

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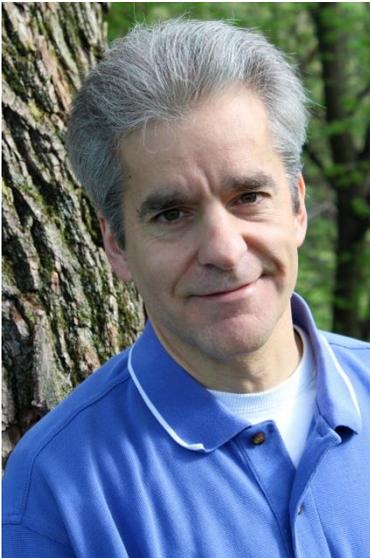
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If you have a newsworthy item that you would like added to the e-newsletter, please forward your submission to newsletter@servinyourjourney.com.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OFFERINGS:

1. Personal Story of Spiritual Lessons



Life has become my 'spiritual practice'

When we begin our 'conscious' spiritual journey—by 'conscious' I mean we become aware we are on a spiritual journey even though we are unconsciously aware of such a journey from the moment we were born into this time and space—we tend toward building a practice to nurture and support our spiritual development. These practices may include reading, yoga, meditation, sangha (or spiritual groups), or any host of other activities or disciplines.

For some, our spiritual practices become the foundation and cornerstone of our lives. We may become very devoted to our spiritual practices. We may set aside time each and every day to honor these practices. Sometimes our practices will evolve as we evolve. So, for example, we may change our meditation or yoga practices by trying different styles of these disciplines.

As we deepen into our respective practices—whatever they may be—something interesting may emerge. The lines among the various practices may begin to blur. As we take time out of our 'regular' living to honor our practices, we may discover that our 'practice' starts to flow into our regular living. We may begin to notice that our practices merge with our living.

I remember the first time I experienced such an awareness was in cleaning the house one day. I was heavily into yoga at the time and everything became a reason to bring awareness to my breath. So, as I moved throughout the house, dusting, sweeping, and vacuuming, I was aware of my breath. I was aware of how effortless it was to bend and twist and maneuver my body to reach behind and underneath furniture, so long as I remembered to breathe. I became aware of how graceful (for me) I was able to move around the house and clean. It actually became fun!

Recently, after years of daily practice; day after day, after day after day of meditation, yoga, reading, prayer, contemplation, gratitude, forgiveness...I have come to a new awareness of how my spiritual practice is presenting itself in my life.

Life itself has become my spiritual practice. Everything I do, everything I experience...is my spiritual practice. From waking, to ablutions, eating, walking, talking, any and all activity, even my thoughts...have become my spiritual practice. And all the conscious practices that preceded it (the yoga, meditation, etc.) have blended into one, ubiquitous practice—awareness. This awareness is the gift of simply observing. It is made possible through surrender, acceptance, non-judgement, gratitude, and forgiveness.

I now understand why the Eastern masters encouraged the student to pick 'one' practice and devote yourself to it. It does not matter what the practice is; it may be knitting or drawing or writing, it may be raising children, or caring for others, it does not matter. Because the practice, any practice, if approached in a devoted way, will



bring about awareness. As our awareness grows we are given the opportunity to explore our divinity and uncover the great mystery of life.

Life itself is a spiritual practice. This practice reveals the meaning of life, that life itself is its own meaning.

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.

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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

"Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience." ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

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).

4. Regiena Heringa – Notes from the Light – March 2017

Linear Direction and the God-Point

The notion of direction in your world illustrates the action of moving from one point of life to another—one location to another, one thought to another. As many of your citizens are beginning to realize, this sense of linear orientation which defines your dimension is not necessarily that which defines other worlds.

Mysteries that you may perceive in your material world such as “medical miracles,” variable frequencies and anomalies vibrating in your outer space and the interlinking of dimensional realities are only mysterious to you for they are observed from your place in space and time in this universe. As you comprehend that linear thought and action are limited to your dimension and to other similar worlds, you realize that you can extend further to explore non-linear, inter-spacial and, indeed, non-spacial possibilities. As you expand the heart, which eternally remains the foundation of all exploration, you will naturally expand your minds and joyfully explore vaster experiences that lie beyond the present knowledge of your scientific communities. And with this exploration you will experience that the material and less material worlds follow ordered reality and realities.

In truth, nothing in existence, physical or otherwise, is mysterious. It is solely that you are restricting yourselves to various constructs and knowledge, surmising that certain concepts are static. Kindly remember that the moment you view existence as stationary you create limitation, for all is perpetually in movement: evolving, transforming, and becoming.

Within the core of your divine and infinite consciousness, lie worlds, dimensions and experiences far beyond your physical bodies and human minds, which beg for exploration. If you forever base your inner exploration on the majesty of the great Divine Heart, you will enthusiastically explore the myriad worlds and universes of matter, light and pure energy. You may then return with these experiences to heighten the beauty and the intelligence of your own world. In truth, your inner explorations which touch hundreds of millions of magnificent universes, galaxies and multiple and other vast expressions of Light, create the splendid foundation for the transformation of your world. It is here you leave linear direction and move into the God-Point. Let us illustrate.

Imagine that you have in your hand a solid, golden globe. As you admire this sphere, it opens up and you realize that within are a multitude of spherical worlds, some more physically manifested than others. At any one spot in your earth's time or space, you may choose to travel into these worlds as they all lead to one point—God-Light, God-Force, God-essence, God-intelligence. This is called the God-Point.

This illustration is to help you understand that no matter what life you may be leading in whatever world or dimension you, like us and all existence, are living within the exact same God-point. From that point, existence flows outwards and inwards to continually manifest this God-point. Some worlds such as yours move towards linear language. Others group to think and speak in the comprehensive language of universality. At this time upon your planet, there is a significant movement of its citizens to travel towards a global and all-inclusive

noble thought. Hence, the sense of direction upon your Planet Earth is changing. You are moving into a more expansive and all- encompassing way of thinking and being.

We rejoice in this, for as your world expands in energy, as it transforms all life upon it, so are the minds of your people expanded. With loving intention and attention, your earth and world move away from linear direction and gravitate towards a more comprehensive direction to life. Indeed, your earth and your world are living in a more exacting nature from and within the God-point.

Hence, we, as you, continue to foster good thoughts for all humankind. Kindly remain gentle and compassionate and with loving determination help all who wish to unfold from the God-Point to the greater, inner worlds of light, intelligence, divine fellowship and meaningful outer service.



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.

OTHER GIFTS AND E-NEWSWORTHY ITEMS:

5. Good News Of The Day

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

"Inner beauty always reflects on the outside. This is something we have all heard time and again. But then, do we spend less time in front of the mirror? Do we still pay attention to outward appearances and draw a lot of conclusions based on those? ... What if one day our inner self and physical self were turned inside out? How would that impact our looks and confidence? Would most of us be able to come to terms with what we see?" Here, avid yoga practitioner, writer, and artist Narendra Kini asks these and other thought-provoking questions to guide us through a contemplation on inner and outer beauty, and life's interdependence.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1500/inner-beauty-narendra-kini/> **Be The Change:** If the experience of beauty and joy "depends on the quality of thoughts and love we share and spread," how can you engage with beauty today?

Judy Wicks is an entrepreneur, activist and author working to build a more compassionate, environmentally sustainable and locally based economy. She notes, "Not long after I opened the White Dog Cafe in Philadelphia in 1983, I hung a sign in my bedroom closet in my home above the business -- right where I would see it each morning. "Good morning, beautiful business," it read, reminding me daily of just how beautiful business can be when we put our creativity, care, and energy into producing a product or service that our community needs. I was just beginning my journey. I didn't know then what I do now: that when you connect head and heart in business, you can transform not just business as usual, but the economy in general. You can find a way to make economic exchange one of the most satisfying, meaningful, and loving of human interactions." <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=6999> **Be The Change:** What can you do to support local business and community? Perhaps you can shop at a Farmer's Market or from a local artisan.

On the 147th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth, Service Space founder Nipun Mehta gave a talk at Emory University that weaves stories from Gandhi's life into an illuminating take on how to live the ideal of 'change yourself, change the world' in modern times. His talk explores how our highly interconnected and technologically advanced age has the potential to make the power of love exponentially more accessible. He gives powerful examples of how the internet ignites connections, and allows us to organize online communities that in turn can reach out and transform the world in tangible ways. This fascinating talk will both inform and inspire you. Watch and learn more about how you can use your own voice and presence to be a ripple of love in the world. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7400> **Be The Change:** Create your own ripple of love! Utilize the internet today to create connection. Email a loved one, join a community, offer support for those in need.

"At the forefront of contemporary science, the universe is no longer seen as a machine composed of elementary building blocks. We have discovered that the material world is a network of inseparable patterns of relationships; that the planet as a whole is a living, self-regulating system." In this article from Resurgence & Ecologist magazine, Fritjof Capra gives an overview of "systemic thinking," the scientific view of the world as network, instead of machine. Rather than looking at fixed parts and components, the focus is on the living world's relationships, patterns, and context. At once, there is stability and change, death and regeneration, in weblike patterns of organization. Cognition is said to be found within all self-perpetuating activities, thereby adding mind into the mix. The way to fix world problems, asserts Capra, is through systemic solutions. Read on for more of this compelling theory. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1501/fritjof-capra-we-re-all-in-this-together-fritjof-capra/> **Be The Change:** Practice thinking deeply about your actions today. Consider how everything you do will create a chain reaction of events.

Connection to others is important in many aspects of life, from establishing a sense of self to securing basic safety. In this piece, Curtis Ogden shares the story of a couple who discovered this truth while hiking in the mountains of Nepal during the 2015 earthquake and makes a compelling case for why critical connections are a key to resilience and to moving from chaos to order in times of crisis. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1496/its-about-critical-connections-not-critical-mass-curtis-ogden/> **Be The Change:** Call a dear friend with whom you have lost touch. If it feels right, while catching up, let them know that you are there for them if they ever need someone!

The science of empathy is now one of the most celebrated subjects of psychological and neuro-psychological enquiry and it has the potential to transform human society in spectacular ways. For instance, if a human being's central nervous system carries blueprints for empathy, and if the health and vitality of one's empathy circuits depend on one's environment from conception through adulthood, what does that mean about our moralistic judgments of good and evil, and of punishment and reward? This well-written piece on the latest findings on empathy and on its limitations offers some surprising and heartening answers.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1508/to-heal-the-human-heart-robin-grille/> **Be The Change:** The next time someone irritates you with something they said, try to understand where they may be coming from and how they may be feeling. Can you try to respond with compassion instead of anger?

Last month, a remarkable gathering took place in Ahmedabad, India. Dubbed, "Gandhi 3.0" it was a retreat that brought together change-makers from around the world who aspire to drive that change from the inside out, through the power of inner transformation. One of the first speakers at the retreat was Sachi Maniar, a dynamic young filmmaker-turned-social-entrepreneur who devotes a significant part of her time towards running a Boys Observation Home in Mumbai (the local equivalent of juvenile hall). In her moving talk she describes pivotal stories, questions and 'aha' moments from her journey -- a journey that saw her befriend the surliest guards, nurturing kindness in the angriest inmates, and learning just how powerful a force listening can be. What follows is the video and full transcript of her talk. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1510/removing-weeds-tending-flowers-sachi-maniar/> **Be The Change:** Practice listening in an area of your life where things seem to be stuck.

Navajos have been using a peacemaking system to resolve conflicts long before contact with Europeans. Built upon K'e, the fundamental idea is to restore relationships and harmony, rather than to assign guilt and punishment, through the use of four foundational values: Respect, Relationship (K'e), Responsibility, and Reverence. Mark Sorensen joined the Navajos as a Phd. student and stayed on for 40 years, teaching school and working to keep this peacemaking system alive in his young Navajo students, teaching them the seven steps to peace developed with Navajo Thomas Walker. He writes about it in detail here.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1514/peacemaking-the-navajo-way-mark-sorensen/> **Be The Change:** See if you can practice some STAR peacemaking, (Service to all Relations).

"Nature's subtleness changed me even when I wasn't aware of it. In retrospect, I feel sort of like an insensitive oaf who got to play in the fields of the Lord and had no idea where I was, except it made all of us smile. So even if we don't have language or recognition of it, my experience is that nature works through us." Today, few people know better, or feel more deeply, our essential connection with Nature and its miraculous gifts, than Mark Dubois. Read more about the journey of a man and deep lover of Nature, who captured national headlines in 1979 when he chained himself to the bedrock of a river canyon that was going to be dammed.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1515/how-do-we-wake-up-a-conversation-with-mark-dubois-richard-whittaker/>

Be The Change: Find a place in nature. It doesn't have to be pristine. Just stop and let yourself take it in. No texting. No doing. If you're still long enough the noise in your head will quiet down.

Love is in the air! When we hear that phrase, we might picture, perhaps, a young giddy couple freshly struck by Cupid's arrow or maybe an older couple holding hands as they stroll quietly along a boardwalk awash in a sunset glow. Perhaps the phrase conjures images of roses, chocolates, and candlelit dinners. But love is so much broader an emotion and action than romance. In this Daily Good Spotlight on Love, we look back

through past features and revisit the many-splendored dimensions and expressions of love... Love is in the air, alright. Everywhere we look. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1512/dailygood-s-spotlight-on-love-shari-swanson/>

Be The Changes: Could there be more to love than we think? Consider how these kids define love. How do you define love? What can you do to bring more love into the world today?

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/158/what-does-love-mean-see-how-4-8-year-old-kids-describe-love-ladan-lashkari/>

"Most of us walk through our lives feeling so certain of what we hold to be true; then along comes a crisis -- like cancer -- and suddenly all bets are off. As humans, we crave certainty. Security. We want to know, Why did this happen? Will I be OK? What if there are no answers and no certainty to be found? What if we can't know? Does that mean peace of mind and heart are no longer possible?" In this piece, Michael Eselun, a chaplain for the Simms/Mann-UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology in Los Angeles, addresses these very existential questions, suggesting that "by letting go of what we thought we knew, we just might be able to open ourselves to finding love, support, meaning, and even magic in the least likely of places. A deeper peace may be found in living the questions, rather than clinging to our old certainty" -- even when our very existence is called into question. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1516/when-cancer-calls-everything-into-question-michael-eselun/>

Be The Change: Invite yourself today to "live the questions" even as you explore how to answer them. What space opens within and outside as you delve deeper into the questions and doubts you have?

Those who are familiar with Laurel Burch's hopeful, whimsical, colorful art might be surprised to find she was struggling with pain for most of her life; her outlook was the polar opposite of how she felt physically. Diagnosed with severe osteopetrosis at the age of 7, Burch's bones would easily break or fracture just from a fall or bump. Raising two children on her own was quite a challenge not just physically but financially. Art proved to be her saving grace. She dedicated herself to creativity, eventually becoming hugely successful and an inspiration worldwide. Rather than expressing her pain, she chose to lift people up, to make them feel good. In this interview, Burch talks about her courage -- something she humbly says is nothing special but rather a quality we all have; we just need to use it. Ten years after her death, her spirit lives on in her artwork.

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7438> **Be The Change:** Let Laurel Burch's artwork inspire you to have the courage to express yourself today.

In spite of all of our care and precaution, life is unpredictable and subject to change. Our sense of security and control is mostly an illusion. No matter how hard we try to be safe and achieve and become someone in this world, life is uncertainty, and we are wavering creatures. There will be unexpected changes at the last moment. There will be loss." And, yet, in these times of loss, author Tracy Cochran discovers we can find moments of illumination when we are: "being attentive, being willing to go on seeing and keeping our hearts open not just for our sake but for the sake of others. We make ourselves available to life, opening our hearts to the passing flow of it, knowing we will blunder and get it wrong but sometimes right. We do this even knowing that those hearts will inevitably break because life is uncertainty and change and loss. But sometimes when we are open, light floods the darkest chamber." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1518/in-the-midst-of-winter-an-invincible-summer-tracy-cochran/>

Be The Change: How can you more fully open your heart?

In an insightful excerpt from "Shakti Leadership: Embracing the Feminine and Masculine Power in Business", authors Nilma Bhat and Raj Sisodan express the innovative concept of bringing caring and love into the workplace. Conscious companies are embracing this form of leadership, as CEOs of different companies speak about how to manifest love in a capitalist business world, whilst still being successful. This innovative concept is discussed further in this article, as leaders offer their insight on how to develop the essential capacities of wholeness, flexibility and congruence when leading with the heart, in the workplace. From dealing with the global economic crisis without resorting to lay offs, Casey Sheahan is just one of the CEOs who share their methods of how they found success through creating and managing a strong team rooted in and driven by love. <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=7068> **Be The Change:** How could you be more caring in your workplace? What would love look like for you at work?

"There are still things I don't understand about the brush; I know that when I practice. I know what kind of lines I want. The lines have to be ones with great integrity, a great rationality; and also ones that are visually appealing, because the role of an artist, of course, is to communicate. Hopefully my sho, my calligraphy, will get better and more mature as I get older. I remember when I first began to study with Morita he and I were talking -- and he says to me, 'You know, I'm looking forward to growing old.' I was kind of befuddled by this. I was only about twenty-six. I thought, 'What is this old man talking about?' So I asked him, 'Why?' very incredulously. And he said, 'Well, I want to see how my art will grow and how it will change.'" Scholar, priest and master calligrapher Ron Nakasone shares more in this thoughtful interview.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1521/ron-nakasone-and-the-art-of-sho-richard-whittaker/> **Be The Change:**

Turn one of your routines into a contemplative practice -- walking, eating, writing. For more inspiration, watch this short film made by a filmmaker who spent four months observing Nakasone at work.

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7007>

We think we travel to find adventure and a change of scenery, but there are other tiny gems that come to us along the way of the road that are not from travel brochures. It is "the compass of our soul" that is the secret guide for finding our way in this world. When we are lost in faraway lands, or "in that part of the heart that lies low at home," there is a silence within that can show us how to find our way. Awaiting us on our next journey is "a crystal of insight, you could not have known you needed." In this poem, John O'Donohue invites us to listen, taste, feel and see all that comes to us as we travel the world beyond our front door. What talisman to guide your life will you find on your next journey? <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1522/for-the-traveler-a-poem-by-john-o-donohue-john-o-donohue/> **Be The Change:** The next time you travel, take the time to talk to a local person. Allow yourself to look into the eyes of that stranger and ask them about their home -- maybe what they like about their city or the countryside they live within. Share a story about your own home too, and remember that we are all neighbors on this planet once we begin talking to each other.

In a lyrical, unexpectedly funny talk about heavy topics such as frayed relationships and the death of a loved one, Elizabeth Lesser describes the healing process of putting aside pride and defensiveness to make way for soul-baring and truth-telling. "You don't have to wait for a life-or-death situation to clean up the relationships that matter to you," she says. "Be like a new kind of first responder ... the one to take the first courageous step toward the other." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1524/say-your-truths-and-seek-them-in-others-elizabeth-lesser/> **Be The Change:** How can you be a first responder for someone in the way Lesser describes? Take a step in that direction today.

In classroom environments where the need to belong is thwarted, young people may grasp for power and prestige rather than learn how to form authentic connections. Students may try to fit in in negative ways like bullying, buying in to peer pressure, or conforming to negative stereotype, because, often they lack the necessary social-emotional skills to form healthy, supportive relationships -- which leads to a fear-based classroom atmosphere that impedes learning. Martha Caldwell, a teacher and teaching consultant, shares how we can intentionally design classroom communities that challenge this dynamic by teaching and modeling compassionate listening to "foster belonging, inclusion, and learning in the classroom." She lists practical tips in the form of seven principles to help cultivate compassionate listening skills -- applicable to children and adults alike. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1525/how-to-listen-with-compassion-in-the-classroom-martha-caldwell/> **Be The Change:** Try applying one or more of the principles in this article to listen compassionately today. Does it shift the charge in the atmosphere of your conversation? Does it make room for authentic connection? For more inspiration on Martha Caldwell's work on mindfulness in education, see here: <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=7059a>

At the end of her first day at her first job at a prestigious design firm in Mumbai, 20-year-old Miti Desai came home and wept for five hours straight. Questioned by her concerned parents, the explanation that instinctively rose to her lips was this: "Every aspect of what happens there ultimately comes down to a financial transaction. I can't live my life that way." Twelve days later she quit. A few months later she flew to Atlanta, Georgia, a freshly enrolled graduate student of the Portfolio Center. A week after classes began she turned up at the

dean's office with an announcement: "I think I need to leave the school." Why? "Everything were being asked to create here is commercial." Read on to learn how this disenchanted design student went on to become a renowned classical Indian dancer -- who now designs from the inside out.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1529/miti-desai-where-dance-design-and-inner-transformation-meet-awakin-call-editors/> **Be The Change:** Is there a practice in your own life that helps you connect to your highest truths?

6. Letting Meaning Flow Into Purpose

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by ***Brother David Steindl-Rast*** (Jan 30, 2017)

The only point where one can start to talk about anything, including death, is where one finds oneself. And for me this is as a Benedictine monk. In the rule of St. Benedict, the *momenta mori* has always been important, because one of what St. Benedict calls "the tools of good works" meaning the basic approaches to the daily life of the monastery-is to have death at all times before one's eyes. When I first came across the Benedictine Rule and tradition, that was one of the key sentences which impressed and attracted me very much. It challenged me to incorporate the awareness of death into my daily living, for that is what it really amounts to. It isn't primarily a practice of thinking of one's last hour, or of death as a physical phenomenon; it is a seeing of every moment of life against the horizon of death, and a challenge to incorporate that awareness of dying into every moment so as to become more fully alive.



Death has to be one of the important elements of life, for it is an event that puts the whole meaning of life into question. We may be occupied with purposeful activities, with getting tasks accomplished, works completed, and then along comes the phenomenon of death-whether it is our final death or one of those many deaths through which we go day by day. And death confronts us with the fact that purpose is not enough. We live by meaning. When we come close to death and all-purpose slips out of our hands, when we can no longer manipulate and control things to achieve specific goals, can our life still be meaningful? We tend to equate purpose with meaning, and when purpose is taken away, we stand there without meaning. So there is the challenge: how, when all-purpose comes to an end, can there still be meaning?

This question suggests why in the monastery we are counseled (or challenged) to have death at all times before our eyes. For the monastic life is one way of radically confronting the question of life's meaning. In it you cannot get stuck in purpose: there are many purposes connected with it, but they are all secondary. As a monk you are totally superfluous, and so you cannot evade the question of meaning.

This distinction that I am making between purpose and meaning isn't always carefully maintained in our everyday language and thought. In fact, we could avoid a good deal of confusion in our lives if we did pay attention to the distinction. It takes only a minimum of awareness to realize that our inner attitude when striving to achieve a purpose, a concrete task, is clearly different from the attitude we assume when something strikes

us as especially meaningful. With purposes, we must be active and in control. We must, as we say, “take the reins,” “take things in hand,” “keep matters under control,” and utilize circumstances like tools that serve our aims. The idiomatic expressions we use are symptomatic of goal-oriented, useful activity, and the whole of modern life tends to be thus purpose-oriented. But matters are different when we deal with meaning. Here it is not a matter of using, but of savoring the world around us. In the idioms we use that relate to meaning, we depict ourselves as more passive than active: “It did something to me”; “it touched me deeply”; “it moved me.” Of course, I do not want to play off purpose against meaning, or activity against passivity. It is merely a matter of trying to adjust the balance in our hyperactive, purpose-ridden society. We distinguish between purpose and meaning not in order to separate the two, but in order to unite them. Our goal is to let meaning flow into our purposeful activities by fusing activity and passivity into genuine responsiveness.

Death puts our responsiveness to the ultimate test.

7. Why Meditate?

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

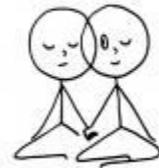
--by ***Suzanne Toro*** (Feb 06, 2017)

Meditation is the act of getting quiet and settling the mind. It's the process of slowing and eventually stopping your thoughts, at which point you can bask in and feel the silence, trusting all that you need exists within you. When you dip into this place of stillness, you begin to touch your soul. It is absolutely one of the most divine and sumptuous ways to feed your inner and outer self.

On a physical level, meditation benefits your body; it acts as both a preventative and a reactive medicine. There are endless studies which show the direct and positive impact that meditation has on the entire human body. On a soul level, meditation impacts your personal existence and changes how you participate in and perceive your life to be. Using this tool on a daily basis will bring you peace and allow you to tap into your internal pot of gold. The infinite potential to transform and heal your life rests within you, and it is through meditation that this potential can be realized. The beauty of practicing meditation is that over time you will begin to experience its “ripple effects.” These ripples take shape in all different areas of your life: on a personal basis you are feeling grounded and centered; on a professional basis – you start to have clarity and opportunities appear; on a mental and physical basis your symptoms, issues begin to shift and healing occurs. On a spiritual basis, you begin to connect with your highest truth. Your life begins to flow.

Once you introduce meditation into your life, your soul and your physical, emotional, mental body actually crave the meditation, similar to the way you crave a certain food or activity. Meditation is the act of reconnecting with your internal self, your soul. You might wonder why you need to take time to meditate. Meditation replenishes the body, mind and spirit; it calms the mental turbulence, heals the physical, mental and spiritual body, and reduces stress. You would never deny yourself water or food yet the majority of humanity does not feed their soul; this nourishment is needed on an individual level and on a global level.

Meditation:



Staying in one place long enough
for YOU to know where to find YOU.
dharmaCanis®

8. Praise Song for Wide Open Space

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by **Omid Safi** (Feb 13, 2017)

Wide open spaces fill my heart with a sense of awe. It can be a plain, a desert, a view from a mountaintop, a vista. Somehow wide open spaces remind me of God's presence in ways that few mosques, churches, and temples ever have.

I have sat with this mystery for a while, wondering about what it is that touches our hearts so. Rumi said,

*"Be empty of worrying.
Think of who created thought!
Why do you stay in prison
When the door is so wide open?"*

The opening feels to me not so much like an emptiness but an invitation, a beaconing, a call, a welcoming. Wide open spaces feel like being drawn into a place that's beyond place, a time beyond time. So many of the ancient sages have been saying this:

*"As Above,
So Below."*

Somehow the wide open space here ("below") serves as an opening to there ("above.")

Maybe there is something about this love of wide open spaces that is a desire to be bigger, grander, more connected. There's something about the urge to lift up our gaze from the micro-dramas of our own life, and be more attuned to the larger rhythms of the cosmos, and the cosmic Artist.

We are meant to live lives that are complete and whole.

At least for me, this is the appeal of wide open spaces: a reminder of who we are, who we have been, and who we must become yet again. It's a reminder that we are not "mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life," as Martin Luther King used to say, but that there is something in us as vast as the whole cosmos. Somewhere deep in our hearts, there is a faculty that reaches out for the whole universe, because it is made in the image of the cosmic Artist.

This is what open spaces are: a reminder that our hearts are meant to be open, cast open, flung open so that the whole cosmos is reflected within.



9. You Play the Piano

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

--by **Alan Watts** (Feb 20, 2017)

The existence, the physical universe is basically playful. There is no necessity for it whatsoever. It isn't going anywhere. That is to say, it doesn't have some destination that it ought to arrive at.

But it is best understood by analogy with music, because music, as an art form is essentially playful. We say, "You play the piano." You don't *work* the piano.

Why? Music differs from, say, travel. When you travel, you are trying to get somewhere. In music, though, one doesn't make the end of the composition the point of the composition. If that were so, the best conductors would be those who played fastest. And there would be composers who only wrote finales. People would go to a concert just to hear one crackling chord... because that's the end!

Same way with dancing. You don't aim at a particular spot in the room because that's where you will arrive. The whole point of the dancing is the dance.

But we don't see that as something brought by our education into our conduct. We have a system of schooling which gives a completely different impression. It's all graded and what we do is put the child into the corridor of this grade system with a kind of, "Come on kitty, kitty." And you go to kindergarten and that's a great thing because when you finish that you get into first grade. Then, "Come on" first grade leads to second grade and so on. And then you get out of grade school and you got high school. It's revving up, the thing is coming, then you're going to go to college... Then you've got graduate school, and when you're through with graduate school you go out to join the world.

Then you get into some racket where you're selling insurance. And they've got that quota to make, and you're gonna make that. And all the time that *thing* is coming – It's coming, it's coming, that great *thing*. The success you're working for.

Then you wake up one day about 40 years old and you say, "My God, I've arrived. I'm there." And you don't feel very different from what you've always felt.

Look at the people who live to retire; to put those savings away. And then when they're 65 they don't have any energy left. They're more or less impotent. And they go and rot in some, old peoples, senior citizens community. Because we simply cheated ourselves the whole way down the line.

Because we thought of life by analogy with a journey, with a pilgrimage, which had a serious purpose at that end, and the thing was to get to that thing at that end. Success, or whatever it is, or maybe heaven after you're dead.

But we missed the point the whole way along.



It was a musical thing, and you were supposed to sing or to dance while the music was being played.

10. A Scheme to Change the World?

Reprinted from www.awakin.org.

—by *Hazrat Inayat Khan* (Feb 27, 2017)

The other day I lectured in Paris and after my lecture a very able man came to me and said, 'Have you got a scheme?' I said, 'What scheme?' 'Of bettering conditions.'

I replied that I had not made such a scheme, and he said, 'I have a scheme, I will show it to you'. He opened his box and brought out a very large paper with mathematics on it and showed it to me saying, 'This is the economic scheme that will make the condition of the world better: everyone will have the same share'.

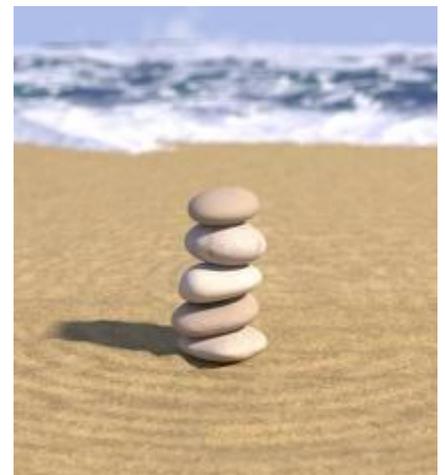
I said, 'We should practice that economic scheme first on tuning our piano: instead of saying D, E, F, we should tune them all to one note and play that music and see how interesting that would be -- all sounding the same, no individuality, no distinction, nothing.' And I added, 'Economy is not a plan for construction, but it is a plan for destruction. It is economics which have brought us to destruction. It is the heart quality, it is the spiritual outlook which will change the world'.

Very often people coming to hear me say afterwards, 'Yes, all you say is very interesting, very beautiful, and I wish too that the world was changed. But how many think like you? How can you do it? How can it be done?'.

They come with that pessimistic remark, and I tell them, 'One person comes into a country with a little cold or influenza and it spreads. If such a bad thing can spread, can not an elevated thought of love, kindness and goodwill towards all men spread? See then that there are finer germs, germs of goodwill, of love, kindness, and feeling, germs of brotherhood, of the desire for spiritual evolution, which can have greater results than the other ones. If we all have that optimistic view, if we all work in our little way, we can accomplish a great deal'.

Many have been cross with God for having sent any misery in their lives -- but we always get such experiences! Becoming cross one says, 'Why, this is not just', or 'This is not right', and 'How could God who is just and good allow unjust things to happen?' But our sight is so limited that our conception of right and wrong and good and evil is only for us -- not according to God's plan. It is true that, as long as we see it as such, it is so for us and for those who look at it from our point of view, but when it comes to God the whole dimension is changed, the whole point of view is changed.

The Sufi therefore, finds the only way out of the distress of life ... He rises above it, taking all things as they come, patiently. He does not mind how he is treated. His principle is to do his best, and in that is his satisfaction. Instead of depending on another person to be kind to him, the Sufi thinks if he were kind to another person, that is sufficient. Every wise man in the long run through life will find in this principle the solution of happiness. For we cannot change the world, but we can change ourselves.



11. **Gandhi 3.0 – Bridging the Internet and the Inner-Net**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

On the 147th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth, Service Space founder Nipun Mehta gave a talk at Emory University that weaves stories from Gandhi's life into an illuminating take on how to live the ideal of 'change yourself, change the world' in modern times. His talk explores how our highly interconnected and technologically advanced age has the potential to make the power of love exponentially more accessible. He gives powerful examples of how the internet ignites connections, and allows us to organize online communities that in turn can reach out and transform the world in tangible ways. This fascinating talk will both inform and inspire you. Watch and learn more about how you can use your own voice and presence to be a ripple of love in the world. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7400>

12. **A Band of Bikers That Battles Child Abuse**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Members of B.A.C.A. (Bikers Against Child Abuse) are a different breed of motorcycle gang. These bikers strive to empower children who have been abused by creating a safer environment with their presence. They show up to every single court date, pay for treatment bills and school supplies parents can't afford, and do anything the child and family needs to feel safe and comfortable. "If we say we're going to be there, we are there." <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7367>

13. **My Love Keeps Me Warm**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

This film is like a warm hug with its focus on LOVE - something that we all know and share. Love has no boundaries, love has no prejudices, love has no labels. This simple message relates to all of us and has been grasped like a banner to wave in the face of bias and judgment. 'Love has no Labels' is a progressive campaign that embodies diversity & inclusion and ultimately challenges us to challenge ourselves. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=6139>

14. **The Art of Sho – A Calligrapher's Pilgrimage**

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Film maker Jerry Hsu spent 4 months observing Dr. Ronald Y. Nakasone practicing the art of calligraphy, and witnessed how this art requires contemplation, perseverance and single-minded concentration. The art of "sho," or "writing," can be properly called abstract art; it is nonfigurative, nonobjective, and

nonrepresentational. The process of the work is one of experimentation and distillation. All of these elements are joined harmoniously together within this formless form. Sit back and watch this creation as a form of meditation. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7007>

15. Recording the Sounds of Extinction

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Musician and naturalist Bernie Krause is one of the world's leading experts in natural sound. Krause has been recording "soundscapes" - the wind in the trees, the chirping of birds, the songs of humpback whales - for over forty years and has amassed the largest archive in the world. In doing so, Krause can chart how wildlife sounds have changed over the course of climate change. Listen for yourself: the silence speaks volumes. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7348>

16. The Human Library

Reprinted from www.KarmaTube.org.

Instead of borrowing a book at this library, you can borrow a person! The intention behind the Human Library is to connect people to members of communities who are not well understood by the general public. In this video, Rachel Bergen shares, "Before today, I had never even met a medium, a transgender person, or someone with EB, but here I had the chance to even ask them personal questions and really see a glimpse of life through their eyes." Designed to create space for positive conversations that defy stereotypes and prejudices, the Human Library is changing the world, one interaction at a time. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7347>

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.

17. Sacred Attention Therapy

Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) references the etymological meaning of therapy: "attending to soul". SAT is a new paradigm of psychological and spiritual growth and development and is based on Richard Harvey's ground-breaking approach to depth psychotherapy, and on his 3-stage model of human awakening (<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/>). This new paradigm of psychotherapy / counselling is an approach that takes into account the ego-based individual and the desire of the individual to grow spiritually. SAT recognizes the fundamental, true, spiritual nature of humanity and the intense longing for the truth about our real, divine state. SAT involves listening with the whole self to the soul of the other. This is what therapy should always be, or at least always aim at, because this is the profound depth of healing and reverence which two gathered together in search of truth can bring about. For more information about SAT, visit these websites:

<http://www.sacredattentiontherapy.com/index.html>

<http://www.servingyourjourney.com/Sacred-Attention-Therapy.html>

Sessions can be offered in person, by phone, or via Skype. For more information about booking appointments, please visit <http://www.servingyourjourney.com/Booking-Appointments.html>. To schedule an appointment, please contact me by phone (613-204-0299) or email (rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com).

18. A Course in Miracles Global Community Centre

Spiritual Guidance is honored to host the 'A Course in Miracles (ACIM) Global Community Centre.' This Centre is a meeting place for ACIM students and teachers from around the world to access coaching counselling, therapy, study and discussion groups, courses, a community café for you to communicate with other students and teachers, and helpful resources and links. Visit the ACIM Global Community Centre at <http://www.servingyourjourney.com/ACIM.html>.

19. 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.

20. Masters of Arts in Conflict Resolution



MASTER OF ARTS IN CONFLICT, PEACE AND HINDU PHILOSOPHY

Mahatma Gandhi Center for Non-Violence, Human Rights and World Peace

The MASTER OF ARTS IN CONFLICT, PEACE AND HINDU PHILOSOPHY offered by the Hindu University of America enriches the discipline of Conflict and Peace Studies by providing a Hindu perspective. By becoming more inclusive and pluralistic, conflicts at various levels can be approached more creatively.

MANDATORY COURSES (4)

Introduction to Conflict and Peace Studies 3 credits
This course introduces students the theories of conflict and peace.

Principles of Hinduism 3 Credits
This course will focus on major elements of Hindu philosophy particularly pertaining to conflict resolution and peace.

Theory of Gandhian Conflict Resolution 3 Credits
This course examines the elements of Gandhian conflict resolution and its application

Research Methods in Conflict Resolution 3 Credits
The course will provide basic literacy in research methods to students, and enable them to become critical consumers of literature, and help them writing their Master's project/ thesis.

All students must choose one of the following options:

1. Master's Project

Final Project and Workshop 6 credits spanning 2 semesters
Plus 6 elective and/or topical course choices (18 credits) required to complete degree. 3 of which must be from HUA course offerings.

2. Master's Thesis

Final Project and Workshop 3 Credits
Master's Thesis in Conflict Resolution – Independent study with faculty advisor 3 Credits

Plus 6 elective and/or course choices (18 credits) required to complete degree. 3 of which must be from HUA course offerings.

ELECTIVE COURSE OPTIONS

Elective courses offered in any given year will vary. Graduate courses taken in other areas offered at HUA or at other universities may be accepted for transfer credit with prior approval of the HUA office. Any course offered at HUA will automatically qualify for elective credit.

- ◆ Religion, Conflict and Peace: An Introduction
- ◆ Yoga and International Peace
- ◆ Mahatma Gandhi: Life and Philosophy
- ◆ Mahatma Gandhi and Contemporary Global Issues
- ◆ Sri Aurobindo, Conflict and Peace
- ◆ An Introduction to Conflicts in South Asia
- ◆ Kashmir Conflict: Dimensions, Costs and Peace Prospects
- ◆ Factoring Gender in Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Swami Vivekananda, Conflict and Peace
- ◆ Negotiation
- ◆ Culture and Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Conflict Resolution – Focus on a Case Study
- ◆ Role of Institutions in Addressing Conflicts
- ◆ Universal Themes in Hinduism
- ◆ Gita: A Document of Conflict Resolution and Peace
- ◆ Contemporary Hinduism and Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Gandhi, King and Mandela
- ◆ Hindu Scriptures on Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Media and Conflict
- ◆ Conflict Resolution: A perspective from Buddhism
- ◆ Conflict Resolution: A perspective from Jainism
- ◆ Conflict Resolution: A perspective from Sikhism
- ◆ Conflicts in Contemporary India

Topical Course Options

A faculty member can develop a course, which is not included in the elective course list. It can be a course on a theme such as war, environment, Yoga, or any theme which is relevant for the course and generate interest in students. These courses may have up to 3 credits.

3 courses per semester (9 credits)

36 credits required to complete program



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March 2017 e-Newsletter

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In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

Spiritual Guidance

Serving your personal journey toward enlightenment...

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