th century, globalization contributed to the expansion of the term to refer to disbelief in all deities, though it remains common in society to describe atheism as simply 'disbelief in God'. Most recently, there has been a push in certain circles to redefine atheism as the "absence of belief in deities", rather than as a belief in its own right. Between the 18th century and the mid 20th century, Atheism became more accepted by those with intellectual or philosophical dispositions. There has been a movement among the Atheist society to stop what they consider infringements on their rights to NOT believe.

People who believe in gods often come up a common theological argument known as "Pascal's Wager": If the believer is wrong and God doesn't exist, then nothing has been lost; on the other hand, if the atheist is wrong and God does exist, then the atheist risks going to hell. Therefore, it is wiser to take a chance on believing than to take a chance on not believing, and then the atheist is in a bad spot. Atheists believe there are a number of problems with this argument. For one thing, it assumes that believing or not believing is a choice which a person can make rather than something determined by circumstances, evidence, reason, experience, etc. Wagering requires the ability to choose through an act of will, and belief is not something which you can choose through an act of will. Most atheists do not choose atheism. They just are. Atheism is not chosen, but rather the automatic consequence of circumstances as they understand them. It is true that many Atheists are highly intelligent and look to define their "belief" by some concrete measure. If that measure doesn't exist . . . they logically can't justify the belief. The other fallacy they find with Pascal's Wager is the assumption that there are only two options: either the believer is wrong or the atheist is wrong. In fact, both could be wrong because there could be a god, but not the god of the believer. Perhaps it is an entirely different god. The atheist logic is such: If there is a god, and it is moral and loving and worthy of respect, then it won't mind if people have rational doubts about it and rational reasons for not believing in it. This god won't punish people for exercising their critical thinking skills and are skeptical of the claims of other, fallible humans. Thus, you wouldn't lose anything. And if there is a god who punishes people for rational doubt, why would you want to spend an eternity with it anyway? Such a capricious, egotistical, and nasty god wouldn't be much fun. Not spending eternity with such a being doesn't sound like much of a loss to an Atheist.

"What is atheism?" Most people already have their own ideas about what atheism is and what atheists are. Theists usually define atheism incorrectly as a belief system. Atheism is not a belief system. Atheism is not a religion. Atheism does not have a doctrine at all and atheists certainly do not "deny" a belief in God. Atheism does not "know there is a god but refuses to believe in him". That would be like saying that you know that your mother exists but you refuse to believe in her. Atheism is the philosophical position that deities do not exist. In the broadest sense, it is the absence of belief in the existence of deities.

Many Atheists say they are modern "materialists" (not to be confused with materialism) and are linked with the everyday experience of people. He is deeply involved with shaping his life as a useful member of society and contributing what he can to its progress. An atheist's faith is in man and his ability to transform the world by his own efforts. It considers the struggle for progress as a moral obligation, and impossible without noble ideals that inspire men to struggle, to perform bold, creative work.

There are many reasons why people become atheists. When asked this question during debates or discussions people assume atheists were driven from religion because of some psychological crisis associated with the churches, religions,

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or gods that they may have had when younger, or that atheists had some major event happen in their personal lives that made them hate gods. It is not that complicated. In order to hate gods, atheists would have to believe in gods. The majority of atheists began by simply questioning some of the core beliefs of their religion. These questions led them to ask their religious leaders. The religious leaders' answers left them unsatisfied. They would then go out and learn on their own, researching their theology and often the theology of other religions. For some that journey took months or a few years and for some that journey took decades. Some Religions have shown themselves to be a poor example of what they preach. Some Religions have impeded scientific progress, liberty, and reformation. And many horrific things have been done "in the name of religion" over the centuries. It is sometimes these thoughts that drive a person to question their religious upbringing.

For most religious theists, their faith practices provide the basis for their entire understanding of morality and moral values. Many are convinced that atheists who don't believe in any gods and who have no religion couldn't possibly have a basis for morality or even understand what true moral behavior is. Many go further and argue that it leads to immoral behavior. The book *Positive Atheism* by Gora, first published in 1972, introduced an alternative use for the phrase. Gora called for a secular India and suggested guidelines for a positive atheist philosophy, meaning one that promotes positive values and such things as a being morally upright.

Logically speaking, Atheists feel that most people in North America could be considered Atheists. Christians consistently deny the existence of the Hindu, Ancient Roman, Ancient Greek, Ancient Egyptian, and many hundreds of other Gods and Goddesses. Thus, the difference between a typical Christian and a typical Atheist is numerically small: The strong Atheist believes that none of the many thousands of Gods and Goddesses exist; the Christian believes that one God exists, whereas all of the other thousands of deities are nonexistent, artificial creations by humans. Undoubtedly, most people think that knowledge is good, and some have tried to reconcile faith and reason, but in the end, to one who believes in gods, faith is always more important. To an Atheist, knowledge is more important.

Myth: Atheists Are Materialistic & Worship Money, Material Goods, Comforts. The belief that atheists are more materialistic than theists isn't one that is founded on any evidence, but it is a popular one.

Myth: Atheists Worship Science, Evolution and Darwin. Atheists don't place any greater importance on evolution than on other aspects of science. It is fair to say that atheists place a lot of trust and confidence in science, but this isn't "faith" in the religious sense and how religious theists typically use the concept. Atheists place their confidence in science because it has repeatedly demonstrated how reliable it is.

Myth: Atheists Worship Satan. Although it's not as common as it once was, there are still people who believe that atheists both believe in and worship Satan, the evil opponent of God. Since Atheists profess in an absence of belief in all Deities and that would of course include a lack of belief in Satan.

Dying in America is a complex and distasteful process for most American families and often a taboo subject. As Timothy Leary puts it: "Most human beings are taught to face death, like life, as victims - helpless, fearful, resigned." He goes on: "In America all of these threatening perceptions of death, and the fears that they engender, have become integral to the development of a high-income death industry; pre-death medical treatment, cadaver dressing including makeup, artificial under skin inserts, wigs, freezing, embalming, burials, cremations, urn-production, casket-building, funerals, home visiting, soul saving and church/temple services are all part of this." As Robert Hatch says: "For once we complete life's passage, we enter a realm where two divergent forces control our destiny; the undertaker our body, and God our soul." But Atheists must face this multiple-layered challenge with an additional concept that there are no gods and there is no afterlife. And as Atheists they must come to terms with this position, not only as an intellectual exercise, but as part of their emotional well-being and their scientifically defined way of living and viewing life. To face dying is to be able to prepare for this last part of living -- to embrace it as an end and not to fear it. It is a fundamental part of who they have chosen to be -- an Atheist. There is no "afterlife." Therefore, life itself is very valuable.

Atheism vs. Agnosticism. What's the Difference? Agnosticism is a recent concept, introduced by Thomas Huxley, the famous friend and advocate of Darwin, to describe his own concerns about knowledge and belief. It is derived from the Greek roots a-(without) and gnosis (knowledge). Most agnostics see their view as distinct from atheism, which they may consider no more justified than theism or requiring an equal conviction. The supposed un-attainability of knowledge for or against the existence of gods is sometimes seen as indication that atheism also requires a "leap of faith". Agnostics are supposedly people who claim to be "undecided" about religious questions or possibly uninterested in them. They are "not sure" or noncommittal, they do not have enough information, and hypothetically they are waiting, actively or passively, for

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some basis on which to settle the two "claims" of Theism vs. Atheism. Persons who declare themselves to be Agnostics allegedly say... "I don't know." Agnosticism was originally used to describe a person who did not know for sure if any gods exist or not. But many find it confusing. A person can believe in a god (theism) without claiming to know for sure if that god exists; the result is agnostic theism. On the other hand, a person can disbelieve in gods (atheism) without claiming to know for sure that no gods can or do exist; the result is agnostic atheism.



ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Robyn Lebron was baptized as an infant in the Lutheran Church, but her individual walk with God didn't happen until many years later. After experiencing many different churches and attending an off-campus four year seminary, her spiritual journey with God grew deeper and richer. Her desire to share the concept that we are called to love everyone, regardless of faith, motivated her to write *"Searching for Spiritual Unity...Can There Be Common Ground?"* She and her husband, Rev. Bob Lebron, live in Wisconsin with their dogs and cats. Robyn can be reached by phone at 608-354-5566, by email at rockin-robyn@msn.com or through her website at <http://www.aninterfaithsearchforunity.com/>.

10. Doug "Ten" Rose – The Process

This is Chapter 76 from the book *Fearless Puppy on American Road*. All profits from this book sponsor Wisdom professionals, beginning with but not exclusive to Tibetan Monks, Nuns, and causes. Why am I putting it here? I have recently run into many folks who hurt and stress themselves by forgetting what this chapter says. If you are one of these folks, I hope this helps. The piece was written about hitchhiking, but obviously applies to many, many aspects of a human life. <http://www.fearlesspuppy.org>

There's a process to hitchhiking—and most of what holds true for the hitchhiking process holds true for the rest of life as well.

First, you've got to decide that you want to get somewhere other than where you are. Then you have to raise the determination to actually leave your present location. All trips start with a determination that's serious enough to get you off your butt and moving. You may have a specific destination in mind. It could just be a direction that you want to head in. Either way, you'll always have to conquer stagnation and lethargy, and sometimes have to risk stability to get there.

After that, you have to pack what you'll need. It's always best to reach a balance in packing. Certain things are essential, such as flashlight, towel, toothbrush/toothpaste, lightweight emergency food, and water. But then again, you may be walking a lot in rough weather from a place you get stuck in. The difference between a thirty pound pack and an eighty pound pack could end up being the difference between comfort or exhaustion/heat stroke/frostbite and even death. But so could a half-pound sweater that you thought unnecessary and left behind. Pack wisely.

You'll also want a map. Other folks have been to the places you want to get to and have traveled in the directions you want to go. Maps exist for nearly every piece of road in the world. They all use universal symbols. It doesn't matter where you're from or what language you speak. Everyone knows that a bigger dot means a bigger city and that a thicker line connotes a major highway. You can travel uninformed in unfamiliar territory if you like. You can even make your own trail or road through wilderness. Folks used to do it all the time in the olden days. Folks used to suffer greater hardships and die younger back then too. Luckily, many of those people made maps of the roads they built or discovered. Reading them can save us modern folk a lot of time, energy, and disaster. It can help you to live longer and more comfortably than people did in the olden days.

It is best to start a long hitchhiking trip from the on-ramp of a major highway. Don't stand right out on the highway itself. There are good reasons why this is illegal. It is dangerous for the highway traffic as well as the hitchhiker. The chance of getting crushed into eternity by a seventy mile per hour vehicle paying strict attention to its own process is a lot greater on the highway itself than on the entrance ramp. A car entering a ramp at twenty-five miles per hour is going to be

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immediately aware that you are safely on the shoulder looking for a ride. It will have a much greater ability to pull over without killing you, its own passengers, or those in other vehicles than a seventy mile per hour highway car would.

Get to the highway or main road as quickly and easily as possible. Standing on a barely traveled road in a rural area where the drivers are unfamiliar with you can last long enough for you to become vulture food. Hitching on a main city street is usually unproductive and can be dangerous as well. The highway or main road is probably close enough to where you wake up so that you can get a ride from a friend, take a local bus, or even walk to it.

Once you are wisely packed and on an entrance ramp, you're going to need patience. You can put yourself on a main road, be properly packed and intelligently discriminating about which cars you get into. That's brilliant. It does not change the fact that sometimes you'll get passed by hundreds of cars and have to wait several hours before someone stops for you. It won't change the fact that a driver who initially seems like fun may turn into a downer (or worse) after a half hour's acquaintance.

Most of the time good luck will favor you. It's usually a good person that will pull over to help a stranger, in the first place. You still have to be vigilant, discriminating, and patient—full time. That way you're prepared for anything.

Prepared does not mean paranoid or even afraid. It means aware. Have fun. Travel should be a joyful process. If you think every car that pulls over for you will have an axe-murderer driving it, you should take the bus. (Unfortunately, your odds of meeting that axe-murderer may not drop much on the bus.)

If you live through many years of hitchhiking, you'll eventually get what is called "a feel for the road." You'll have a better instinct for the best times to be on which roads, what equipment to carry, whose car to not get into, and so on. Rides will seem to come more easily. This is still no time to let your positive attitude, awareness, or vigilance fall asleep.

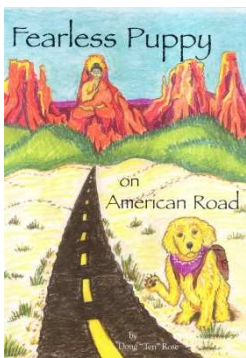
Novice or adept, neither the road, its vehicles, nor its human participants owe you anything—nor are any of these under your direct control. Neither driver nor divine force owes you a ride. Be pleasant and grateful to the person that finally stops for you. It is not your benevolent host's fault if you've been standing in freezing rain for two hours.

At its best, hitchhiking is a joint venture where you and your hosts can benefit each other. In such instances, taking the ride can be a joy. If you're not grateful, if you are arrogant, or if you're not aware of each situation you get into—it can certainly be otherwise.

I hope it is obvious to you that this process can apply to any number of life's procedures besides hitchhiking.

Pick a place you want to get to. Prepare wisely. Read a map. Hit the road with your eyes open.

<http://www.fearlesspuppy.org>



ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND TEACHER: Albert Einstein said, "Once you accept the universe as being something expanding into an infinite nothing which is something, wearing stripes with plaid is easy." Doug "Ten" Rose has metaphorically worn stripes with plaid all his life. He has thirty years experience raising funds at street level for various causes, often while working under very adverse personal circumstances. He has invented and directed charity projects involving rock stars, pro sports teams, a governor, mayors, and senators. These projects raised awareness and large sums of money for others. Much of this was done while Ten remained homeless and panhandled for food money on the streets. <http://www.fearlesspuppy.org> He has recently written two amazing books, *Fearless Puppy on American Road* and *Reincarnation Through Common Sense*. True to Ten's form, ALL author profits from these books will be donated to sponsor Wisdom Professionals (beginning with but not exclusive to Tibetan Nuns and Monks). Ten is a graduate of heroin addiction and death, as well as thirty-five years and over a hundred thousand miles of travel without ever driving a car, having a bank account, telephone, or a bill in his name. He may be the most comedic smartass as well as one of the most entertaining survivors of the hitchhiking adventurers that used to cover America's highways. The term "crazy wisdom" is often used, but rarely meets its match the way it does in this author. Ten Rose and his work are a vibrant part of the present and future as well as an essential remnant of a vanishing breed.

OTHER GIFTS AND E-NEWSWORTHY ITEMS:

11. Good News Of The Day

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

Moin Khan was born and raised in Lahore but went to the United States to attend university. Frustrated with the way in which his home country was portrayed in the media, he decided to leave his comfort zone and embark on an epic journey back to Pakistan. For 18 months he lived on boiled rice and ketchup, held 3 jobs and worked 70 hrs a week to save up enough money to ride his motorcycle from San Francisco to Lahore, carrying only a tent, a sleeping bag, some tools and the will to tell the world that he -- as a Pakistani -- was just as peace-loving as anyone else in the world. He didn't use any maps, because he wanted to get lost and let strangers be his guides. He did get lost. About 50 times a day -- equaling 50 opportunities to talk to people and tell them about his country. After his triumphal return to Pakistan, he continued his 'different agenda' -- staying on to teach women how to ride motorcycles, and distributing warm clothing in rural Pakistan. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4772>.

"Can the sharing economy movement address the root causes of the world's converging crises? In recent years, the concept and practice of sharing resources is fast becoming a mainstream phenomenon across North America, Western Europe and other world regions. According to most general definitions that are widely available online, the sharing economy leverages information technology to empower individuals or organisations to distribute, share and re-use excess capacity in goods and services. There is no doubt that sharing resources can contribute to the greater good in a number of ways, from economic as well as environmental and social perspectives." But is sharing the way to a sustainable, happy, and equitable world? This article probes into both sides of the debate and touches upon ways in which the sharing movement can evolve. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/660/politics-and-the-sharing-economy-adam-parsons/> **Be The Change:** Do you know something or have a special skill or talent that may benefit others? Offer a golden nugget of knowledge, a helping hand, or your presence to someone today.

In his breathtaking new book author Paul R. Fleischman carries out an in-depth and masterful exploration of a unique and timeless human quality: Wonder. Remarkably researched and elegantly articulated the book is an invitation to come newly alive to the mystery and magnificence of being on this earth. This short excerpt takes an ordinary moment on a winter's morning and deftly opens our eyes to the extraordinary. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/661/wonder-when-and-why-the-world-appears-radiant-paul-fleischman/> **Be The Change:** Take a moment to stop and look around you right now. Try opening your eyes to the wonder of this moment and all that it contains.

Nipun Mehta gave his first public talk at a monastery. He was 25 years old and the subject was "The Spirit of Service" At the time Nipun was just a few years into running ServiceSpace, a non-profit whose global projects now touch millions and are designed to spark generosity and inner transformation. In this debut talk Nipun dives headfirst into the core of what selfless service is about. With compelling clarity he offers up a wealth of stories, insights and reflections, giving us a glimpse of the vast potential we each have to be of service in this world. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/662/the-spirit-of-service-nipun-mehta/>

Jonathan Harris spent much of his life creating small, beautiful things. Going from one project to the next wasn't always so lucid, and in this article, he recounts moments where it felt like he lost his flow -- and what he did about it. "We have these brief lives, and our only real choice is how we will fill them. Your attention is precious. Don't squander it. Don't throw it away. Don't let companies and products steal it from you. Don't let advertisers trick you into lusting after things you don't need. Don't let the media convince you to covet the lives of celebrities. Own your attention -- it's all you really have." <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=5831> **Be The Change:** Stuck? Shift your perspective on your situation as the emergence of new possibilities, and embrace the expansiveness of what lies ahead.

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Compassion moves us to care for the suffering of others and enables us to live cooperatively with each other. Yet, in this world of information overload and constant connection, we risk being overwhelmed by our emotional response to the suffering of others. Fearing exhaustion, we turn off our compassion. However, although many of us assume that we only have so much compassion to spare, the developing research on compassion says that we can cultivate and sustain our compassion to build our capacity to alleviate suffering. Read on to learn more. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/601/how-to-increase-your-compassion-bandwidth-c-daryl-cameron/> **Be The Change:** Is there a service opportunity you have been avoiding because you fear it will weigh too heavily on your heart? You are not alone. Challenge yourself to dig deep into your core of love and consider engaging your whole heart in that service activity, being mindful of the positive effect your actions have and why that service is important to you.

Join writer John Landretti on a ride with his two little boys as they make their weekly bicycle trek through a series of natural wonders for some ice cream. And in line with the old saying, he discovers it is the journey - and not the destination - that brings out the wonders of life and awakens insight. <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=5790> **Be The Change:** Pay attention to the journey today.

Our emotions, beliefs, and ideals are constantly changing, and most cells in our bodies are completely renewed every seven years. How, then, do we know who "we" are? Over the past ten years, the emerging field of experimental philosophy has examined this paradox, along with its many related questions about morality, happiness, love, and how to live. In this fascinating video, Yale University professor and experimental philosopher Joshua Knobe "takes us through some mind-bending, soul-deconstructing thought experiments that push our notions of the self to the limit and past it, into a new understanding of our basic existential anchor." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/665/the-nature-of-the-self-maria-popova/> **Be The Change:** How has who you are today changed from who you were five years ago? Practice keeping in mind the transient nature of the self so that you do not get too attached to the way things are. Change is constant.

When Pope Francis took office, he shocked the world by abandoning the luxuries of office for a simple guesthouse out back. His goal was to experiment with a new living arrangement, one that allowed him to live amongst the community he was serving. And as the recession forces more and more families to 'tighten their belts', it seems that the art of simple living is making quite a comeback. In his new book, "How Should We Live?: Great Ideas from the Past for Everyday Life" Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman shares his ideas on how we might increase our overall happiness by merely embracing a much simpler life. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/668/the-history-of-simple-living-roman-krznaric/> **Be The Change:** Think twice before buying that next new gadget. Ask yourself, how may this one thing bring me the happiness I deserve.

"On the train from Washington to Philadelphia, while on my way to my father's memorial funeral service, I sat down next to an interesting fellow who worked with young boys, particularly those in jail and prison, as part of an inner-city project in Washington, DC. He told me this story..." So begins this piece by Jack Kornfield a renowned psychologist and teacher of Buddhist psychology, in which he shares a touching story of forgiveness and explains how we can all tap into this great human capacity. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/669/the-ancient-heart-of-forgiveness-jack-kornfield/> **Be The Change:** Perhaps to learn to forgive others we must forgive ourselves. Experiment with forgiveness this week, of yourself and others. Find the beauty in it...

The Concord Free Press operates under a tradition-smashing publishing model: It thrives on generosity rather than a profit margin. The authors that approach the Concord Free Press give them the rights to publish an initial run of 3,000 books, which the CFP then distributes for free to readers, along with a request to make a donation of their choice. Since 2008, when the CFP began this ground-breaking adventure in generosity-based publishing, it has encouraged more than \$375,000 in giving. Learn more about their model and its impact here. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/671/a-place-for-generosity-based-publishing-bruce-goldstone/> **Be The Change:** Check out a book from the Concord Free Press, and pick a cause you'd like to contribute to! <http://www.concordfreepress.com/>

In 2006, Maria Popova shared an idea with a few friends: to start a weekly digest featuring five stimulating things to learn about each week, it could include anything from a breakthrough in neuroscience to a timeless piece of poetry. Brain Pickings was thus born, giving rise to a digital anthology or collage of works of historical and cultural significance. Seven years later, Maria shares reflections and lessons learned from her professional and personal journey with Brain Pickings. Among them: "Be generous with your time and your resources and with giving credit and, especially, with your words. To understand and be understood, those are among life's greatest gifts, and every interaction is an opportunity to exchange them." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/677/lessons-from-7-years-of-brain-pickings-maria-popova/> **Be The Change:**

What lessons have you learned from the past five to ten years of your life? Reflect on your golden nuggets of wisdom and share your story with someone.

When's the last time you stopped to smell the bread baking? Learn more about taking the time to appreciate the little things, and how this and other habits of highly grateful people can help support a lifetime of appreciative presence. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/663/6-habits-of-highly-grateful-people-jeremy-adam-smith/> **Be The Change:** Did you resonate with this article? Take a moment to say thanks to the author, Jeremy Adam Smith! <http://www.dailygood.org/?pg=contact&mid=130845>

Do you remember the last time you felt completely vulnerable? It's a rather uncomfortable feeling that causes most people to rush through to a 'quick fix' -- desperate to avoid the discomforts of feeling exposed. We tend to view our vulnerability as a sign of weakness. But, what if the opposite were actually true? What if vulnerability was absolutely essential to wholehearted living? According to research professor, Brene Brown, vulnerability is not weakness. On the contrary it is "our most accurate measurement of courage." This interview shares more. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/676/brene-brown-on-shame-and-the-courage-to-be-vulnerable-krista-tippett/> **Be The Change:** Have the courage to embrace your imperfections and begin living life from the vantage point of authenticity and worthiness.

"I think attentional skills are fundamentally under siege today. Never before in human history have there been so many seductive distractors in a person's day, in a given hour, or in 10 minutes...I think this is another reason to develop a meta-awareness about where our attention has gone. I think we need to make more effort and cultivate more strength to detach [our attention] from that thing that is so tempting over there, and bring it back to the person in front of us." Have you ever had the experience of being "alone together" -- sitting in the same space with someone, while both of you stare at a screen? For anyone who feels the temptations of electronic distractions, you may want to learn more from Daniel Goleman and his new book "Focus." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/678/q-and-a-with-daniel-goleman-jason-marsh/> **Be The Change:** This week try becoming more conscious of where your attention is when you are in meetings or in conversations with family and friends.

Philosophers, researchers, spiritual leaders -- they've all debated what makes life worth living. Is it a life filled with happiness or a life filled with purpose and meaning? Is there even a difference between the two? Recently some researchers have explored these questions in depth, trying to tease apart the differences between a meaningful life and a happy one. Their research suggests there's more to life than happiness -- and even calls into question some previous findings from the field of positive psychology. This piece shares more. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/666/the-difference-between-meaning-and-happiness-jill-suttie-jason-marsh/> **Be The Change:** Strive for balance in all areas of your daily life, and discover those pockets of happiness inside the meaning.

12. The Dalai Lama: Why I Laugh

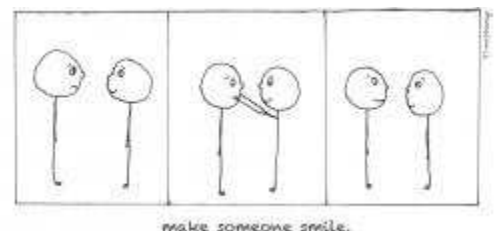
Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by [The Dalai Lama](#) (Feb 24, 2014)

I have been confronted with many difficulties throughout the course of my life, and my country is going through a critical period. But I laugh often, and my laughter is contagious. When people ask me how I find the strength to laugh now, I reply that I am a professional laugher. [...]

The life of exile is an unfortunate life, but I have always tried to cultivate a happy state of mind, appreciating the opportunities this existence without a settled home, far from all protocol, has offered me. This way I have been able to preserve my inner peace.

If we are content just to think that compassion, rationality, and patience are good, that is not actually enough to develop these qualities. Difficulties provide the occasion to put them into practice. Who can make such occasions arise? Certainly



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not our friends, but rather our enemies, for they are the ones who pose the most problems. So that we truly want to progress on the path, we must regard our enemies as our best teachers.

For whoever holds love and compassion in high esteem, the practice of tolerance is essential, and it requires an enemy. We must be grateful to our enemies, then, because they help us best engender a serene mind! Anger and hatred are the real enemies that we must confront and defeat, not the "enemies" who appear from time to time in our lives.

Of course it is natural and right that we all want to have friends. I often say jokingly that a truly selfish person must be altruistic! You have to take care of others, of their well-being, by helping them and serving them, to have even more friends and make more smiles blossom. The result? When you yourself need help, you will find all you need! On the other hand, if you neglect others' happiness, you will be the loser in the long run. Is friendship born of arguments, anger, jealousy, and unbridled competition? I don't think so. Only affection produces authentic friends.

As for me, I always want more friends. I love smiles, and my wish is to see more smiles, real smiles, for there are many kinds—sarcastic, artificial, or diplomatic. Some smiles don't arouse any satisfaction, and some even engender suspicion or fear. An authentic smile, though, arouses an authentic feeling of freshness, and I think the smile belongs only to human beings. If we want those smiles, we must create the reasons that make them appear.

-- The Dalai Lama, in an excerpt from his book "My Spiritual Journey"

See more at: <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=995#sthash.6wH8hOnJ.dpuf>

13. To Be On A Spiritual Path

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by [Jan Phillips](#) (Mar 03, 2014)

"To be on a spiritual path means to live mindfully, paying attention to the signs along the road and being conscious of our body — the vehicle we are traveling in — and of the needs and safety of others on the journey.

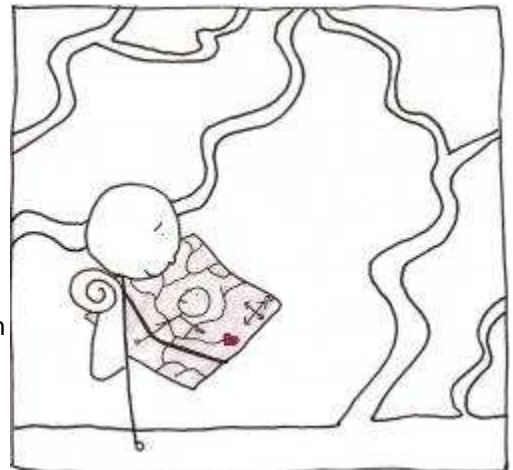
"To be on a spiritual path means to look inward as often as outward, knowing that the externals of our lives are reflections of our thoughts and words, manifestations of that which we are imagining and energizing into being with the fuel of our passion.

"To be on a spiritual path means to use the rearview mirror to be sure that the path behind is clear of debris and that we do not obstruct another's journey with clutter of our own. It means making peace with our past, knowing our future contains it, and summoning the courage it takes to acknowledge, forgive, and release whatever we have clung to that impedes our movement.

"To be on a spiritual path is to take responsibility for creating our own creed, based on our commitments, and to respect the rights of others to do the same. It also means to reflect anew on what beliefs we've inherited to be sure they are compatible with our wisdom and compassion.

"To be on a spiritual path is to embrace the mystical paradox that while we are singular, physical beings on this journey, we are also profoundly connected to one another, animated and sustained by the same vast Spirit that abides in the star, the petal of an iris, the howl of the wolf.

"To be on a spiritual path, it is necessary to forgive yourself for wrong turns, for failing to yield, for driving under the influence of others. These are minor and forgivable infractions. The more important rules of this road are to be attentive,



to notice when you stray, and to get back on the path as soon as possible.

"We could all use a road map for the journey inward, a guide away from the crowded thoroughfare to the quiet path of our own true calling; a reminder that it is not the destination, but the journey, that is important. The fourteenth-century Italian saint Catherine of Siena once wrote, 'All the way to heaven *is* heaven.' Perhaps this is roadmap enough — this one stark line enough to keep us walking, reminding us that the wind we feel on the back of our necks is nothing less than the breath of God.

- Jan Phillips, from "***Finding the On-Ramp to Your Spiritual Path: A Road Map to Joy and Rejuvenation***"

- See more at: <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=988#sthash.pH2qv4sS.dpuf>

14. Seeing Fully

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by [Ajahn Brahm](#) (Mar 10, 2014)

We were poor monks who needed buildings. We couldn't afford to employ a builder — the materials were expensive enough. So I had to learn how to build: how to prepare the foundations, lay concrete and bricks, erect the roof, put in the plumbing — the whole lot. I had been a theoretical physicist and high-school teacher in lay life, not used to working with my hands. After a few years, I became quite skilled at building.

Being a monk, I had patience and as much time as I needed. I made sure every single brick was perfect, no matter how long it took. Eventually, I completed my first brick wall and stood back to admire it. It was only then that I noticed— oh no! — I'd missed two bricks. All the other bricks were nicely in line, but these two were inclined at an angle. They looked terrible. They spoiled the whole wall. They ruined it.

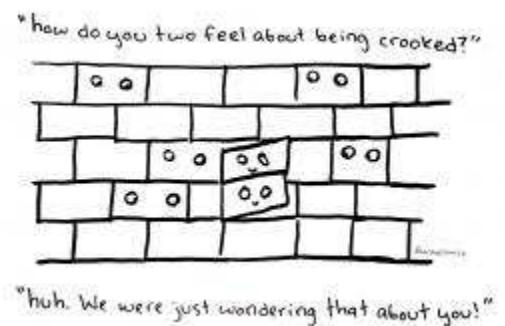
By then, the cement mortar was too hard for the bricks to be taken out, so I asked the abbot if I could knock the wall down and start over again — or, even better, perhaps blow it up. I'd made a mess of it and I was very embarrassed. The abbot said no, the wall had to stay.

When I showed our first visitors around our fledgling monastery, I always tried to avoid taking them past my brick wall. I hated anyone seeing it. Then one day, some three or four months after I finished it, I was walking with a visitor and he saw the wall.

"That's a nice wall," he casually remarked. "Sir," I joked in surprise, "have you left your glasses in your car? Are you visually impaired? Can't you see those two bad bricks which spoil the whole wall?" What he said next changed my whole view of that wall, of myself, and of many other aspects of life.

He said, "Yes. I can see those two bad bricks. But I can see the 998 good bricks as well."

- See more at: <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=1003#sthash.vM4T708i.dpuf>

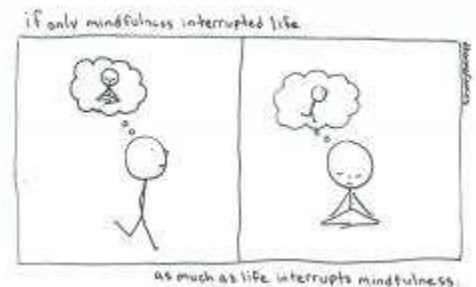


15. Practice Without Integration Is A Waste

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by [Krishna Das](#) (Mar 17, 2014)

I once met Roshi Philip Kapleau, the author of *The Three Pillars of Zen*. He was one of the first Westerners to go to Japan and do intense practice there. He was suffering from very advanced Parkinson's disease and had terrible physical discomfort, along with the involuntary spasms that come from the disease. One thing he said to me really stuck. As he was sitting there, writhing, he looked into my eyes and said with great intensity, "It doesn't matter how much practice you do. If you don't bring it into your daily life, it is all a waste." The power of this statement came from the depths of his realization and his daily battle with Parkinson's, and it shot straight into my heart.



We don't want to walk around afraid. We don't want to walk around feeling hurt and separate. We don't want to continue carrying around all the feelings of betrayal and pain that we've experienced in all of the relationships of our lives. No matter how much meditation, chanting, yoga poses, or any other practice we do, it's very hard to remove the fears that come up in our daily lives and the feeling of being isolated from the rest of the world. But the result of a true spiritual practice ultimately must be the lessening of that fear and isolation. We can't be judging ourselves if we're really singing or offering ourselves or someone else lovingkindness. These are the moments we're taking energy away from unconscious programs that run all the time in our heads about how small we are or how unworthy we are of love and affection.

We have a lot to worry about in our daily lives, a lot of stress. We move very fast and often get lost in the unconscious flow of our days. We can't control the things outside of us. We can't make people act the way we want them to act. We can't even make *ourselves* act the way we want to act! The good news is that our feeling of unworthiness, our self-judgment, is just stuff; it's not who we are. Stuff comes and stuff goes. What doesn't come and go is *who* we really are and *what* we really are. To experience this, we need a spiritual practice.

When we are doing a practice and begin to experience lighter states of being, we start to recognize that being greedy, fearful, jealous, angry, pushy, and manipulative in our relationships actually *hurts*. When we're stuck in one of those heavy states - which for most of us is all we've known - who suffers more than we do? Nobody. We may feel righteous about our heaviness and think that somebody else caused our suffering, but we're the ones who are burning! At these moments, it's very hard to practice. For example, if I'm really upset about something, it's very hard to sit down and chant. Sometimes I have to burn for a while until I can begin to let go and return to my practice.

-- Krishna Das, excerpted from *Chants of a Lifetime*

- See more at: <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=972#sthash.Z4dVRUiL.dpuf>

16. Two Words That Can Change Your Life: You Matter

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

"...one of the most dangerous things that can happen to us as individuals, as organizations, as a community, is the feeling that we don't matter." In this TEDx talk, education consultant Angela Maiers contends that two words - "you matter" - can change your mood, your mind, your heart, your life, and even, the world. "The significance of our lives is dependent on how other people see us." She asks us to tell people that we notice them and value them. It might just change their lives, and ours. - See more at: <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4538#sthash.CHahBDWb.dpuf>

17. **Grace Hearth – A Community Movement Through Soul-Warming Food**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Keri Keifer and Jocelyn Jackson found cooking as a way to create change by engaging their local community while nourishing their creative souls at the same time. Their distinguished catering company in Oakland, California, sources from local farmers and community gardens. Grace Hearth provides soul-warming foods which expresses their passion for bringing people into their hearth to nourish them with delicious food and authentic dining experiences. - See more at: <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4513#sthash.874F8SNV.dpuf>

18. **Living Service: Jayesh Patel**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

"This work is just a drop in the ocean," Jayesh Patel observes. "But a teardrop of compassion changes everything." So says the founder of an organization catering expressly to the ~180,000 residents of a slum community in Ahmedabad, India. In a remarkable walking interview with a man who had never before agreed to appear on-camera, Patel shares a simple philosophy: give everything to whatever comes up in a moment. "No ambition--mission!" he advises with a smile. "Don't stretch, never stretch. Wherever you are is the best time for you, whoever you're around are the best people for you. That's living in the present." - See more at: <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=231#sthash.7spiKMyr.dpuf>

19. **Love Note Writer**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Shannon Weber is on a mission to change the world - one love note at a time. What started out as a love note to her kids became a passion for sharing love notes throughout her city. By herself, or with kids and friends in tow, Shannon "love bombs" wherever she can to "get love, give love." Her dream? To sprinkle the world with love notes. - See more at: <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4574#sthash.6qop4PHH.dpuf>

20. **Infinite Love**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

In a tough border town in South Texas, four mothers touched by heartache and tragedy learned to heal themselves, and others, through love. On Valentine's Day 2012, they started Infinite Love to honor a much-loved nephew they lost to a rare form of cancer. This all-volunteer effort currently serves the homeless and cancer patients and their families with fresh food and the warm company. They dream of one day being able to provide shelter as well. Listen to how the lives of the volunteers have been changed as they spread the love in their challenged community. - See more at: <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3948#sthash.nBzImZ5B.dpuf>

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.

21. 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.

22. Sacred Attention Therapy

Sacred Attention Therapy references the etymological meaning of therapy ("attending to soul") and is based on Richard Harvey's ground-breaking approach to depth psychotherapy (<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/>), and on his 3-stage model of human awakening (<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/human-awakening.html>). For more information about Sacred Attention Therapy, visit this website (<http://www.sacredattentiontherapy.com>). Hourly rates may apply. To schedule an appointment, please contact Spiritual Guidance at rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299.

23. Spiritual Exploration and Soul Coaching

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

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

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

Hourly and daily rates, dependent on the nature of the guidance or coaching requested, can be discussed with Spiritual Guidance. To schedule an appointment, please contact Spiritual Guidance at rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299.

24. Spirituality Workshops

“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:

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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@servingyourjourney.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.

25. Spirituality Discussion Groups

Spiritual Guidance leads discussion groups on spirituality in Ottawa, Canada. One of these discussion groups is designed for organizations wanting to host a lunch-hour spirituality discussion group for employees. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in these discussion groups, please contact us at rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299. You can also register your interest on the ‘Services’ page of the Spiritual Guidance website (<http://www.servingyourjourney.com/page04.html>).

26. 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>).

27. 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. You can contact us at rmeagher@servinyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299.

Shanti, Namaste, Agape,

Rev. Robert Meagher
Spiritual Guidance

28. 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:

- Sacred attention therapy
- 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.
- Daily contemplative sharing
- OM websites

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

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

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

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



the  button toward the bottom left of the home page.

OR

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

OR

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

679 Cooper Street
Ottawa, ON K1R 5J3
CANADA

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

Love and gratitude for your support and generosity.

29. Interfaith Community Celebration

Interfaith Community Celebration

Come celebrate the diversity and common ground among the faith traditions!

When: Wednesdays, Mar 19, Jun 11, Sep 17, Dec 3, 2014.

Where: Contact Robert at rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299 for details.

Who: Anyone interested in exploring the common ground among the faith traditions. All paths welcome.

Food: Enjoy sharing light communal offerings, potluck style.



The purpose of the Interfaith Community Celebration initiative is to bring together the National Capital Region interfaith community to provide a forum for sharing, understanding and celebration of our faith traditions.

We meet four (4) times per year (in March, June, September and December). The gatherings are held in an intimate setting (e.g., the home of a community member) and will offer attendees the opportunity to hear a faith leader share their faith tradition with attendees. In the spirit of celebration of our diverse faith traditions, we will encourage attendees to share their own faith perspectives with the guest faith leader as a means to facilitate an enriching evening of dialogue.

The gatherings will begin at 6:00pm over light, potluck snacks and then proceed to have the faith leader share an informal, interactive dialogue about their faith tradition.

To register your participation in this initiative, contact Rev. Robert Meagher at rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com or 613-204-0299. You can also register your interest by going to <http://www.servingyourjourney.com/page04.html> and entering your email address in the appropriate registration form.

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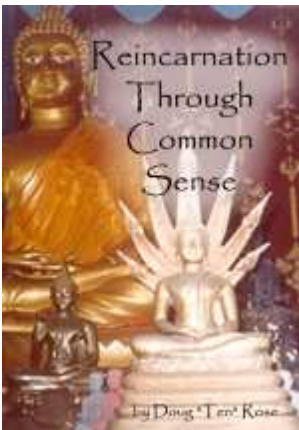
30. OM Websites

OM Websites is an extension of the Spiritual Guidance ministry and serves the entrepreneur and business owner by developing, enhancing and maintaining your website and social media marketing presence. OM Websites offers a full range of services to help you build your website and social media marketing presence, with a focus on giving you the tools and ability to maintain your own website and social media marketing initiatives. Visit the [Services](http://www.omwebsites.com/Services.html) page (<http://www.omwebsites.com/Services.html>) for more details. OM Websites specializes in building websites and social media marketing profiles and presences for those businesses and people who offer products and services that are spiritually-oriented.

31. Reincarnation Through Common Sense and Fearless Puppy on American Road

*ALL AUTHOR PROFITS SPONSOR WISDOM PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR EFFORTS *

“Once you accept the universe as being something expanding into an infinite nothing which is something, wearing stripes with plaid is easy.” Albert Einstein



Reincarnation Through Common Sense is a book of stripes and plaid in the most entertaining sense of Einstein's words. Westerners have written many books about living in Asian temples. None are like this true story.

The rural Buddhist Monks and Nuns of a forest temple in Asia adopt a very troubled soul from Brooklyn, New York. He can't speak the language. No one there speaks English. He is penniless, has no intention of studying spiritual discipline, and is amusingly psychotic. This author is not a theology student! He is nonetheless given access to the ancient roots and spiritual wings that define the Wisdom Professionals who have rescued him. He redefines life and reports the details in a manner so intimate and natural that you'll think you are having coffee on a barstool in the temple with him. You may laugh a lot on your way to Nirvana! You may say "Ouch!" a few times, too.

Magic is redefined as objective reality and common sense. Spirit is presented as a functional friend, without the fairy dust. Moods run from adventurous psychosis through enlightened bliss as writing styles run through ancient prose to sharp modern internal rhyme. The main character's life runs through death into reincarnation without ever leaving his body—and he describes this process in vivid terms and living color.

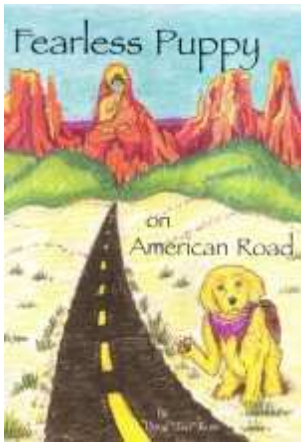
This down to earth treatment gives a clear view in simple terms of truths that we more often find fossilized within concretized symbols beneath rusting metaphor. For an experience unique in comedic drama, spirituality, adventure, and sheer creativity, buy and read *Reincarnation Through Common Sense*.

http://fearlesspuppy.org/m_reincarnation.htm

\$21 in print e-book \$5.75 ISBN#978-0-692-01952-8

<http://www.fearlesspuppy.org>

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Fearless Puppy on American Road This amazing (mostly) true story reads like a fantasy. *Fearless Puppy* is a transfictional self-help book. It is both comedic and dramatic—a butt kicking, page-turning adventure story that makes deep spiritual impressions.

Within this book you will meet several saintly Tibetan Lamas. You will also meet a man who is his own uncle, specialists in smoke, mirrors, and invisibility, spirited sex, oxygen orgasms, heavenly Hell's Angels, phony preachers, domestic violence/domestic solutions, racist killers in America, Canadian race wars, Native American wise men, a bit of Christian ethics and Jewish ritual, angelic witches, benevolent heroin addicts, magical birds, an all-lesbian band playing a rock concert for the deaf, the musician raised by multi-ethnic golden-hearted prostitutes, martial artists battling neo-Nazis, the modern-day Robin Hood, and many other strangely wonderful people.

Buckle your seatbelt tightly, take a deep breath, and enjoy the ride. Fearless Puppy runs on rocket fuel!

**Please forward this* through your contact and friend lists, and to anyone you think might be interested. Help us raise funds through book sales to sponsor Wisdom Professionals. Your effort is important! Thank you.

\$21 in print e-book \$5.75 ISBN#978--0615781181

Doug "Ten" Rose may be the biggest smartass as well as one of the wisest and most entertaining survivors of the hitchhiking adventurers that used to cover America's highways. He is the author of Fearless Puppy on American Road and Reincarnation Through Common Sense, has survived heroin addiction and death, and is a graduate of over a hundred thousand miles of travel without ever driving a car, owning a phone, or having a bank account. Ten Rose and his work are a vibrant part of the present and future as well as an essential remnant of a vanishing breed.

32. Celebration Circles – Awakening Global Hearts of Humanity – Connecting with Our Resonance!

Ottawa Citizen Building
1101 Baxter Road
Ottawa On

Guest speakers and small circle sharings starting Thursday, Oct. 24! Nov. 28! and Dec. 19! And into 2014!

Speaker for Oct. 24 Celine Cloutier of www.essences.ca Join us as we share who we are that is our passion. That which gives our life deep meaning and purpose. Where service is the ultimate! These are evenings to create sacred space to meet and to make each other bigger! By listening or also sharing who we are and how the speakers message spoke to us in small circles, we will go away all the richer in our own knowingness of greater clarity for the reason we have come! For more information or to offer your story for sharing up to twenty minutes as a key note speaker please contact Sylvia Parker at 613-721-0039 or Judith Matheson at 819-684-3099. Abundance offerings will be welcome and prayers of thanks to all in gratitude. Time and space to net work and meet other like minded people will also be a significant part of these evenings to inspire and uplift our hearts and our imaginations to new choices!

Deep thanks
Judith Matheson
Heart + Soul Light Centre
Gatineau/Aylmer QC
819-684-3099

Sylvia Parker
Global Wellness
Manotick ON
613-721-0039

33. Hamilton Grooves with Laughter Yoga



Hamilton Grooves with Laughter Yoga

Laugh Stress Away with Child-like Play

Two locations to choose from

Location: Caroline Place Retirement Residence
118 Market St, Hamilton

When: Tuesday, every 2nd and 4th week

Time: 7pm – 8pm **Cost:** \$10/pp

Location: Synchro- nicities
219 Ottawa St. N, Hamilton

When: Wednesday, every 3rd week

Time: 7:30 – 8:30pm **Cost:** \$10/pp

All ages are welcome

Take the laughter challenge, 6 classes for \$50

Contact: Kathryn Kimmins

Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher

Direct: 905-574-1765

Email: info@laughyourselfhealthy.ca

Website: www.laughyourselfhealthy.ca



34. Hsüan-Hsüeh On-line Discourses



The Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses

Five **Online** Talks with questions, discussion, and sharing, **live**, with psychotherapist and spiritual teacher **Richard Harvey**, author of *Your Essential Self* and *The Flight of Consciousness*

RICHARD HARVEY



Each of these psycho-spiritual talks takes a Taoist story and relates it to a passage from another spiritual tradition before relating and extending the themes to Richard's sacred-spiritual model of human growth and development for the modern era.

Between February and April 2014 I will be giving this series of five talks, one a fortnight for five weeks. These discourses explain the dynamics of wisdom, the first stage of ego-transcendence, the relationship of destiny to individual potential, spiritual baptism, and, finally, sacred and spiritual wordless teaching. At the end of the lectures questions, discussion, and sharing are invited.

Each lecture is 1½ hour long and given over a Skype conference call and includes radical new spiritual practices for psycho-spiritual practitioners, students, and seekers. Each lecture may be taken separately or as a part of a longer training.

"Nothing is greater than the human heart." —Richard Harvey

Methods: Lectures, discussions and questions, psycho-spiritual practices and instruction.

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Format: Small group lectures over Skype as a conference call. Psycho-spiritual exercises for between sessions and to incorporate into your spiritual practice.

Times: 16.30-18.00 Central European Time (CET). **Please check carefully for your time zone equivalents.**

Dates:

Penetrating Wisdom 12 Feb

The story of Huang-ti, the Upanishads' 'Carrying Fuel,' and the Journey Around the Self

Transcending Separation 26 Feb

The Empty Boat, Jesus' Dictum of Turning the Other Cheek, and the Second Stage of Awakening

Locating Destiny 12 Mar

The Sacred Tortoise, the Gospels' Temptations of Christ, and Capacity, Potential, and Destiny

Spiritual Baptism 26 Mar

The Useless Tree, Martin Buber's *philosophia vera*, and Deep Spirituality

The Ocean of Stillness 09 Apr

The Nameless Tao, the Legend of Bodhidharma, and the Third Stage of Awakening

Prices:

40 Euros per discourse. (A concessionary rate of 20 Euros is made available to students who are unable to afford the full fee.)

Special Offer: Book the complete Hsüan-Hsüeh Online Discourses, five discourses in all, in advance for 160 Euros (25% discount).

Booking:

To make a booking please use our booking form to apply for the course(s). When you have received a confirmation email, please pay a 50% deposit by Paypal or credit card (using our online facilities), and then pay the balance before the course starts.

The Richard Harvey/Therapy & Spirituality Bursary Fund: No one is excluded from participating for lack of funds. If you are unable to afford the concessionary rate please contact Richard to apply for an assisted place. If you would like to know how you can contribute to the bursary fund and support this work please see offer suport.

For more information on how the Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses came into being, please see my article below "A Glimpse of the Divine: The Background and my Life-Preparation for the Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses."

For information and booking visit: <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/courses.html>

A Glimpse of the Divine

The Background and my Life-Preparation for the Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses

It is a hard one to put across to people who don't get it, but teaching spirituality involves *letting go*. You simply dive in! It is not information, as I have been discussing elsewhere. It is not knowledge (in the sense of learning by rote). It is wisdom in the sense of aligning yourself or tuning in to a vast impersonal flow of Truth.

This word truth also is contentious. For when I and other spiritual teachers use the word truth, most of the time, we mean Truth. Truth with a capital "T" is the Truth which participates in no opposites. It is not the opposite of a lie, some deceit or falsehood. This Truth *is* and if you were to further the explanation you could say that Truth is absolute (whereas truth—with the small "t"—is relative).

My life seems to have been a journey to Truth, to a direct apprehension of the Absolute. It has become as real as the relative world to me. When I was younger it was actually *more* real than the relative world in my experience. This life, this personal-impersonal procession of moments has been a kind of return, but more accurately discovering anew, the Reality (with a capital "R") that I occupied unselfconsciously when I was very young.

One of my teachers, also my therapist, was an enthusiastic Taoist. So was I. It was one of many points of convergence. Some years after our meeting, a psychic dowser, the late Pat Densham of Dartmoor England told me that we had been Taoist monks together in a previous life. This somehow fit. His gift of Thomas Merton's *The Way of Chuang Tzu* led directly to my book *Tao's Gift* (which is a phrase from the book). I had puzzled over Chuang Tzu since I was twenty-five. I had puzzled over the *Tao Te Ching* even longer.

One morning while reading John Wu's popular translation of the *Tao Te Ching* in the Shambhala pocket edition, the Tao and its resurgent opacity simply opened up for me. And I fell in laughing. I could only think—not that I was thinking all that much—that it was and had always been so very simple. I had tried to understand inscrutable, timeless wisdom with my small mind. It was like trying to fit the ocean into a pint pot. Something broke open inside me and the doors to the treasure house yielded and in I came.

My background in Taoism has been punctuated by work with Chungliang "Al" Huang of the Living Tao Foundation, the marvelous teacher who wrote *Embrace Tiger, Return to Mountain* (as well as co-writing *Tao: the Watercourse Way* with Alan Watts) and Richard Dror (of the Taoist Center, Vermont, USA). I also studied with many different Tai Chi masters. This training may have saved my life (although I am prone to exaggeration, but I'll let you judge). When I was working in Skyros running meditation groups and therapy courses on a personal growth holiday, I learnt windsurfing with another gifted teacher who I only remember as Bob. Bob showed me the basics and I took to it because water is my element and I reveled in the freedom of slicing through the waves in the wind as a contrast to the in-turned intensity of the workshops I was facilitating during the day.

One time, feeling confident, I took off on my own and sped out further than ever before into the Mediterranean Sea. My hair was flying, the sun was shining, and it was glorious. I don't know if you have ever done this and it may be different for an experienced windsurfer, but my experience was that there was some point at which you simply fall. You maintain balance, endurance, and vigor, then at some point there's a call to just let go and you fall in. It's really all part of the fun. So I had got to this point and I was on the verge of letting go and savoring the pleasure of relaxing my muscles, releasing the boom, loosening my legs, and falling in when I looked straight down only to find that the sea was a quaking mass of Portuguese Men O'War, as far as the eye could see, a field of purple just below the surface of the water.

Survival instincts kicked in and I adapted to the new movement in a way that, had I not practiced Tai Chi, I am not sure I could have pulled off. Swinging around I maintained perfect balance and poise, becoming one with the windsurfer that kept me a merciful distance from the insurgent stings of the venom of the Portuguese Men O'War. I have never flown as quickly as I did back to the beach.

Tai chi gives you balance and poise and much more. Taoist literature speaks of this balance and poise, which are crucial for the spiritual life. We occupy a space between heaven and earth and through this space we can reach to the farthest ends of the universe and beyond, into the furthest reaches of time and into eternity. To occupy this body and this space and reach this far into the astral and etheric bodies demands some balance, some poise and equanimity.

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Balance and poise of movement but also curiously the total lack of thinking got me out of the clutches of the shoal of the Portuguese Men O'War. The inspiration for the Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses has settled over me in a similar fashion. The idea of lectures based on the Tao gestated in me for a while as I wrote pieces on love and maturity for the present series of online talks, the *Novena Teachings*. Then one day it erupted in me like a newborn teaching, ready and freshly prepared.

The first discourse is "Penetrating Wisdom." The story of Huang-ti came to me in a book I have owned forever it seems—*The Wisdom of the Taoist Mystics* by D Howard Smith. I had picked it up in the marvelous Inner Bookshop in Oxford in the 1970s. This story reminded me of another favorite of mine, this time from the *Upanishads*; the story of Indra and Prajapati. Both stories explore the sublime theme of returning to the teacher for deeper levels of wisdom and the dissatisfaction with anything but the full truth. Most fascinating is the motif in the Upanishads story of carrying fuel, the symbolic and perhaps practical gift of fuel or willingness to learn and a symbol of the energy required to see discipleship through to spiritual enlightenment. I have related these stories and their themes to what I have come to call the Journey Around the Self (which was a longtime working title for *Your Essential Self*. It is also the title of part 2 of my book *The Flight of Consciousness*).

In the process of self-discovery we journey around the self. The first time is a revelation, an awakening of sorts. On the second revolution we etch in more detail, getting a fuller picture and deepening in self-awareness. On the third revolution we pick up on what was missed the first and second times. If and when we begin to venture on a fourth my view is that we should be cautious and suspicious. Some simply coast around the self for multiple times, immersed in the ride and oblivious to the reasons for taking the journey in the first place. It becomes an obsession and gets nowhere. Therefore I have set a boundary in my own work. I will accompany clients on a first and second journey and I will complete the third revolution too with the strong intention to leave the viewing at the end of it. But I will not set off on a fourth revolution (other than in very rare circumstances).

The fourth, fifth, or sixth revolutions are almost certainly an avoidance of the second stage of awakening (see my book *Your Essential Self*), which is the flowering of a human life. So if you are a practitioner, a counselor, a therapist, or a guide, be wary of the addiction to self-discovery that keeps your clients in a negative vortex of self-concern and morbid fascination with the past. Allow them to discover a way out of this addiction to the small self and lead them on, wherever you can and wherever it is appropriate, to the further challenges of the mature life of authenticity and heart. Much will depend on their innate potential and capacity. This is the theme of "Locating Destiny," a later discourse in the Hsüan-Hsüeh series.

The famous empty boat story from the Chuang Tzu is a story that once heard is never forgotten. Its impact lies in its immediacy. Who does not identify with the desire to blame someone when something happens to them, to the illusion of the ghost in the action? Who has not bashed their head on a low roof beam? Or caught their clothing on a low-mounted hook in the kitchen? Or felt that the world or life itself is somehow against them?

Chuang Tzu illustrates memorably and powerfully the ephemeral nature of our emotions, the fleetingness of our reactivity, and the very core of the constellation of our egoic complex: self-importance.

What could be more apposite than the furtherance of this insight in Jesus' dictum to turn the other cheek? And finally this inferred dichotomy in the frisson between self and other and its transcendence in my model at the second stage of awakening is the subject of "Transcending Separation," the second discourse in the series.

Throughout the previous series of online lectures I have been giving since 2012 Truth has been irresistible in its reaching out and longing for expression. When it meets the longing and the reaching out in you something miraculous and profoundly simple occurs. It is three-fold. First, recognition. The Truth is impersonal and familiar to us all regardless of the level of intellect or acumen. If anything it relies on our readiness, openness, and willingness to listen and hear. The recognition of Truth is universal, common to all who are present and available to it.

Second is an overwhelming feeling of relief that you have found IT: that which is immutable and deathless. It is the understanding that what you have always suspected was real, that which may have alienated you from others and for whose sake you may have suffered ridicule and humiliation is demonstrable, near-tangible, and spoken.

Third is the insight, breakthrough, or expansion that constitutes the next step in your psycho-physical development. This opening is either in your heart or the higher *chakras* or energy centers of your psycho-physical system. You may feel this

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as a shuddering, a jumping, or some mental/physical disturbance. But this resolves in a resettling and a fresh centering of your consciousness in your psycho-physical organism.

Essentially what characterizes this is *letting go*. For it is not only the spiritual teacher who must let go, the student-devotee of the spiritual path must also let go.... profoundly. You must let go of opinions, prejudices, bigotry, judgment, and finally thoughts, altogether. Then you align yourself or tune in to transcendent Wisdom.

The vast impersonal flow of Truth offers us a glimpse of the Divine. Here in the Hsüan-Hsüeh Discourses we will join together on the journey to Truth, celebrate existence, and behold the shining state of the Source, our Divine nature through human form.

35. 5th International ICCS Conference in Mysore, India

Dear Relative:

The World Council of Elders of the Ancient Traditions and Cultures (WCEATC), a forum of Elders under the auspices of ICCS (International Center for Cultural Studies, USA, Inc.) in collaboration with the European Congress of Ethnic Religions (ecer.org) and the National Council of Elders Mayas, Xinca and Garifuna of Guatemala and many other organizations, is organizing the

5th International Conference and Gathering of the Elders from 31st Jan to 5th Feb 2015 at Mysore, India.

Our website: www.iccsus.org will give you more information on our activities. We invite your interactive participation and welcome co-sponsorship of your organization. The sponsorship is free of cost and 5 delegates of the organization will get the registration waived for the conference. Please ask your organization to send us a letter to that effect.

Our first conference was held at Mumbai, India, with the theme "Mitakuye Oyasin-We are all related" in 2003, attended by delegates from more than 30 countries. The second conference was in 2006 at Jaipur, India, with the theme "Spirituality Beyond Religions" attended by delegates from more than 40 countries.

Our third conference was held in Nagpur, India, from Jan 31 to Feb. 5, 2009, with the theme "Renaissance of the Ancient Traditions: Challenges and Solutions" attended by an equally large number of delegates from all over the world.

The theme of our 4th conference was "Nourishing the Balance of the Universe". It was held in Hardwar from 3rd to 7th March, 2012 attended by 357 delegates from over 30 countries.

We are very glad to inform you that ICCS USA Inc is proposing to organize the 5th International Conference and Gathering of the Elders from **31st Jan to 5th Feb 2015 at Mysore, India**

Theme of the 5th International Conference is

**“Universal wellbeing -
Sustaining Nature, Culture and Communities”**

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It is expected that we will have delegates from over 50 countries for this conference that will represent more than 100 world ancient cultures and traditions. The conference will have 'ceremonies, paper presentations and workshops' on related topics. The delegates will also have an opportunity of visiting local schools and interact with academicians during the conference. In Jaipur, our delegates met more than 30,000 students in one day programs. We are also planning pre- and post- conference tours of India at very reasonable costs and we invite you to take advantage of them. We are offering a small number of short term fellowships of 2-3 months duration before or after the conference for studying the "Ancient Indian Traditions". Anyone interested, please apply.

We invite your active participation in this conference as delegates in large numbers. There are a few travel fellowships available up to \$500 to cover the partial cost of travel as well as several fellowships for the registration fee (\$250) which covers the expenses for accommodation and boarding during the conference.

As like every year we will organize pre and post conference tours to visit India for 5 to 7 days based on participation by the delegates, Please do indicate if you wish to attend the tours.

Looking forward to welcoming you all in Mysore, India .

Best regards,

Shekhar Patel Ph. D. President ICCS USA

Praveen Veldanda. Secretary ICCSUSA

Shyam Parande, Margadarshak, ICC USA

Please follow on our website at www.iccsus.org for further information and details about the conference.

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In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

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