

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! 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 [rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com](mailto:rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com).*

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OFFERINGS:

### 1. Personal Story of Spiritual Lessons



#### Giving Advice and Sacred Attention Therapy

The therapeutic process is a mystery. And the therapy I practice, Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT), is no exception. To help demystify the process, I offer an introductory session to new aspirants. When I meet with an aspirant for the first time, I invite the meeting to (a) get to know each other a little; (b) learn about what has brought the aspirant to therapy and what their expectations are of the process; and (c) share with the aspirant how I work and equally, if not more important, how I do not work.

When I begin sharing with the aspirant how I work and do not work, I typically begin by talking about how I do not work. I explain that I do not give advice and I share that I do not give advice for three important reasons:

1. It is none of my business how someone lives their life. I should be coming to a session with an aspirant in non-judgement. How someone lives their life is a divine fulfillment of their free will and the choices they make. It is not up to me to interfere with the aspirant's free will and decision making.
2. I cannot know what is best for someone. I can only know what it best for me. The most I can do is to help the person discover what is best for themselves.
3. I have to let people live their own lives and learn their own lessons. I can accompany an aspirant on the journey, and support them as requested, but telling them how to live their lives is not what we do in Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT).



More than once an aspirant has said to me after hearing the above, "If you aren't going to give me any advice, why am I coming to you?" Their question gives me important insight to their expectations of the therapeutic process.

I typically reply, "That is a very good question; why are you coming to me?!" The question allows me to probe further into the true (or truer) reason(s) the person is coming to therapy. In SAT we are all too aware that the reason the aspirant thinks they are coming to therapy is not the 'real' reason. It is rare that an aspirant is mature and evolved enough to know the depths of truth that has brought them to therapy. We pay close attention to the reasons the aspirant thinks they are coming to therapy, and we hold the awareness lightly; knowing that the truth will reveal itself in time, should the aspirant choose to embark on the inner journey.

My life teachings have intuitively guided me toward listening to my own heart in all matters. I simply do not understand why anyone would want to take someone else's advice. Wouldn't we be far better off to do whatever it is we need to do to develop our own strength and sense of guidance in life? Why would we want to

give over that gift, that power, that sense of knowing to someone else? It doesn't make sense to me. What does make sense to me is to develop a relationship and/or connection with that authentic part of ourselves that can truly and honestly guide us lovingly through life.

SAT is not alone in this foundational practice of not giving advice. Parker Palmer talks about the perils of giving advice this way:

*Here's the deal. The human soul doesn't want to be advised or fixed or saved. It simply wants to be witnessed—to be seen, heard and companioned exactly as it is. When we make that kind of deep bow to the soul of a suffering person, our respect reinforces the soul's healing resources, the only resources that can help the sufferer make it through.<sup>1</sup>*

Heather Plett says it this way:

*To truly support people in their own growth, transformation, grief, etc., we can't do it by taking their power away (i.e., trying to fix their problems), shaming them (i.e., implying that they should know more than they do), or overwhelming them (i.e., giving them more information than they're ready for). We have to be prepared to step to the side so that they can make their own choices, offer them unconditional love and support, give gentle guidance when it's needed, and make them feel safe even when they make mistakes.<sup>2</sup>*

In our topsy-turvy world, people want answers. The reason people want answers is because they have lost their inner guidance system—their ability to know what is right for them. Richard Harvey writes “What went wrong? Has there ever been a time when people looked so desperately for guidance, when their inner sense of referral was so lacking? When their alienation from their inner wisdom was so total.<sup>3</sup>

In SAT, if we do anything, we give the aspirant back to themselves. We offer with our presence to show, once again, the aspirant their true, Divine self—the Self that is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. Through a process of listening with the whole self to the soul of the other, SAT practitioners foster the removal of the blockages to truth. And that's all therapy is, nothing more and nothing less, the removal of the blockages to truth.

There is nothing right or wrong, good or bad about giving advice. But the old parable about giving a man a fish, versus teaching a man how to fish comes to mind. As the parable goes, a man is given the opportunity to either give a man a fish to feed him and him and his hungry family, or to teach the man how to fish. The fisherman responds to the options with this gem of wisdom:

*“Give a man a fish, feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, feed him for a lifetime.”*

I see advice in the same light. Give advice and feed the aspirant for the day. Witness and commune with the soul and feed the aspirant for a lifetime.

1. Palmer, Parker. “My Misgivings About Advice.” [www.awakin.org](http://www.awakin.org). January 23, 2017.

2. Plett, Heather. “What It Means To ‘Hold Space’ For People, Plus Eight Tips On How To Do It Well.” [www.heatherplatt.com](http://www.heatherplatt.com). March, 11, 2015.

3. Harvey, Richard. “I Give You Back Yourself.” <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/articles/i-give-you-back-yourself.html>

In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

## 2. Poem

### Of Being Woven

“The way is full of genuine sacrifice.

The thickets blocking the path are anything  
that keeps you from that, any fear  
that you may be broken to bits like a glass bottle.  
This road demands courage and stamina,  
yet it's full of footprints! Who *are*  
these companions? They are rungs  
in your ladder. Use them!  
With company you quicken your ascent.

You may be happy enough going along,  
but with others you'll get farther, and faster.

Someone who goes cheerfully by himself  
to the customs house to pay his traveler's tax  
will go even more lightheartedly  
when friends are with him.

Every prophet sought out companions.  
A wall standing alone is useless,  
but put three or four walls together,  
and they'll support a roof and keep  
the grain dry and safe.

When ink joins with a pen, then the blank paper  
can say something. Rushes and reeds must be *woven*  
to be useful as a mat. If they weren't interlaced,  
the wind would blow them away.

Like that, God paired up  
creatures, and gave them friendship.”

This is how the fowler and the bird were arguing  
about hermitic living and Islam.

It's a prolonged debate.  
Husam, shorten their controversy.  
Make the *Mathnawi* more nimble and less lumbering.  
Agile sounds are more appealing to the heart's ear.

Jelaluddin Rumi

## 3. Quote or Question

*“Overcome anger by love, evil by good, the greedy by generosity, and the liar by truth.” ~ Buddha*

## 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 – February 2019

#### Push and Pull

In your material universe, there are forces which pull and others which push—that which attracts and that which repels. Imagine that you have in front of you a ball suspended in the air which emits a magnetic pull. It invites you to fall into it. Using your personal will, you can decide: “Shall I fall into this ball, or do I move away from it?” Your decision is a personal one which becomes a part of the fabric of the life you are weaving.

In considering your choice, you examine the nature of this ball. You may also ask yourself, “Do I want to be a part of this ball? Does it uplift me? Do I feel a spiritual connection which promotes the betterment of myself and humankind?”

This pulling and pushing is a pulsation which is an integral part of your material world. Without this gravitational force of attraction and repulsion, all participants in your planetary system would leave their orbits. Confusion upon your planet would surely follow!

These forces are core elements found from within the smallest particle of matter to the greatest galaxies. However, within yourself, there is a centre of quiet—a place where there is no push or pull. This is the state of neutrality—home to pure, divine, Love. In truth, Love is a tremendous force, pulling all things into It. Yet, as paradoxically it may seem, in your world Love remains neutral. How can this be?

Love, sacred and divine, is the creative force which births all life, all worlds, all dimensions and much more. Love holds the subatomic particles in place and ensures order in all of creation. It has no push nor pull. It simply exists as Creator and Creation.

All hearts upon your planet hold Love. However, this loving force will not initiate pushing or pulling. *It is you who initiates this movement of attraction or repulsion.* It is you, using your personal will, who decides and chooses which movement to take. Within your essence—your soul—there is no pushing or pulling. The soul lives quietly inside Love. It is stable there.

Kindly contemplate the following: All activities have a push and a pull. In your every day living, what force will you initiate? Will you choose thoughts, creations and activities which reflect your inner soul or will you initiate movement which pushes you away from your personal and planetary spiritual advancement? What will you do with this ball suspended in front of you? Perhaps you will attune yourself to your divine centre, examine the qualities this ball is radiating and make them a part your existence. Kindly remember, however, that if there is nothing in the ball which reminds of your spiritual home, you might consider moving away from its pull—*no matter how enticing that pull might be.*

We assure you that if you remain anchored in the Love within, you will not be pulled in or pushed away. Rather, you will be enfolded.



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](http://www.nextagemission.com) or write Regiena at [rheringa@bell.net](mailto:rheringa@bell.net).

## OTHER GIFTS AND E-NEWSWORTHY ITEMS:

### 5. Good News Of The Day

The stories below are reprinted from [www.dailygood.org](http://www.dailygood.org).

Parker Palmer is the founder and senior partner of the Center for Courage and Renewal. His work teaches us to connect with others through our authentic self. His courses help to develop courageous leadership and collectively evolve our spirits for social change. With humor and heart, Parker shares his perspectives on advice giving vs the gift of our presence. Leading us into presence with unconditional listening and loving. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2152/the-gift-of-presence-and-the-perils-of-advice-parker-j-palmer/> **Be The Change:** Is there someone in your life who could use the gift of your deep presence? Taking the time to listen and witness - without expressing how they could fix their problem. Learn more through the Center for Courage and Renewal. <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=7870a>

Tired of hearing about the negative in your neighborhood? Well, so were these high school kids, who started a program, now sponsored by the City of Rochester, NY, to reward the positive. Each summer, the youth walk around different neighborhoods, looking for the good. And if they spot it, they hand out a ticket: A Positive Ticket. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3390> **Be The Change:** For more inspiration join this Saturday's Awakin Call with Peacebeam founder Jane Murray. Peacebeam is "a facilitator for kindness" that offers short audios (called peacebeams) that are designed for commuters and busy people to get calm, connected and out of their headspace into their heartspace."

"My word of the year is listen. Its one of those words whose meaning is in its music. Listen is a quiet word, that half swallowed L and diffident I and softly hissing S. It defies the clamorous words it absorbs, the words that have defined this year, the shouts and roars, the bray and bluster. Listening is hard when the sounds around us grow mean and ugly. And listening takes particular courage in divisive times." Nancy Gibbs shares more in this evocative passage. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2175/my-word-of-the-year-nancy-gibbs/> **Be The Change:** Take a moment to reflect on what your word is for 2019.

"He must have been around 66. When he walked in through the sliding glass doors, he had to bend down a little bit to avoid hitting the top beam. He was a well-built African American. He was dressed to kill. His blue full-sleeved shirt still looked prim, proper, neatly pressed with the crease still showing although it was towards the end of a working day. His black slacks looked classy, professional, and rich. His shoes were shining spick-and-span. His head and face were clean shaven. He took a seat on the couch that was adjacent to mine. I was sitting at the car dealership waiting for my car to be serviced." What follows is the story of an inspirational encounter that unfolded in the midst of an ordinary day. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2139/breakthrough-generation-ilango-meyyappan/> **Be The Change:** Make time to connect with a stranger this week. Open yourself up to wisdom in unexpected places.

Maria Popova shares insights on Anne Lamott's latest offering - "Almost Everything" Notes on Hope. How do we see past the illusions of polarity of right and wrong? Can we let go of these tightly held convictions that keep us small and separate and move into more mindfulness of our shared living beingness? It starts by bringing our awareness, curiosity and forgiveness - what we are designed for to the forefront. Let us come to terms with the truth - and be with it all, the irritating and the comforting, the hard, the gentle, our hearts both broken and pure. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2161/against-self-righteousness-maria-popova/> **Be The Change:** Where could you bring your curiosity, and perhaps for just a moment see the rightness of something you "know" is wrong?

A talk Lobsang gave twenty years ago stayed with me. But what did he mean by "aesthetic thought"? And why was it so important? In a recent interview, Rappagay talks about allowing a thought to come forth rather than the habitual way of going looking for one. It means having a direct experience. "The real freedom," he says, "is freedom from our thoughts and projections." It's not an easy path.

<http://www.conversations.org/story.php?sid=571> **Be The Change:** Experiment with embracing the state of not knowing in your own life this week. What does it bring up for you?

"Sarah Corbett never dreamed a cross-stitched teddy bear could change her life and how she approached her career. But looking back, she realizes that that's when it all started.

Corbett, a professional campaigner for causes and charities, was preparing to board a train from London to Glasgow to give yet another workshop on training people as activists. But she was exhausted, stressed, and burning out. With a five-hour journey ahead of her, she couldn't work because it made her travel sick. Feeling a hankering to do something creative, she picked up the tiny cross-stitch kit. As she took her seat and began to work, she immediately noticed something...." <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2186/when-crafts-become-activism-tracy-l-barnett/> **Be The Change:** For more inspiration read "On Death Row: Creating Art from Pain". <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1834/on-death-row-creating-art-from-pain-lilly-greenblatt/>

Mirka Knaster, fiber and mixed media artist, asks us "How many times have artists thought, while working on a project, 'Will I ever get this completed?' How often do we face seemingly unsurmountable obstacles on the path to turning our vision into reality? And when will we reach the level of proficiency and excellence we aspire to?" These questions are familiar to any creative person who has a vision and wants to bring it to life. And what we often lack is patience, a slower tempo, more attentive listening to the nature of the unfolding creation.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/2189/waiting-to-unfold-mirka-knaster/> **Be The Change:** How do you react to what the poet Rainer Maria Rilke says, that "patience is everything!" And how does impatience interfere with your own creativity?

Have ever asked yourself, why am I moved to tears or laughter at the sight of a soaring bird? Have you ever felt deeply drawn to a tree, a river, an ocean or a mountain? Settle in and watch this video. Come home to who you are in this wide wonderful world. Learn how even your smallest daily choices can be deeply meaningful and fulfilling once you understand the your deep connections to the vastness of the universe.

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7387> **Be The Change:** Go outside today and sit quietly in the presence of the natural world; a tree, a garden, a birdbath, a patch of sunlight. Close your eyes and sense the life force connecting you to everything around you.

Encounter the mystery of life and living with Krista Tippet and Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, wise physician, author and founder of the Remen Institute for the study of Health and Illness.

Through hearing these powerful stories we can sense that our losses, our illnesses have helped us to live fully and to heal not only ourselves but those whose lives we touch. Life is full of losses and disappointments, and the art of living is to make of them something that can nourish others. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2207/the-difference-between-fixing-and-healing-on-being/> **Be The Change:** How would you live, if you perceived yourself to be exactly what is needed to heal the world?

What does it mean to live wisely and well and what does it take? How can we cultivate qualities such as love, wisdom, kindness, and compassion? Dr. Roger Walsh's lifework, addresses these questions. A man with an eclectic past, Roger has explored contemplative life as a professor, physician, therapist, celebrated author, spouse, spiritual practitioner, and inquisitive human being. He is a former circus acrobat, as well as a record holder in the fields of high diving and trampolining. Roger claims to have no final answers about life and meaning; yet through a combination of spiritual wisdom and practical tools, he offers hope and healing for us all, individually and globally. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2164/what-does-it-mean-to-live-wisely-and-well->

[awakin-call-editors/](#) **Be The Change:** What does living wisely and well mean to you? Take a few minutes to write down your thoughts or share them with a friend or family member today.

"A bit over a year ago, my grandmother passed away. During the last couple of years of her life, she was dealing with a lot of different health problems -- literally ranging from head to toe. And, thanks to Western medicine, she was able to add years to her life, because of these different drugs and therapies that were working on the physical problems that were happening in her body. But, in the conversations that I had with her in those last couple months of her life, we learned that she was really struggling with the other parts of disease -- the nonphysical parts -- the emotional, the spiritual, the psychological kind of burdens that these diseases have that western medicine wasn't addressing...That really got me interested in quality of life, and how we can focus on that in western medicine and in the hospitals that we have here." As a pre-med student at UC Berkeley, Priya Shah created "The Happiness Advantage" to help students cope with stress. After three semesters, over 400 students had signed up. She shares more in this compelling interview.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/2210/quantitative-and-qualitative-healing-unknown-yet/> **Be The Change:** Remember that at virtually any time you can stop, even just for two or three minutes, and come back to yourself - breathe, let go of tensions and come back to being here.

Saturday Awakin Calls are moderated live conversations where amazing people share their journeys and interact with listeners. These conversations are then transcribed and archived creating a treasure trove describing the many ways to "be the change" we want to see in the world. In this post, an Awakin Calls volunteer shares some of her favorite jewels from this past year's most memorable calls. Read Gayathri Ramachandran's blog post and dive into this rich collection of inspiration.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/2181/nuggets-of-wisdom-from-10-everyday-heroes-gayathri-ramachandran/> **Be The Change:** Learn more about Awakin Calls, and if interested, become part of the circle of inspiration, dialog and personal transformation. <http://www.awakin.org/calls/?pg=about>

For the last 11 years, Xiuhtezcatl Martinez has been in the public eye for his activism, movement building, work with Earth Guardians, and youth empowerment. In 2013, President Obama awarded Xiuhtezcatl the United States Community Service Award. Xiuhtezcatl was the youngest of 24 national change-makers chosen to serve on the presidents youth council. He is the recipient of the 2015 Peace First Prize; the 2015 Nickelodeon Halo Award; the 2016 Captain Planet Award; the 2016 Childrens Climate Prize in Sweden; and the 2017 Univision Premios Agente de Cambio Award. He has addressed the UN General Assembly, given TED Talks, been interviewed by Bill Maher, and made an appearance on the Daily Show with Trevor Noah by the age of 17. Currently, he is one of 21 young plaintiffs suing the U.S. government for violating our constitutional rights by perpetuating the climate crisis in the trial of the century: Juliana vs. the United States. He has authored We Rise: The Earth Guardians Guide to Building a Movement That Restores the Planet, and just released his first album, Break Free. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2212/xiuhtezcatl-martinez-break-free-kari-auerbach/> **Be The Change:** Learn more about the work of Earth Guardians - a tribe of young activists, artists, and musicians from across the globe co-creating the future they know is possible.

Kindness begets kindness. This simple saying points to a profound truth. What we put out into the world, often comes back to us in one form or another. Not only does kindness have this wonderful boomerang effect, it's also delightfully contagious. Being at the receiving end of an act of kindness or witnessing a thoughtful gesture for another person can inspire a chain reaction. This just might be one of the best recipe's out there for creating a better world. For inspiration, here are some of KindSpring's favorite stories of 2018.

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/2211/top-10-kindness-stories-of-2018-kindspring-editors/> **Be The Change:** What are three acts of kindness that you could potentially do this week? Start with one today. For more inspiration and resources visit KindSpring. <http://www.dailygood.org/>

"Compassion is practiced in two ways: subtly and overtly. You can subtly serve any person with whom you interact by allowing their pain to resonate deeply within you, and experiencing it completely so that it does not turn into suffering within you. This is the healthy alternative to both callous indifference and enervating enmeshment." Author and mindfulness teacher Shinzen Young shares more in this collection of thought-provoking reflections. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2213/on-compassion-equanimity-and-impermanence-shinzen-young/>

Zachary R. Wood invites controversy into his life. Raised by a schizophrenic mother, he learned that people are complicated and challenging, but they can bring us into a deeper understanding. In this Ted talk, he describes growing up in a difficult home that was also supportive. He attended an elite, predominantly white, private school where as a black student, he felt the sting of being stereotyped and the joy of a education. He joined a group that brought controversial speakers to campus in order to prepare himself for controversy. He was not always successful in overcoming student bias, but he was able to engage in conversations with those who held different opinions and to understand their views. He believes "that to achieve progress in the face of adversity, we need a genuine commitment to gaining a deeper understanding of humanity."

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/2180/why-it-s-worth-listening-to-people-you-disagree-with-unknown-yet/> **Be The Change:** Seek out those with whom you disagree. Read their books, blogs or listen to their speeches. Try to understand their point of view and find 1 idea you share.

If you ask a child what they want to be when they grow up the answer is never "loved" or "happy" or "peaceful." We put a lot of weight on success, on setting goals and reaching them. And we quantify those accomplishments. How much did you get done today? What is your salary? How big is your house? Even our connections today are quantifiable. You have 500 friends on social media. You scroll through their posts, briefly acknowledging some with a click. How often do we consider the impact of the singular things in our life? It takes more than a moment to truly appreciate the special people around us.

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=827>. 8 **Be The Change:** Take some time today to appreciate the blessings in your life and enjoy the many benefits of gratitude. <http://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=7932a>

In 1978 Matthew Sanford was paralyzed in a car accident that took the lives of his father and sister. He was thirteen years old. He shares his story of transformation through loss in this insightful interview. Through the teachings of yoga and building a relationship to his body he became in touch with the "more" we all know ourselves to be. Our bodies make the intangible, tangible; integrating body with spirit, even if you can't flex a muscle. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/2194/matthew-sanford-transforms-loss-nathan-scolaro/> **Be The Change:** What one thing could you do today, to deepen your relationship and awareness of your body?

## 6. My Word of The Year

Reprinted from [www.awakin.org](http://www.awakin.org).

—by **Nancy Gibbs** (Dec 31, 2018)

My word of the year is listen.

It's one of those words whose meaning is in its music. Listen is a quiet word, that half swallowed L and diffident I and softly hissing S. It defies the clamorous words it absorbs, the words that have defined this year, the shouts and roars, the bray and bluster. Listening is hard when the sounds around us grow mean and ugly.

And listening takes particular courage in divisive times.

“Courage is not just about standing up for what you believe,” Doug Elmendorf tells his students at Harvard. “Sometimes courage is about sitting down and listening to what you may not initially believe.”

Which is not to say that if we all just listened more, our wounds would heal and our conflicts end. Nor does it mean abandoning our values; it's a strategic reminder of the value of humility. “It's always wise to seek the truth in our opponents' error, and the error in our own truth,” theologian Reinhold Niebuhr said. Listening, closely and bravely, to an opposing view deepens our insight and sharpens our arguments—especially in our public life.

It's long past time that we quiet our animal spirits. Our fierce public battles, political fights that have infected our friendships and family, have degraded our discourse, defaced institutions, disturbed our peace. I grew up in Quaker schools, which included regular silent meetings. This did not come naturally to nine-year-olds. But I found then, and need to be reminded now, that we can't hear the soft, sane voice inside us if we're talking all the time, and certainly not if we're shouting.

Instead, let's listen. Invite surprise. Invest in subtlety. And surrender to silence once in a while.



## 7. Two Kinds of Resistance

Reprinted from [www.awakin.org](http://www.awakin.org).

–by **Rhonda Fabian** (Jan 07, 2019)

The light begins its slow return to places in the North, and today a new year begins.

Some people are saying it is already “too late” – climate chaos, species loss, war, disparity – that we have gone too far, the darkness is too profound. We, however, believe no darkness is so profound that a single candle cannot dispel it.

The Buddha’s teaching on light and darkness is simple: they depend on each other for their existence. Like ‘above and below’, ‘left and right’, ‘birth and death’ – take one away and its partner ceases to be. They do not have a *separate self* – and neither do we. Each of us is composed of many elements – our ancestors, DNA, what we consume, our relationships, and our actions. Maybe somewhere in the world, our ‘opposite’ also exists.

Anger, outrage, despair, fear – these are common responses to the injustices we see around us. We want to take action, to rebel, to protest and oppose the people on the ‘opposite’ side of the issue or debate. However we must be skillful at transforming these feelings into compassionate and nonviolent action if we want this kind of resistance to be effective. This resistance requires *satyagraha*, or soul force – the fire of determination in our hearts, and a willingness to see that, like ‘left and right’, we depend on each other, even those with views very different from our own, for collective awakening to happen.

There is another kind of resistance we should also consider. Just as the body builds up resistance to a virus or a cold, we must build up our inner resistance to despair. Zen monk and teacher Thich Nhat Hanh says, ‘In this kind of resistance there is no corporation, no politician and no policy to oppose or to rebel against. It all comes down to our own free conscious choices, without judging others or imposing our views.’ For example, we can choose to consume less, to support our local economy, to reduce or eliminate meat in our diet, to look after our neighbors and the children in our community, to plant trees and care for our watershed and our soil, to be models of peace.

The new year ahead will require both kinds of resistance if it is to be truly ‘new’.



## 8. Signals Even GPS Cannot Detect

Reprinted from [www.awakin.org](http://www.awakin.org).

--by [Aylie Baker](#) (Jan 14, 2019)

Returning to the US was always hard for me, in part because I began to notice how GPS technology was eroding what was left of our wayfinding capabilities. In the spring of 2013, I flew from Palau back to New York City, and I remember walking out of the subway on a starry night and struggling to break free of the shuffling crowd, because everyone was looking down at the maps on their phones. I started to read more about celestial navigation and the maritime history of the Atlantic, wanting to understand how we had come to abandon the stars and choose such a different way of moving through the world. My partner Miano often says that before modern technology, we were all moved by nature. And he's right. I think we forget that.

Technologies themselves did not lead us astray, but our impulse to develop, adopt, and rely on them mirrors a slow wandering away from the receptive centers of ourselves.

Hundreds of years of observing the planets, of striving to understand our place in the universe, of equations scribbled down and passed on to be elaborated over generations—all of that now gets compressed into the instruments that we use every day without a second thought. And part of what feels so scary to me about witnessing the rise and application of GPS in my lifetime is that all those generations of learning are obscured; they're hidden in code, recorded on SIM cards and giant hard drives off in the desert. We can drive to the restaurant with the four-star Yelp review or fly thirteen hours across the Pacific Ocean without any appreciation for the incredible majesty behind these gestures.

It would be easier, more efficient, far faster to continue moving through the world along the grids that we've created, following the routes we are presented. But what is the impact on us? Recent studies are revealing the effects GPS is having on our brains and on the way we relate to the world. Our daily journeys are now riddled with refrains of Turn right, Turn left, Slow down, Stop. When these directional prompts come from outside of us, we don't lay down memories in the same way we would navigating through the world without instruments. The mental maps that we construct of the places we inhabit are slowly being shredded, rendered into strip maps that lead to isolated, meandering points. The restaurant, the mountain, the grocery store, even Grandma's house, begin to float around without any clear interrelationship or tether to the wider landscape. As our dependence on GPS technology increases, we are in danger of no longer integrating our journeys into a larger sense of home.

Even a map of home is a representation, a slice of space captured by the mind at a discrete point in time. It is always a fragment of the fabric of the universe. It doesn't matter whether this map is updated every few years or every few seconds: it is flat. It will never be fully present or capture the rippling dynamism of the natural world. It will never be truly alive.

It's scary to think about stepping back from these instruments, scary because stepping back might mean admitting that we never really learned where we are. For most of human history, this question has run like an umbilical cord to the core of who we are—and anyone who has been lost knows the waves of discomfort, fear, shame, guilt, loneliness, and longing that rise up in the face of not knowing.



Wayfinders are always reminding their students that each of us is capable of picking up signals that even the most powerful GPS could never detect. And we do, all of us, moment by passing moment. How ironic that we've designed wayfinding instruments and climate-controlled environments that shut out the many forces that are there, waiting to guide us. Humidity, vibration, shadows, birdsong—they reach out to us in every moment, silently imploring us to remember that we are—all of us, always—life responding to life.

## 9. Green Mountain Are Forever Walking

Reprinted from [www.awakin.org](http://www.awakin.org).

--by *Subhana Barzaghi* (Jan 21, 2019)

I've been fascinated by this process of birth and death. I was a midwife for seven years, delivering babies in the bush and it was always a great privilege and honor to be invited to a birth. I had many wonderful experiences there. One thing I remember about these births is the energy and excitement, the focus and attention at the moment the baby comes out. At that moment, the baby is often blue and it does not breathe for a few moments. Everybody in the room solemnly looks at this tiny creature and waits for it to breathe and all the adults in the room are holding their breath. I would then say to everyone, "Breathe! How is this poor little creature going to learn how to breathe if we are all holding our breath?" That precious moment seems like an eternity, when we are waiting for the baby to breathe and we need to bring that same attention and precious quality right here to our own breathing to give birth to ourselves, to our own child by night.



Another thing I found about birthing which was quite addictive was this special quality of presence around birth, and usually when you really get into labor and are there for a while, all the things that don't matter just fall away and it becomes a moment-to-moment experience. There's a timeless quality about that energy.

I went from delivering babies to spending time with people who are dying, and that same energy, that quality of presence is also true for people who are dying. That same energy is generated in meditation. And it wasn't just by luck or chance, all those Zen stories where the ancient teachers just said one word and the student was enlightened. It's the same as when you're with a laboring woman, you stay with her through the night, you breathe with her, you can tell when the baby's going to be born, you can tell the stages of labor easily when you're a midwife. And it's the same with those great Zen teachers. They know when the student is ripe. That one word can awaken the mind.

There's another beautiful analogy about form and emptiness that is very simple. It is like the wave and the ocean. The wave has a beginning and an end, a birth and a death, and the Heart Sutra says that the wave is full of emptiness but is empty of a separate self. Now the wave is a form created by the wind and the water, but if the wave only sees its form, its beginning and end, it will be afraid of birth and death. But if the wave identifies with the water, with the essence, it will not be afraid of birth and death. The water is free from birth and death.

Through the process of practice, we see there is an exclusive identification with our own body and mind, and this attachment to this body is our greatest limitation. I feel, I think, I am this, I hear, I, I, I. [But] when we

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meditate, we can experience the moment to moment impermanent nature of all the elements. We have the heat, the air, the water, thoughts and feelings. So what elements can you truly consider to be your own body if you truly look at it just as elements arising and passing away on a moment to moment level? Try and grasp hold of any one of those elements, try and hang onto one, just even one sensation in the body and say, "That is me". It is impermanent. When we contemplate the body we can experience that microscopic level of that constant change and flux, bubbles, atoms. And we can experience this directly.

There is no permanent, separate entity called "self" there in all those elements. And that constant changing, that state of flux is what Dogen meant when he says, "The green mountains are forever walking". There is no separation between yourself and the green mountains. Green mountains come forth as self. But we must not stagnate in that realization of emptiness. That must be replaced by a more comprehensive realization of integration -- merging with the world in compassion. Like a dance, where we meditate and introspect and then merge with the world and serve. Continually, we do this dance. There's a beautiful rhythm there. Keep up that rhythm, and please do not doubt the walking of the green mountains.

## 10. What Does It Mean To Be Human?

Reprinted from [www.KarmaTube.org](http://www.KarmaTube.org).

The song "All We Do" seemingly floats through this short film that asks and answers the question: what does it mean to be human? Providing hope and inspiration, the answers include a recognition that being human is difficult; it means being aware of and accepting of ourselves and others, recognizing our potential, not giving up when we fail, knowing that we are not alone. To be human means all of this and much more. The words of the song, "All we do is hide away" contrast markedly with the words and images of the people interviewed, who meet us openly and honestly, showing us the very best of what it means to be human.

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7728>

## 11. Handing Out Positive Tickets

Reprinted from [www.KarmaTube.org](http://www.KarmaTube.org).

Tired of hearing about the negative in your neighborhood? Well, so were these high school kids, who started a program, now sponsored by the City of Rochester, NY, to reward the positive. Each summer, the youth walk around different neighborhoods, looking for the good. And if they spot it, they hand out a ticket: A Positive Ticket. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3390>

## 12. Give In To Giving

Reprinted from [www.KarmaTube.org](http://www.KarmaTube.org).

Life can get difficult and busy at times. It is easy to focus on ourselves and not take time to stop to help others. The Exchanger Volunteer Programme by Emirates NBD, which was started in 2015, is helping people find opportunities to volunteer and make a difference in the world. Just one little act of kindness or an hour or two of

volunteering can change the lives of both the giver and the receiver. This short animated film shows just how easy it is to "give in to giving." <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=8295>

## 13. Purls of Wisdom

*Reprinted from [www.KarmaTube.org](http://www.KarmaTube.org).*

Peggy sums up her philosophy of life for us with these words: "If you feel lonely, make a cup of tea. Or knit." Her approach to life will warm your heart like the jerseys (sweaters) that she makes warm children who benefit from her generous spirit. She visits areas where parents and young children congregate and passes out her beautiful handiwork for free. Though she feels, at age 83, that she is "in the departure lounge---to go up there--to die," she doesn't let that stop her from loving life and filling her time with knitting in service to others. Her payment is the pleasure she enjoys from seeing the grateful looks on the faces of the recipients. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=8338>

## 14. We Teach Who We Are: Gratitude

*Reprinted from [www.KarmaTube.org](http://www.KarmaTube.org).*

If you ask a child what they want to be when they grow up the answer is never "loved" or "happy" or "peaceful." We put a lot of weight on success, on setting goals and reaching them. And we quantify those accomplishments. How much did you get done today? What is your salary? How big is your house? Even our connections today are quantifiable. You have 500 friends on social media. You scroll through their posts, briefly acknowledging some with a click. How often do we consider the impact of the singular things in our life? It takes more than a moment to truly appreciate the special people around us. <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=8278>

## 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 [rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com](mailto:rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, for distribution in the following month's e-newsletter.*

### 15. 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 therapy / 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.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](mailto:rmeagher@servingyourjourney.com)).

### 16. 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>.

# Spiritual Guidance

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In love, gratitude, compassion and forgiveness...

Rev. Robert Meagher

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