

*Plants are given to us by God because He loves us.
The appreciation of us taking care of them
is what God gives us back in a flower.
The flower is God's way of saying thank you.*

SWAMI SHANKARANANDA MAHARAJI



TRANSCENDENCE
Serious Spirituality for Devoted Aspirants

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TRANSCENDENCE

Serious Spirituality for Devoted Aspirants

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This month's cover feature was taken by Victoria Rodda at the Christchurch Botanical Gardens, New Zealand.

Welcome to the December 2014 issue of *Transcendence*.

*"At Christmas, as we celebrate this Birth of Jesus Christ,
Let's keep in mind the truth of Christmas Day;
For it's not the Christmas wrappings, nor the gifts that lie within,
But our gift of love to others in every way..."*

ANON

December is the month during which many of our readers celebrate Christmas, or the birth of Christ into the world. But as we all know, Christmas is so much more than that. It is a reminder of the birth of our inner Christ light within the dark cave of our ignorance.

Many of you will be on holiday, away from work, having a break from the stresses of your usual daily activities. This is the perfect time to schedule some daily reflection sessions to meditate and focus on awakening the Christ within, and to beam that light of love to others.

We wish all our readers and contributors a blessed and peaceful holiday season and look forward to sharing more inspiration and Transcendence with you in 2015.

In Love and Service, always,





Heavenletter # 4101 – To Stay Afloat in the Ocean

GLORIA WENDROFF

God said:

Everyone does not see eye to eye. Everyone sees through his or her own eyes. And very different things may be seen.

At the same time, everyone carries responsibility for what he sees and how he is seen.

There are understandings and misunderstandings. Everyone intends well. Everyone thinks what he is doing is right or called-for. And no one wants to be interfered with.

A teacher at school may adore a certain naughty student, let's say, and, yet, if that student makes a certain kind of smart remark, and the teacher says nothing, other students will take that as a go-ahead to make their own smart remarks. The teacher has a responsibility that the students do not at first have.

No one I know likes to be corrected, rightly or wrongly. Every one of My children desires freedom, and many do not know the difference between freedom and license. Is license the right word? Everyone is free to say what he likes at the same time you had better know where and when. Here, but not there. There, but not here. License would say that you can say anything you want anywhere any time. One who takes license may not know the difference between a tea party and a camp-out. Words may be appropriate in one context and not in another.

One who objects to being corrected may also be adamant about correcting another.

A lot does come down to responsibility. Of course, it is best to be responsible for yourself. A responsible person knows when and where and how. A responsible person has the freedom to know when and where to keep thoughts to himself.

Everyone makes mistakes. Schoolchildren make mistakes. Teachers make mistakes. School administration makes mistakes. Unlikely is there perfect agreement. Perhaps in theory, yet not in practice.

Let Us forgive others their mistakes, and let Us forgive ourselves for our own mistakes. Let Us even forgive ourselves for judging others. Let Us let go of the past. How many times have I said that? And how many have listened and followed that? Certainly, everyone has tried.

I tell you that you are perfect. Only in the world are you imperfect. Concede to this, and you won't be dismayed so when someone disagrees with you.

Take it easy when you correct another, and take it easy when you are corrected. Grant yourself some leeway, and grant leeway to others as well.

We come back to again and again that there are no others. It is yourself you defend from yourself. It is yourself you approach. It is yourself you favour or disfavour. There is such a thing as how you conduct yourself. Manners in one country may be opposite to manners in another, and this is true for individuals as well. In one house, life is conducted a certain way. In another house, life is conducted in a different way.

There is room for all, and differences, when seen from a longer view, matter not at all.

In all cases, be kind. Be kind as you can be. And remember to be kind to yourself.

Everyone in the world is scrambling to stay afloat. Help others, and help yourself. The best way to stay afloat in the ocean is to lie back and relax. Is that not so? In life, then, lean back and don't make so much of what goes on. Tomorrow something else will go on. There is nothing to get into a fuss over, is there, is there really?

SOURCE LINK TO THIS ARTICLE: <http://heavenletters.org/to-stay-afloat-in-the-ocean.html>



Inspirational Quotes



In an extant world where nothing really happens, where all is illusion, there is really no winning nor is there losing. I am a good God. I am not a bad God. I do not go up and down in mood or in thought. I am not soft-hearted nor am I hard-hearted. I do not have predilections. I am not biased. One day may go the way you want. Another day may not. I have not changed My mind about you. You are My beloved every day. Heavenletter #4103 In the Consciousness of Heaven



The government of a country is meant to be yours to govern. A government is meant to represent you and not itself. You have your voice. When it comes to a private enterprise, decisions are not yours to make. If you don't like the way a private enterprise is run, it is your decision to stay or to leave. Divine right is not yours when it comes to an enterprise that is not your bailiwick. Of course, you have your opinions, and yet you do not have to go on and on to declare your opinions. Support or don't support, but do not haggle.

Heavenletter #4102 The Rules of the Game



"I have ordained you as an ambassador of love, and there is nothing that can stop love from taking over the whole world. Concede. Surrender. Love."

Heavenletter #4099 Concede. Surrender. Love.



Dreams are going to come true on Earth. Love takes its rightful place on Earth, and you become Kings and Queens. You are nobility. You are Heaven nobility. You have always been so and have not seen. Now you will see. You will see what love is. You will see the love you are. You will dispense with anything that is not love.

Heavenletter #4104 Imagine That

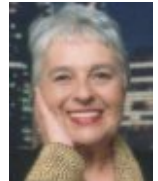


Your love and My love are strong magnets. Love is mightier than steel. There is no force like that of love. You cannot resist it. Love is the tide of life, and it makes itself known. All love leads to Me, and all love is from Me. I love Myself. You are learning to love yourself. You are lifting your eyes up. The closer you come to Me, the closer you come to yourself.

Heavenletter #4105 Growing Closer to God

Ten years ago, after a spiritual awakening, I started writing letters to my inner self and got answers. After a while, I thought: "Hmm, if I can address myself and get answers, why not with God?" I had always heard to go to the top, so I started asking questions to God, first for myself and later for others, and God answered with a common sense and vision far beyond anything I could ever have thought of. And then questions were no longer necessary because God just started coming in with what He wanted us to hear. One thing about God, He wants His words shared, and so Heaven Letters is emailed out every day.

GLORIA WENDROFF



Everything God says is meant for you, and each day's Heaven Letter contains a new message God wants you to hear that day. For people of all faiths, or of none, Heaven Letters are like a walk you take with God. With each step, you come closer until you find there is no distance between you and God.

Visit www.heavenletters.org





Searching for soul-satisfaction Part IV

ROY EUGENE DAVIS

The Real Purpose of Our Spiritual Practices is to Have Our Consciousness Fully Restored to Its Original, Pure Wholeness

Souls are individualized (not created) as units of the pure consciousness of ultimate Reality because of subtle interactions between the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality and its emanated field of primordial Nature. Their consciousness becomes blurred and conflicted when they identify with objective conditions because they are curious or are influenced by inertia. People who don't know how souls are produced and become involved with a universe may imagine a supreme being that creates souls and universes for purposes that must remain mysterious because they are not known.

They might imagine a variety of ways that universes and souls come into being or promote their theories of salvation (permanent freedom from suffering and misfortune commonly experienced by incarnated souls and other forms of life in our world). The primordial (original) expression of Nature is composed of a unified field of Om vibrations, space, time, and fine cosmic forces. From it, causal, astral, and physical fields or realms are produced. Its energetic characteristics are kinetic (capable of movement), inertia, and equilibrium (balance or stillness).

The immediate way to have our consciousness restored to wholeness is to detach attention and awareness from objective (outer) and subjective (mental and emotional) conditions to the extent that emotions are calm, the mind is peaceful, and stillness prevails while we remain alert and attentive. This can be done during meditation or whenever we decide to do it. Spontaneous spiritual enlightenment is also possible. For optimum benefits, do these things:

- Holistically live a well-ordered, purposeful life, doing what is right or proper in all situations and relationships. This will contribute to your physical and psychological well-being and harmonious environmental circumstances.
- Meditate every day to the stage of superconsciousness, then gently aspire to rise above ordinary (modified) states of mind and consciousness.
- When engaged in normal activities, stay alert, attentive, and Self- and God-aware.
- Remember that, at any moment, your innate Self-knowledge may be revealed and partial or complete spiritual awakening may effortlessly occur.

Don't allow your aspiration to be fully spiritually enlightened to be weakened by doubts, pessimism, extreme mood changes, negative comments others might make, or neglect of metaphysical study and regular superconscious meditation. Regardless of the events and circumstances that emerge and linger on the screen of time and space, or fade away, faithfully go forward with firm resolve.

Follow the guidance of your essence of being, your immortal, true nature in which flawless Self-knowledge and eternal joyousness of being permanently abide.

Excerpt from *Truth Journal*, February/March 2013

Roy Eugene Davis was ordained by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1951 and appointed as the minister of the Phoenix, Arizona, Self-Realization Fellowship Center in March 1952. In 1955 he began his mission as an independent Kriya teacher. Since then, he has taught in more than 100 cities in North America and in Japan, Brazil, Europe, West Africa, and India. He is also the publisher of *Truth Journal* magazine and writes monthly lessons for CSA members around the world.



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The jurisdiction of the Christ

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Cycles come and go, and are an intrinsic part of the unfolding life of humanity. Periods of activity oscillate with periods of (apparent) inactivity, the ebb and flow of life is evident all around us. Throughout the long course of human evolution greater and lesser Avatars have appeared, have led exemplary lives of service and have revealed those inner truths appropriate to the age. And, according to the ageless wisdom teachings, a Great One is due to appear again.

Written more than two thousand years ago but equally relevant today, the profound Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, informs us that “Whenever there is a withering of the law and an uprising of lawlessness on all sides, then I manifest Myself. For the salvation of the righteous and the destruction of such as do evil, for the firm establishing of the Law, I come to birth age after age.” Does this description not in some measure highlight world affairs today?

At the end of an era (the last two thousand years) and at the beginning of a new cycle (the Aquarian Age), a growing number of people look to a great Avatar, a World Teacher who can indicate a way, point a direction and reveal those practical inner truths that will lead humanity into a clearer light. Many look to the reappearance of the Christ, others to the Lord Maitreya, the Messiah or the Imam Mahdi, but whatever name we may assign, this same great spiritual Individuality will love and serve all human beings, regardless of race, religion or social position. In some spiritual circles, the name of the “Christ” is understood as that of an office, or that of a position of profound responsibility in the evolving life of the planetary Whole. And, we are informed, there has been more than one exalted Individuality, who has occupied this noble position in the course of human unfoldment.

Over seventy years ago, Alice Bailey suggested establishing a “united world group given to 'unanimous' and simultaneous meditation upon the work of preparing the world for the new order and for the jurisdiction of the Christ”. It was envisaged that this group would meaningfully reflect upon the laws and principles that will underpin the Aquarian dispensation. The three laws and three principles are:

The Law of Right Human Relations; The Principle of Goodwill; The Law of Group Endeavour; The Principle of Unanimity; The Law of Spiritual Approach; The Principle of Essential Divinity.

These six themes essentially reflect the nature of the Kingdom of God. Focused and sustained meditation upon these ideas will help magnetise the thoughtform and paint a clearer picture in the imagination and collective psyche of humanity of this stupendous and solemn event. It is hoped that all who truly sense the significance of this work will play their part in bringing about a purer and truer perspective on the role of the Christ in the world today and beyond.

The Christ, the supreme spiritual executive, stands “attentive to the demand of humanity”. The fiat of the Lord has gone forth and “in such an hour as you think not, He will come.”

The activities of the Lucis Trust promote the education of the human mind towards recognition and practice of the spiritual principles and values upon which a stable and interdependent world society may be based.

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Yogananda's excerpts from revelations of Christ

SWAMI KRIYANANDA

Surveys of present-day Christians show that a high percentage of them feel shaken in their faith by scholarly claims that challenge the very authenticity of the Gospels. Not a few such claims have been aired, without proper authentication, in works of pure fiction. Others have been made by scholars who, though serious, demonstrate a lamentable absence of spiritual insight. In both cases, the claims to authenticity are based on the supposed antiquity of their sources, supported by a skillful misuse of reasoning. God has intervened many times in human history. If there ever was a time when His intervention was needed, the time is now. My purpose in writing this book is, therefore, to offer Christians spiritual support based on revelation.

Paramhansa Yogananda was sent by God to the West with the commission of restoring the teachings of Jesus Christ to their full and original glory. Only a declaration of certain deep truths in Christ's original divine teachings, proclaimed once again by a truly enlightened spiritual master, can bring the authority that is needed in the world today to counter these bee swarms attacking from all sides. Yogananda's commentaries on the words of Jesus Christ are profound, convincing, and of inestimable inspiration to Christians everywhere who want answers to the doubts that are being forced upon them nowadays – indeed, forced upon every thinking person, especially the apparent conflict between old religious concepts and the ever-expanding horizons of modern knowledge. The Bible is full of esoteric teachings that might be described as 'pure yoga.' How could it be otherwise? Truth is universal. There is no such thing as a 'true, Christian vision,' from which anyone belonging to some other religion is, by his 'wrong structure of beliefs,' automatically debarred. *Sanatan Dharma* is a Sanskrit term meaning, 'The Eternal Religion.' *Sanatan Dharma* has for long ages been the accepted name in India for the universal Truth: God, Creator and Sustainer of the universe, every atom of which, being a conscious projection, is designed eventually to merge back into the Supreme Spirit.

'Hinduism,' the popular name for India's ancient religion, was imposed on that country by foreigners in relatively recent times. 'Hinduism', however, is a misnomer. *Sanatan Dharma* belongs not only to India. The religion it proclaims is universal. It should therefore be understood that Divine Truth has nothing to do with separative or sectarian beliefs. *Sanatan Dharma* is not a man-made religion, but explains, rather, how God brought all things into manifestation and how every soul, each one a 'prodigal son,' can return and merge back into Him. *Sanatan Dharma* shows people how to achieve for themselves the inner revelation of the highest truth. The fundamental truths of *Sanatan Dharma* can be perceived by everyone who has the willingness to offer himself up completely to God, in deep humility and devotion. Christ, who taught that Eternal Religion, gave it particular emphases that were suited to the understanding of the Judaic people of his day. He referred, for example, to the cosmic power of maya (delusion) as Satan, and emphasized (as great masters in India have not, to my knowledge, done) that Satan is a conscious force dedicated to man's spiritual downfall.

The emphasis of Jesus Christ on this subject differs from the teachings of India on maya, but the truth of it isn't different. Both maya and Satan refer to a conscious force – not to a specific being, but to a universal reality, for nothing in creation is unconscious. In Hinduism – which is only one expression of *Sanatan Dharma* – the emphasis, in discussions of maya, has been on subjective delusion rather than on maya's cosmic, all-pervasive power consciously to influence all men to submerge themselves in ever-deeper delusion. In fact, however – as Hinduism teaches also, even though less explicitly – the satanic influence is not only individual, but universal. It is a dogma in Christianity that Jesus is 'the only Son of God.' Yogananda declared this to be a truth. He also said, however, that it is a deeply esoteric truth, and applies as much to the foundation of the universe as to that divine human being who was born in Bethlehem. God could never in essence, of course, be anthropomorphic; that is to say, He could never, in essence, possess a human form. It is inconceivable that the Creator of a hundred billion galaxies, each with its own innumerable stars and planets, could have any intrinsic form at all. It is even more inconceivable that such a God, needing help in getting His 'job' done on earth, could have created one human being as His 'only son.' Yogananda stated that the dogma that Christ is God's 'only Son' is true

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only if we understand it in the deeper sense expressed in the Eternal Truth, *Sanatan Dharma*. The ‘Son of God,’ as Yogananda declared, is not Jesus the man, but the infinite Christ consciousness, which dwelt consciously within him – the reflection in every atom of creation of the omnipresent, eternally motionless Spirit beyond all vibration.

This omnipresent reflection of the Supreme Spirit in all creation is the one and only true Christ, for which ‘the only begotten Son’ is but a metaphor. Jesus had attained that state. Therefore he was called the Christ. All souls who merge consciously into the Infinite attain that all-pervading state of consciousness. I once asked my Guru, ‘To what state must one have attained to be called a master?’ He replied, ‘One must have reached Christ consciousness.’ Heaven compared to a ‘mustard seed’ Jesus once compared the kingdom of heaven to a tiny mustard seed (Matthew 13:31). Has anyone ever made the leap from that thought of a sprouting, and then upward-growing mustard seed to the shining astral heavens? If so, it is a leap my own little brain is incapable of making. What Jesus referred to in that parable was, again, man’s own latent potential to raise and expand his consciousness, spiritually, into oneness with Omnipresent God. That expansion is accomplished by removing, one by one, all the self-enclosing veils which constitute our egoic limitations. The orthodox dogma – clearly specified by many churches – is that mankind is naturally sinful, and doomed to hell. There is a ‘but’ here, however. We can be redeemed by special grace if we ‘receive’ Christ, who sacrificed his life for us on the cross. Christians are encouraged to think of Jesus Christ, through that penitential offering, as their ‘personal Savior.’

Receiving him has always been understood as the essence of true Christianity because of those words in St. John’s Gospel: ‘As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.’ (John 1:12) That word ‘received,’ however, demands extra-cautious attention. Does ‘receiving him’ mean simply formal baptism – followed years later by equally formal confirmation? Does it mean instead, perhaps, a single ardent act of self-offering before the altar in a church? Considering any one of these explanations as a hypothesis, we should submit it to the test of experience. Do people really emerge from the first ceremony, or at least from the second one, purged and permanently changed? Is it enough even to make a single, emotion-charged self-submission? Again, thinking of Christ’s sacrifice as having been made for all men, did human nature everywhere undergo a radical transformation after his crucifixion? What about humanity as a whole? Judging at least from the gloating sadism of the mobs at the Roman Coliseum – one must conclude that the Crucifixion was not followed by any notable mass upliftment. Yogananda stated that to ‘receive’ Christ means to receive Christ’s presence consciously and inwardly, on a soul level, which is to say, in a deep state of ecstasy. Anything less than that is superficial and should not be taken seriously, since it produces no real or lasting change in a person’s consciousness and no increase of spiritual power (such as one would expect of a ‘Son of God’).

Jesus said that his physical presence among his disciples was a great help to them, spiritually. What happened, then, after the Crucifixion? His death did help them enormously, in relieving them of some of the burden of their own past karma. What Jesus accomplished through his divine self-sacrifice on the cross was [thus] the upliftment – but not, be it noted, the spiritual perfection – of his faithful disciples, that they might continue, on his behalf, his redemptive work after the death of his body. The impact on the whole world, however, was definitely to a lesser degree. Water always flows downhill, and if it issues out of the mountains onto a desert, it soon expends itself on those sands. Similarly, the karmic penance of Christ’s crucifixion, being a single act and not renewed again and again in compensation for man’s further and uninterrupted sinning, cannot have fully relieved the sins of all mankind. A finite cause, cannot have an infinite effect, for even though Jesus Christ’s consciousness was infinite, the crucifixion of his body was a finite event. Wishful thinking, we should remind ourselves, is not ‘binding on the universe.’

Ananda



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Memetic Influence

ROD BRIGGS

Def: Meme – *From the Greek for “an imitated thing.” An element of a culture or system of behaviour passed from one individual to another by imitation or other non-genetic means.*

The silly season is upon us; the time of the god of consumerism is nigh so open your wallets and splurge folks! I am always surprised how powerfully the Christmas spirit drives those of us in the southern hemisphere. Removing the Christian mythos and religious content for a moment – we can hardly equate the lemming like rush to toy stores with anything remotely Christ like – what we are left with is the trappings of an old pagan belief in Sol Invictus – literally the victory of the Sun over darkness. All the traditional trappings, from gifts to Christmas trees and festive lights, to the traditional meals and crackers, are expressions of this most important of pre-Christian festivals. This is where the Christmas meme comes in.

In theory the southern hemisphere festival should happen on our winter solstice on 22-23rd June. Over the years many of us have tried “Christmas in June” but it just doesn't feel like Christmas; no matter how over the top we go, we cannot recreate the feelings inherent in the December rituals. This is because we are fighting the power of the memetic influence; for hundreds of years the settler community has followed European timing to the point that, no matter that Santa has to undergo heat-stroke in heavy mid winter garb, it has become part of our modern folklore. The memetic influence is one of the main components of the ever moving zeitgeist that is responsible for everything, from the changing in moralistic norms to the speed at which the very young are fully computer literate.

Knowing that we are all moved, in an almost pavlovian way, by invisible forces need not however, detract from the joy of the time that is in it. Our house will be just as full of light and festive food and family as if it really was the winter solstice.

Whatever your belief system, and however strong the memes are, may you have a Blessed time, and for those travelling, may your gods go with you.

The Mindlink Foundation is dedicated to the emotional, physical and spiritual upliftment of humanity. This dedication finds expression in seminars and workshops designed to integrate both conscious and subconscious as well as the physical and non-physical aspects of mankind. The effects of the resulting balance are far reaching and life changing. On a micro scale this leads to an enhanced lifestyle for the individual. The macro impact is to raise the consciousness of the planet as a whole.

The teachings of Rod Briggs are gentle, fun and informative with entertaining stories, transformational wisdom and insights. His tertiary studies included Science and Theology as well as Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand and the UNISA. He is a frequent guest on local and international talk

shows and when not travelling presenting seminars, talks and lectures, he resides on the Dolphin Coast of Natal.

www.mindlinkfoundation.com





Epitomised mind power Part VI

SWAMI MURUGESU MAHARISHI

It is with the firm belief that our readers will not use this art to harm anyone but will only use it for beneficial purposes, that this method is revealed here.

The first step towards entering other's minds and converting them to your line of thinking, is *concentration*. The systematic method of utilising concentration in this manner should be undertaken with the help of a qualified yogi. I am revealing here only a simple method to develop such concentration which will enable one to enter others minds and alter their behaviour and ideas.

First, block out external noises by plugging your ears with cotton wool. Concentrate on the sounds that you will hear in your ears: a buzzing noise which is the noise of blood circulating in your ears. Do not analyse the sound or where it is coming from, but keep on listening to it without any diversion. Slowly, during the course of a few days practice you will begin to hear the noise of your nervous stimuli, your heart beat etc. You should continue to only observe them. If you are able to hear only these sounds without any diversion, it is an indication that you have developed enough power of concentration to enter into others minds and impress your ideas upon them.

There are certain prerequisites a practioner should have. You must be free from any disease and be sound of health. You should not have worries or anxieties, and should have a permanent, ongoing positive outlook. You should not have any bad habits like smoking, drinking or recreational drug use. You must have a firm belief that you will keep a steady mind and will succeed in all your attempts. You should practice regularly and sincerely.

I shall now explain the method of entering others' minds assuming that you reader have acquired enough power of concentration to do this.

Firstly, decide on whom you wish to impress your ideas, for what purpose, and the idea to be impressed. This is to be done only to fulfil your curiosity and to ascertain whether you have attained the ability or not.

If the person on whom you wish to impress your ideas is in your house or lives near your house, whenever you meet him or her, focus your concentration on the point between their eye brows or their medulla if their back is turned to you. Repeat with full concentration the idea you wish to impress upon the person. Whenever you get an opportunity, practice this for a few days. You will start to notice that there is a desired change in the person concerned. This is proof of your ability to enter into others' minds. If you do not succeed in your attempt, it shows that you have not developed your power of concentration. Follow the exercises of concentration for a few more days and then try the above experiment again. You are bound to succeed.

If the person on whom you wish to impress your idea cannot be met during the day and you can see them only when they are asleep, focus your concentration at the center of their eyebrows and repeat your idea strongly. Normally children will be very active during the day; hence you can try this on them when they are asleep. You will succeed after a few days.



Swami Dr RK Murugesu Maharishi founded the Gayathri Peedam in Sri Lanka, which promotes the non-denominational Divine Mother aspect of God.





Spiritual solutions for today

SUREN PILLAY

In world of increasing pain and poverty many are asking what lies at the root cause of the problem and what the solution is to these problems. It has been said that there is enough food thrown away in rich countries every day to more than cater for the hungry in impoverished countries. If this is the case then the issue is not about resources but rather about the distribution of resources. The distribution of resources is in turn determined by the inner consciousness and selflessness of the people who have resources.

Spiritual people may argue that the issue is thus not a political or resource problem but a deeper inner problem. Inner spiritual development ensures a balanced mind and compassionate heart. Without compassion the world would be a more violent place. And it is the lack of compassion that is the source of much of the violence in the world.

Jesus Christ preached the message of tolerance and forgiveness. If one is hurt or offended he should turn the other cheek. He should love his neighbour and forgive his enemies. The Buddha emphasised compassion as an essential spiritual quality. If the previous generations of human beings did not have compassion and forgiveness there might not be an earth today as nuclear war would have demolished our civilisation. However, now more than ever, there is a real threat of global war due to lack of forgiveness, compassion and civility.

Spiritual practices will automatically result in the cultivation of forgiveness and compassion in an individual as they expand ones awareness beyond ones own self to the universal self and to all human beings in the world. Meditation clarifies the awareness to a point where one is able to recognise intuitively whether an action is inherently good or bad for society as a whole. If more people were to start meditating every day, the collective actions of society would be wiser, resulting in less poverty, illiteracy, war and disease.

My message to you this month, dear readers, is to recognise that we all have the ability to effect some positive change in the world. The world is a collective of human beings with each bringing their own gifts and contribution in their own unique way. By practicing meditation every day you can ensure that your gifts shine and that you will always make the right decision that benefits society as a whole.

Surendran Pillay is a Chartered Accountant and a motivational speaker and lecturer at the University of South Africa, author of *The Art of Intelligence: A practical guide to igniting the Power of Mind*, and a composer of meditation music, keyboardist and tabla player.

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Role of morality and equality in violence eradication

FLORA TECKIE

We are currently observing “16 days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence”. The 16 Days of Activism is an international campaign originating from the first Women’s Global Leadership Institute held in 1991. The dates, 25 November, International Day Against Violence Against Women and 10 December, International Human Rights Day, were chosen in order to link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that gender-based violence is a violation of human rights. While many of the world’s governments have committed to the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in family, community and public life, individuals continue to struggle against deeply rooted patterns of dominance and violence that characterize much of human interaction in many parts of the world.

Violence against women – with its severe impact on their physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being – is one of the most widespread abuses of human rights. Abusive practices against them have been, and are still being, justified in the context of cultural norms, religious beliefs and unfounded ‘scientific theories’ and assumptions. Creating a violence-free family and society, in the Bahá’í view, requires new skills and approaches and commitment to equality, which encourages communication, mutual trust and respect. It involves consciously moving away from using force and violence to impose one’s will and fulfil his desires, and instead using cooperation and consultation. It necessitates respect for the dignity and rights of everyone, including one’s spouse and children.

Currently, most efforts and policies focus on the problem of violence rather than its prevention. However, it is important to focus simultaneously on dealing with violence with equal, if not greater attention on preventing it. According to a Statement of the Bahá’í International Community: “Our challenge is to search out new strategies and adopt fresh models that will encourage a healthier, more cooperative society at all levels. We need to move consciously away from patterns of force and aggressivity and towards methods of consultation and peace-making”. Our individual and collective commitment, demanding action and accountability from the authorities on their pledges are, of course, all vital. It is the Bahá’í view that “Alongside critical changes in the legal, political and economic architecture slowly taking shape, the development of individuals’ moral and spiritual capabilities is an essential element in the as yet elusive quest to prevent the abuse of women and girls around the world”. Drawing inspiration and authority from religion, moral and ethical values serve to define our attitudes and to motivate and orient our behaviour.

The principle of the fundamental equality of men and women can transform the relations within the family and society, allowing each person to fully develop his or her unique gifts and talents and to contribute to the well-being of the family and society. The application of this principle can help change conventional practices, as it is the mistaken belief that women are inferior which often makes them easy targets of anger and frustration. Responsibility for the change that will bring about gender equality and help eradicating violence against women and girls rests with both men and women. Appropriate laws, and the mechanisms developed for their enforcement, although necessary, seem to have had limited impact on eradicating gender-based violence. Hence, there is clearly a need to follow moral and spiritual principles, as they facilitate the shift in our values required to put into practice gender equality and justice towards all.

The Bahá’í Faith is the youngest of the world’s independent religions. Its founder, Bahá’u’lláh (1817-1892), is regarded by Bahá’ís as the most recent in the line of Messengers of God that stretches back beyond recorded time and that includes Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Christ and Muhammad.



Bahá’í Topics

*Religion bestoweth upon man
the most precious of all gifts.*
-BAHA’U’LLAH-

AN INFORMATION RESOURCE OF THE BAHÁ’Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

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Maitreya is the World Teacher, the Master of all the Masters, the Head of the Spiritual Hierarchy of Masters, the Embodiment of the Christ Principle on our planet. He holds the office of the Christ and worked through the Master Jesus in Palestine for the last 3 years of Jesus' life. He is the Teacher or Avatar awaited by many faiths under different names; He is here for all humanity, not as a religious teacher, but as a spiritual teacher to uplift and bless all humanity, to heal and inspire us to make the needed changes in the world. His social concerns are reflected in His priorities. As He Himself says: "The problems of mankind are real but solvable. The solution lies within your grasp. Take your brother's need as the measure for your action and solve the problems of the world. There is no other course." Maitreya's message can be summed up in a few words: "Share and save the world." He has come to teach the art of Self-Realization. He comes to offer the love that he is, so that we may know the love that we can be.

The futility of war

BY THE MASTER through Benjamin Creme

When men engage in war, they endanger not only their own and others' lives, but also the well-being of the planet on which they depend for life itself. The Earth is plundered recklessly for the metals of all kinds used in the ordnance of death. No thought is given to the needs of future generations who also have the right to the planet's bounty. Countless millions of tons of twisted, rusting iron adorn the 'theatres of war' where men enact their deadly pageantry. Men cannot see, or even imagine, the devastation caused to their subtle bodies by endless hours of bombardment. The unprecedented levels of noise tear and shred these sensitive veils. The human frame is not constructed for such abuse. Thus do they do themselves irreparable harm. How long, therefore, will it take men to realize the futility of war? War solves no problem; it creates only chaos, and halts the progress of man.

Some, few, men, it must be said, relish the act of war. It is, for them, an act of valour, a test of their will and skill, but mainly, today, men are drawn into war for ideological reasons, for the cause. Hence it is the leaders of the nations who hold the reins of power, who legislate for war or peace. They must be carefully chosen to ensure a peaceful world.

Much thought must now be given to this problem. Recent events in the Middle East have shown how simple it is to transgress the rule of Law and let loose chaos; to rectify the transgression and bring resolution is quite another matter.

Maitreya watches these events with care. He calculates precisely the tensions and their relaxation as they occur and seeks always to establish equilibrium. In this respect, the energies of the Spirit of Peace or Equilibrium, focused through Maitreya, play a vital part. Potent and precise, they are turning the tide of hatred and warring instincts which so trouble the peoples of the nations.

The people themselves are beginning to play their part. Through ballot-box and demonstration they are making their voices heard, their demands for peace known. From this point there is no turning back. The people are sensing their power and are coming to understand that they must make the peace they all desire, and that only when justice reigns with freedom will blessed peace be assured.

This growing understanding will set the scene for Maitreya's early emergence.

SOURCE LINK TO THIS ARTICLE: http://www.share-international.org/master/2006/ma_dec06.htm

The Master is a senior member of the Hierarchy of the Masters of Wisdom; His name, well-known in esoteric circles, is not yet being revealed for various reasons. The Master dictates messages to Benjamin Creme who is in constant telepathic contact with the Master. Share International is a worldwide network of individuals and groups whose purpose is to make known the fact that Maitreya, the World Teacher for the coming age and his group, the Masters of Wisdom, are now among us, emerging into the public arena gradually, so as not to infringe human free will.

British futurist Benjamin Creme, artist, long-time student of esoteric philosophy and foremost spokesperson for this message, has for more than 30 years been preparing the way for Maitreya's emergence. He is the author of numerous books, translated into many languages, and editor of Share International magazine.

SHARE
— International —
<http://share-international.org>





Grow God's love in a plant

SWAMI SHANKARANANDA MAHARAJI

Plants are given to us by God because He loves us. The appreciation of us taking care of them is what God gives us back in a flower. The flower is God's way of saying thank you. It is at this time in this kali yuga that we need as many plants as we can around us in our surroundings. Create an environment so we don't get caught with the ozone thing that seems to be happening. As you walk around the ashram you'll see that I've taken good care of the plants that are here. I walk around, I water them, I dig. Because I'm not only your caretaker, I'm also the ashram caretaker, the garden caretaker.

We need to find some time in our busy lives. You may not appreciate this now but you will later. You need to find some time to spend in the garden, because Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* that without karma yoga there's no bhakti yoga. You have to have some action. Without legs you can't run (except for one person with artificial legs).

So we need now to find within ourselves and around ourselves some time to attend to the garden, to the ashram. Every time you come here you'll see something new. We try our best but I think sometimes it's also the devotees who must try. If you go to Akshardham in Delhi you'll fall on your back. All work there is voluntary. When you look at the garden it's like a postcard. Then in Vellu there's a devi temple in gold, with the murthis in solid gold. Security is high but the garden is unbelievable. From the entrance to the temple is a 1 km walk. And all the way the garden is just kept so beautiful. And God also satisfies them in every other way. Krishna says clearly to Arjuna when he asks, that without action, karma yoga, there is no bhakti. So if you can, please come here, take a patch – you'll see lots of names here. Neeta will leave plants with me, Saras leaves plants with me. I have to dig and plant them. Bring plants. Last week it cost the temple R1900 just for the plants and garden stuff. I'll leave it to you.

In kali yuga we can't do anything else but satisfy God. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* that we must just surrender and make all work God's work. Even if you are going to work in the morning, say it's God's work and collect darshan. Don't say, 'Mister So-in-so is going to make my day miserable'. Wake up and say 'Lord, God, Jesus, Allah, I'm working for you', and you will have the most beautiful day. The same applies to school children. I didn't like my Latin teacher so when time for the Latin lesson came I was most stressed and frustrated because I didn't like the teacher – I still passed though. My guru knew nothing about school. He didn't to go school, he just said, 'Go to school, study, pass and I'll give you everything'. And he kept to his word. As I said, God's gift to us, out of love for us, is a plant. Our tending of plants shows his appreciation by giving us a flower.

SOURCE LINK TO THIS ARTICLE: <http://fridaysatsang.blogspot.com>



Swami Shankarananda Maharaj is the founder of the Jadatharaya Institute of Right Living and Yoga. His teachings are scientific but practical. The Institute promotes universal spiritual principles and embraces students of every denomination. One does not have to follow an Eastern religious practice to be involved in the Kriya Yoga classes, though an understanding of universal spiritual philosophies is beneficial. Swami's weekly discourses are recorded on his blog which can be accessed at www.fridaysatsang.blogspot.com. For more information on the Jadatharaya Institute, please visit the website below.

www.jadatharayayoga.com





Mind and heart matters: Simple Wisdom

BERNIE SIEGEL, MD

I am often impressed by the simple wisdom which comes from those who truly experience life and keep an open mind. It is hard to discover any wisdom when your life is governed by what others tell you you must believe because that is the way. I keep an open mind because I don't profess to know the way of my journey when my experience tells me there are many ways and I can learn from them all. I have seen this with my patients and the sages I know or read about. The following is from two of them.

"A human being is part of the whole, called by us "universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty." Albert Einstein

None of us see life as it is, the world as it is. We all see life as we are. We look at others through our own likes and dislikes, desires and interests. It is this separatist outlook that fragments life for us – man against woman, community against community, country against country. Yet the mystics of all religions assure us on the strength of their own experience, if only we throw away this fragmenting instrument of observation, we shall see all life as an indivisible whole. From Eknath Easwaran's Words to Live By

The following wisdom comes from our son Jeff. We chat every evening and he comes up with amazing stuff. His thoughts and wisdom he said, "Comes to him and not from him." Yes. I agree with him and that he connects with the greater consciousness and so it is all in the moment and there is no time associated with it because when you leave your body time no longer exists and consciousness does not require a body to exist and function.

What got me started thinking was his comment to us to think of our body the way we think of the universe. The following are his words, which I will not attempt to interpret, to help you to understand what he is saying. I will comment at the conclusion.

"In reference to evolution of the species, it is not only natural selection, but selection of the infection. The human genome and all other life forms are constantly being changed on the DNA level through infection by an infinite number of alien microbes in turn changing our DNA and destiny. They are the true creators. The instance of living things we cannot see far outnumber those we can, but the way we have colonized our world is no different than the way they colonize theirs which includes living inside beings larger than themselves.

Just as there are things so small we cannot see them, so it goes there must be things so large we cannot see them either. We may be living inside a giant living being just as bacteria and parasites live inside us. They can only see the world around them, but not the perimeter, or external boundary. Planets and stars are not unlike our organs. Planetary organs producing raw materials like oxygen and other gases that provide the food to the ATP producing mitochondria, electrically based life forms which power the invisible electromagnetic field creating the energy that holds the galaxy, the guts of a giant life form, together.

The sun regulates our earth organ's temperature and metabolism in a healthy range, but can also clear the earth of life with fever if life becomes cancerous to the greater life form within which we live. A black hole can eat a diseased planetary organ and spew out new life as it gives birth recycling



all matter that moves through it creating new healthy organs in whatever manner need be.”

My thought is that whatever threatens our planet’s health and disturbs the creative force can lead to our elimination. The black holes, sun and more are like our immune system and can eliminate or eat up what is within us and what exists in the body of the universe. Wars, pollution and more can lead to a disease which eliminates the life our Creator desired. Think about global warming and how an elevated temperature is associated with your body’s or our planet’s infection and how we follow potential Ebola cases? We can be eliminated by the diseases we create but as Jeff notes, “What remains is recycled instantly by the nature of creation to create new life so nothing is wasted.” It all becomes a part of a new body or universe, which I hope as we become wiser, will create a higher level of consciousness and a healthier universe than ours and then we can then give thanks for the gift of life.

Today’s Prescription for the Soul – Prescription #193 – Good Friends

*Friendship improves happiness and abates misery,
by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief.*

CICERO

What is a friend? To me it is someone who knows our faults and still sees the divine in you. A friend will love you despite your imperfections. A friend is someone who is there for you when you have the courage to ask for help. A friend is also someone who can say no to you and still remain a friend.

A friend points out your imperfections, not to blame you for them but to help you become better at what you are doing, just as a coach would talk to an athlete. A friend always answers your calls even when you are driving them crazy.

A friend never talks about who is right but rather listens to how you are feeling. A friend will not judge without taking the time to understand and can forgive, let go of the past, and continue to love. Probably the most important thing a friend does is never to abandon you, no matter what you do.

Soulution of the Day

*Do something to acknowledge a good friend today
and remember to be one as well.*



Dr. Siegel, who prefers to be called Bernie, retired from practice as an assistant clinical professor of surgery at Yale of general and pediatric surgery in 1989 to speak to patients and their caregivers. As a physician, who has cared for and counseled innumerable people whose mortality have been threatened by illness, Bernie embraces a philosophy of living and dying that stands at the forefront of the medical ethics and spiritual issues our society grapples with today. He continues to assist in the breaking of new ground in the field of healing and personally struggling to live the message of kindness and love.

Visit Bernie’s web site at www.BernieSiegelMD.com



Readers' Inspirations

Prana

In the light of the masters I am blessed to take within the prana
Every breath an opportunity to reunite individual soul to universal spirit;
Every breath an opportunity to come closer to the infinite;
Every breath a step closer to enlightenment;
All glories to the brilliant practice of pranayama
which completes the evolution in wholeness.

SUREN PILLAY



Soul, heart and body one morning

There is a morning where presence comes over you,
and you sing like a rooster in your earth-colored shape.
Your heart hears and, no longer frantic, begins to dance.
At that moment soul reaches total emptiness.
Your heart becomes Mary, miraculously pregnant,
and body, like a two-day-old Jesus, says wisdom words.
Now the heart turns to light, and the body picks up the tempo.
Where Shams Tabriz walks, the footprints
are musical notes, and holes
you fall through into space.

RUMI



The Transfiguring Christ

Christ has ever abided in me. He has preached through my consciousness
to all my rowdy and hypocritical thoughts. With the magic wand of meditative intuition
He has stilled the storms in the sea of my life and of many other lives.
I was mentally blind, my will was lame; but I was healed by the awakened Christ in me.
Christ walked on the restless waters of my mind, yet the Judas of restlessness and ignorance,
deluded by the Satan of sense lures, betrayed in me the Christ calmness, the Christ joy, and
crucified the Divine on the cross of forgetfulness.
Christ commanded my dead wisdom to come forth from its sackcloth of delusion,
and raised my wisdom to new life.
At last my will, faith, intuition, purity, hope, meditation, right desires, good habits, self-control,
sense aboveness, devotion, wisdom – all these disciples obeyed the commandments
of the Christ who appeared on the high mountain of my meditation.
O living Christ, present in the body of Jesus and in all of us, manifest Thyself in the essence of
Thy glory, in the strength of Thy light, in the power of Thy perfect wisdom.

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Index of Resources and Online References

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